

Glimpse of a Well-Suited Man

“...I am still very dissatisfied with myself. The more progress you make in self-improvement, the more you see faults in yourself, and Socrates rightly said that the highest state of a man’s perfection is the knowledge that he knows nothing.”

Leo Tolstoy
In his journal

I

“How are you doing these days?” the candidate asked.

“To be honest, I’m not sure what to think - at least for the moment,” Ben Adams said.

“Once this thing is over, you ought to go home to Texas and come back up here on your own terms,” the candidate said. “It’s better that way; you have what it takes, if politics is really what you want to do.”

“Did you enjoy being in the congress?” Ben asked.

“Best thing I have ever done.”

Ben had picked the candidate up earlier that Monday morning at Mayflower Hotel in Washington D.C. and after several brief stops, the pair headed to Reagan National airport, where the candidate would catch the next shuttle to New York. Once there, he would attend several meetings at his law office in Rockefeller Center before holding an afternoon press conference at the Hyatt Regency nearby, where he planned to make public the fate of his presidential campaign.

Looking back on the situation now, Ben believed the candidate’s decision hung in the balance even as they made their way to the airport that morning. Why? Because to him, the issue did not boil down to winning or losing a race for political office; he was unafraid and unaffected by either of those outcomes. He did believe in having great aims

and fighting to the end for ideas that mattered; ones that reflected a concern for every citizen rather than a select few. To him, charting that particular course and staying on path toward it, determined one's fate; like the waves of the ocean that followed the moon.

“Not long ago, I boarded a cross-town bus in New York,” the candidate said, the traffic thick and slowing the car's pace as they approached the airport exit. “I cannot remember exactly where I was going, but it was one of those older buses regular riders call *harpies* and dread arriving at their stop.

“The buses are noisy, crowded and sort of mutter along, and for some reason used primarily on the cross-town routes. At Forty-Second Street and Fifth Avenue several people boarded and then immediately got out again, obviously irritated. I felt impatient too and almost left the bus to walk the rest of the way. Then I noticed the driver. He was a middle-aged man with a shy expression and it was easy to see the shabby bus did not add any prestige to his life. But as I remained seated and watched the man greet his passengers and collect their fares, I was struck by his humility. At the next stop two schoolgirls climbed aboard; he smiled at them and I was healed by the moment's simplicity. You have to be on the lookout, but it is exciting to find such unexpected lessons in life,” the candidate said.

Now, from a bench on a green patch of grass in Arlington Cemetery, Ben Adams thought back about those heady days and what might have been. He had not seen Washington, D.C. in almost four years, but had returned to visit the gravesite of a man that had affected his life and the lives of many others.

II

“Stick a fork in it, this campaign is done,” a nationally known newspaper reporter wrote in the opening paragraph of his column that Friday morning in early February. The comment captured what many political observers had been saying privately for nearly two weeks now – barring a political bank shot that produced significant changes, for all practical purposes this was the end of the line for a candidate who had remained idealistic in the face of practicality his entire life.

That same day, Ben Adams and several members from the campaign’s national advance team arrived in Los Angeles on an early afternoon flight from San Francisco, where they had arranged and completed the details of the candidate’s visit there two days earlier. The five stood on the tarmac beside a chartered 737 that was parked in a remote section of the airport, pondering an uncertain future and waiting patiently on the candidate and his motorcade. Later that evening, the candidate, campaign staff, and traveling press corps would board the plane and return to their home base in Washington D.C.

After more than seven months on the road and two early primary losses, the candidate had some fundamental questions to address and only a few days to do so. Ultimately, the decision of whether or not to continue the campaign rested with him, and the reading of the political tea leaves by friends, advisors, and supporters had been the main reason behind the recent three-day swing through California. Everyone on the flight home that evening recognized it may be the final time they were together as a group, and although most of them had kicked a few tires in the political game, knowing so pitted professional instinct against basic human emotion.

The campaign had faced long odds since its inception last fall and most of the paid staff joined the team aware of its underdog status, almost everyone putting their careers on hold and taking a substantial cut in salary to do so. They took this action because the candidate was more than a politician, statesman or lawyer, but a man who genuinely brought bold ideas and the courage of his convictions to the table; a brilliant man that placed as much emphasis on character as intellect. The candidate was like a pied piper, a polestar with a compass; one whose light was bright enough for all to see.

Now – following hundreds of political events and months of labor – with the grim reaper standing on the doorstep, the campaign’s resolve had only strengthened. It was that old hearts and minds thing. The candidate had a sense of fairness and justice that sought out America’s better angels while at the same time being passionate, tough-minded and relentless in selling it. To those loyal to him, his view of the world had balance and perspective when things were their most chaotic. Many considered his political precept - that government ought to represent every American face - as too radical and unrealistic, but he did not flinch from the idea or the ideal it reflected. He believed the system could be reformed without tearing it apart; that politics was life, an honorable endeavor and ought to be taken seriously. Somehow he managed to convey that perspective without taking himself too seriously.

The columnist who had delivered his opinion earlier that morning ended his piece by writing, “here is a man that embodies our best instincts and traditions, that rare political figure that acts as a man of thought and thinks as a man of action.”

Still, the reporter’s message was clear, and he based it upon a theory that had evolved through years on the campaign trail: for any candidate to win his party’s nomination for

president, two national political columnists must openly suggest that he can win while secretly wanting him to do so; and in addition, two national political reporters must think he can win. None did.

The would-be candidate gave an eloquent speech when he launched his bid for president in September. The remarks were delivered from the steps of Manhattan's Riverside Church and were literally and figuratively filled with prose and poetry, and hope. It began, "My name is Nicholas K. Stevenson and I am running for president," and ended with, "now let's roll up our sleeves and get to work."

III

Benjamin Russell Adams had arrived in Washington D.C. from Texas following graduation from Rice University and a five-year stint teaching English, History, and the science of hitting and fielding a baseball to sophomores at an inner-city high school in Houston. He was twenty-seven years old when he chose to leave teaching children and take a chance on politics.

Ben did not reach his decision lightly; he believed in education and learning, but he believed too - that one had an obligation to live life to the fullest. In order to do that he figured one had to pursue their potential, be on the outlook for grace, and take the small steps that have the opportunity to leave large footprints. One spring evening, two men - one a close friend and the other, someone he had never heard of before - encouraged him to take that crucial first step.

Ben Adams met his friend Jim Berry III at a place called the Stoneleigh P, a neighborhood watering hole that served cold beer and perhaps the best chili cheeseburger in Houston. His old college roommate, heir to a family banking fortune in New Orleans,

was in town on business and rather than meet over a fancy meal somewhere, the two pals preferred the place where they had held many late-night conversations on such subjects as lacrosse, baseball, women, politics, and books. Ben had always admired the way Jim Berry attacked and relished daily life.

“What’s it like?” Ben asked, having never been more than a couple of hundred miles outside of his home state, and knowing Jim Berry had traveled extensively and worked in Washington as an intern one summer during his college years. “I’m not going to know a soul and I’m wondering if you think I’ve completely lost my mind considering this? Few people are going to understand, certainly not my parents.”

“It is a physically beautiful and compelling town,” he said. “But unlike New York, Boston or even Houston, the city revolves around one thing, the business of big-time politics. You must know that going in.

“It is an easy place to lose perspective, but it has a familiar, Southern flavor and there are tons of Texans working there. You’ll run into very few native Washingtonians; some people have been there for years, but not many were born and raised there. Go – you can always come back home,” Jim Berry said.

“Do you remember what we used to asked ourselves when we faced difficult choices?”

“What Would Emerson Say (WWES)?” Ben said.

Jim Berry left to catch his plane back to New Orleans and Ben stayed behind at the Stoneleigh P. It was Monday, the day when the bar received its delivery of the Sunday New York Times and Washington Post. He pulled the newspapers from the rack and read articles in both about man named Nicholas Stevenson resigning as the Special

Ambassador to the United Nations. As fate would have it - when Ben returned home later that evening he stumbled upon a taped broadcast of Stevenson debating a Princeton professor on an issue involving the First Amendment. The passion and clarity of the man wearing black horn-rimmed glasses and a wrinkled dark suit intrigued him.

“I like that guy,” Ben said, aloud.

Ben honored his contract and tendered his resignation the day summer school ended in August. A few weeks later, he packed his car with a few belongings, some apprehensive comments from his parents, and dreams of working in Washington; he then headed out - traveling through Little Rock, Memphis and Richmond. Two days afterward, he arrived in Washington and found his way to the home of Carlton and Ernestine Keebler, where he rented a room. The place was located about a block behind the Supreme Court building in an area known as Capitol Hill and the next morning, armed with his one-page resume and some recommendations, he planned to knock on the doors of congressmen and senators, Democrats only of course, and ask them for a job.

That first day in town he walked and walked, ending up around midnight on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. One other person was there, sitting a few feet away. He looked vaguely familiar in his glasses, loosened necktie, and white shirt - the sleeves rolled up to the elbow.

“Hello,” Ben said.

“Hello.”

“Pardon me, but aren’t you Nicholas Stevenson?”

“Yes,” he said.

They talked for more than an hour and the ambassador gave Ben a name to call the following day. “There might be something on the horizon,” he said.

“So long Ben, it was a pleasure meeting you.”

“Thank you, sir.”

On the walk back to his rented room, Ben could not believe his good fortune.

IV

According to the lead Secret Service agent at the Los Angeles airport, the candidate and motorcade had departed the union rally and were set to arrive at the hanger area in about twenty minutes. Security had become tighter during the last few months due to a series of incidents and for the first time, Ben noticed that all the baggage to be placed on the campaign plane was lined up in grids on the tarmac. Ben’s bag was made of brown leather worn smooth by the travel. It had a shoulder strap, zipped across the top and had two small pouches on each side, perfect for someone that had changed locations as many times as he had during the last year.

“What are they doing with the bags?” a woman asked.

“It’s a new procedure ever since the ambassador received the death threat and a batch of Irish soda bread with nails embedded inside of it in New York last week,” Ben said.

“Oh,” she said. Linda Sawyer had led the advance team in San Francisco and in real life she was an Assistant U.S. Attorney stationed in Seattle, and a graduate of Stanford Law.

Ben said, “The dogs are used to search for explosives, among other things.”

About the same time the Secret Service agent brought out his dog for the bag check, the motorcade entered the airport through a back gate and began making its way toward

the plane. It was an impressive sight - the string of black cars and chartered press buses wedged between state and local law enforcement vehicles, traveling at an almost perfect pace. Two Los Angeles motorcycle police, their lights flashing in silence, led the way.

“I’m a bit nervous about your bag,” she said.

“Why?” Ben asked.

“Well, several of us celebrated after the event last night in San Francisco and a friend gave me a small amount of marijuana to take home. This morning someone had already carried my luggage to the car and I stuck the baggie inside of your bag sitting near the front door.

“A bag of dope is inside my bag?” Ben asked. “That brown bag –there?”

“Yes,” she said, the motorcade coming to a stop beside the plane.

When the dog bypassed Ben’s brown bag, he breathed again; but when he wheeled back and sat down beside it, his life flashed before his eyes and he figured if he were busted on the LAX tarmac in front of a candidate running for the most powerful office in the world, at least one hundred journalists, not to mention colleagues and friends – well, how could anyone begin to calculate the potential embarrassment?

“I’m history,” Ben thought.

The dog sat motionless as his handler approached, stroked his head and praised him. People begin unloading from the cars and buses in the motorcade, unaware of the frenzy that lay ahead; for Ben a long and enduring journey had suddenly become memorable for all the wrong reasons. The candidate emerged from his car along side one of the network anchors that had interviewed him on the way back to the airport from the rally. Linda

Sawyer and Ben watched the handler reach into the side pocket of the brown bag and retrieve a plastic baggie. Ben stepped forward.

“Hold on,” she said, grabbing his arm. “Give it a second”

“It’s my bag; I’ve got to try to head this off.”

“Wait,” she said, as the agent opened the bag and removed a small solid oval.

“What is that? Ben asked, looking to Linda Sawyer.

Turns out the agent had arbitrarily selected the bag to slip in a sample explosive as test run for the dog.

“All clear, load the bags,” the agent said.

Thirty minutes later, wheels were up and the campaign team was headed home. It had been some kind of year. “Please God – I am not a religious man, but help me be as good as my dog thinks I am,” he said, closing his eyes.

It was not the first time exhaustion had overtaken him recently. Later, Ben grabbed a cup of coffee and began to read selective passages from the journal he had started when he first arrived in Washington.

*13 August
Washington D.C.*

I met Nicholas Stevenson by chance last night at the Lincoln Memorial. My first impression – this is a smart and spirited man.

We spoke about life, art, politics and other things – of people from the sixties drifting and banging around, but coming back into orbit the better for it. Ambassador Stevenson said he did not know exactly what he wanted to do with himself until about the age of thirty-five and that by then he had built up such a head of steam, he is still moving forward. He said for the longest he felt as if he had wasted so much time, but that now he actually believes the experiences prepared him for the years that followed.

This morning, I called the number NS gave me last night and went for the interview. The person was a former staff member of the McGovern campaign and asked, “Is this what

you really want to do – work on the advance team?” My main concern was getting hired, and I told him – absolutely, even though I had no clue what that meant.

Iran is a major topic in the news. The nation has stopped oil imports recently and there are Americans, mostly diplomats, being held hostage there. Reagan announced for president today. For some reason, my emotions are scattered; I suspect I am trying to concentrate on too many things.

Books reading: To Kill A Mockingbird and In Dubious Battle.

Books pending (Political): The Advanceman, Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail, 85 Days, The Last Campaign of Robert Kennedy, A Preface To Morals.

Books pending (Other): War and Peace and Magic Mountain.

I've gotten a fresh start, but sense I am light years behind everyone – I've never read anything by Walter Lippman or Joseph Alsop, two names I heard for the first time today.

WWES: Patience is everything.

*21 August
Washington D.C.*

I was hired a few days ago and carried out my first presidential advance assignment this past weekend. For those of us still wet behind our political ears, it looks as if they will slot us with campaign veterans for the next few months. My instructions were to pack a couple of bags and not expect a day off until Christmas.

In the meantime, I am to drive Ambassador Stevenson everywhere. I don't know the city, but I am learning fast. I have maps and bet I've ask a thousand questions a day.

He sits in the front seat writing speeches and talking about things. But he also asks questions and listens well. I wonder if he ever sleeps, because he takes these five-minute naps on the fly and is completely rejuvenated afterwards. He just leans his head against the window and is out, then back at it. I've never seen anything like it.

My first advance assignment:

The two leads for the event were Bill Herman, a lawyer from the State Department and Al Barrie, a reporter that helped Bob Woodward with a couple of his books, and from all accounts, has a bright future with the Washington Post.

We worked the AFL-CIO meeting at the Sheraton Washington Hotel on Saturday. Ambassador Stevenson spoke at noon and later, met privately with George Meany, the

head of the AFL-CIO. I could not believe I was in the same room – this is good stuff, sort of like sitting at courtside during a pro basketball game, where the sounds make things even more interesting.

Later in the day NS addressed a group called Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) at the Mayflower Hotel, where he received a standing ovation. It was if he were preaching to the choir.

On Sunday, we advanced a fundraising event at Senator Ted Kennedy's home in Virginia. All went well except the chartered buses completely wiped out the senator's front flowerbeds when they attempted to turn around in his driveway. Herman told me later to pay heed to the first rule of advance work - Murphy's Law – what can go wrong, will go wrong.

He also suggested that an advancement man can never do enough.

WWES: The true scholar understands they can learn from everyone.

*23 September
Phoenix, Arizona*

The early morning sunrise today was gorgeous – the sides of the mountains were pink and orange. I took a run and stumbled across an old, beautiful school called Phoenix Union High School; it struck me their football stadium had stands only on one side of the field. As expected, things were quiet this early in the day, except for a strange sounding echo. I followed the sound and found two young Native Americans playing one-wall handball outside the gates; they had their shirts off and their skin glistened with beads of sweat.

I cannot believe the number of hours we work each day; my stamina is being tested.

WWES: Labor is good.

*6 October
Hartselle, Alabama*

Ambassador Stevenson traveled to Hartselle, the hometown of Senator John Sparkman. The event at the civic center was one of many honoring the man elected to the U.S. Senate in the year I was born.

We had a good event, well advanced. Two students from the Communist Workers Party disrupted the proceedings briefly; they were protesting a recent civil rights incident in Greensboro, NC, and the nation's foreign policy in the Middle East. Secret Service

agents hustled the young man and woman out of the building and interrogated them, but the candidate did not press matters.

Several of the state's more recognizable political figures – George Wallace, Howell Heflin, and Morris Dees, among others - were on stage with the senator and ambassador. So were Norman Lear, Ethel and Bobby Kennedy, Jr., and the current president's mother.

Later, we toured a chemical munitions plant that Sen. Sparkman persuaded the Army to locate in Alabama back in the 1950s. No doubt, the man has delivered for his state during his years of service. Afterward, the ambassador departed for events in Cleveland and Pittsburgh. This was one of thirteen stops today and sometimes I wonder how he keeps up with where he is.

The advance team returned to Hartselle and ate some awfully good fried catfish at a honky-tonk on the river. The next morning we were fogged in at the airport, waiting on our flight to Gainesville, Florida.

WWES: Game of human life – of love, fear, justice, and the appetite of the human race. The near can explain the far, if we allow it to.

Ben looked away from the pages and closed the small notebook. Perhaps he should have written more about each place during the past months, but time was a factor in political campaigns and particularly in advance work; one discovered quickly they really can never do enough. Still, each line held a memory.

The ambassador's views differed from most politicians in the arena these days and he welcomed the opportunity to debate his ideas with anyone. To Ben and others that were dedicated to his run, it was if he breathed mountain air while his opponents breathe air that was thick and fat. He spoke privately with the advance team about the two protestors in Alabama shortly after the incident occurred; it did not alarm him nor did he consider their actions unpatriotic.

“It is the reason we fight for freedom at every turn,” he said, taking things a step further.

“Take the man that burned the flag on the steps of the U.S. Capitol yesterday. Although as a veteran I find it personally distasteful, I believe he has every right to do it. The tolerance for ideas and opinions different than our own and the willingness to let them breathe freely, makes us stronger rather than weaker. The same goes for our cultural and ethnic differences.

“Our Constitution is a strong and just document,” he said. “My hope is for our individual constitution to be as equally strong.”

V

During the years, Nicholas Stevenson had been characterized as a quixotic loser, a compulsive peripatetic, and a political man without a country. Ben characterized him as a generous man with a sense of honor, an eye for the truth, and a set of principles that staked out the right conduct, regardless of the consequences. His voice spoke for others: the feelings of a child, the ballad of the street, the news of the ship, the meaning of ordinary life. To Ben the ambassador’s message and actions were as strong as the silent song of the stars.

In the second paragraph of his announcement speech the candidate quoted an Egyptian writer that he admired: “Must a politician that belongs heart and soul to a society, share their concerns? Yes, if he wishes to express something of that society. Without being directly part of people’s lives, his work would have been subjective, centered upon his own feelings, likes and dislikes. He would be his own society.”

Nicholas Stevenson was born in Brooklyn, New York. He attended Yale, where he starred in the classroom and student senate, and for the wrestling team. Later, he became a teacher, soldier, advisor, author, political activist, diplomat and politician. Through it all

he earned many friends and a top-ten spot on the Nixon enemies list. Young people flocked to him when he visited college campuses; perhaps because he remained optimistic, more a skeptic than a cynic, and a tireless worker for the underdog – after all, he had been one his entire life.

Ben returned to his journals:

*22 December
Cedar Rapids, Iowa*

We've been in Iowa for ten days now and I have never been so cold. The issues center primarily upon farming, energy availability and independence, and abortion. The politics are retail.

Iowa has a ninety-nine percent literacy rate, several top-flight universities, and an outstanding newspaper in Des Moines. And due to some early German influences, the state is on the cutting edge in area of mental health.

The Iowa caucuses are a unique way to begin the nominating process, yet they are a fair test of the candidate's strengths. Doing well here is more a function of a quality organization than in a primary state, and it provides the underdog candidate with an opportunity to break into the game, if his ideas catch on and his supporters vote.

Our basic job as an advance team is to do everything possible to help the field organization in their efforts, to build audiences for the candidate in the state and ultimately, beyond.

Most everyone is in need of a short break and today I received word that I can travel home to Texas for Christmas. I barley made my plane, which made five stops – Cedar Rapids, Moline, Dallas, Austin and home.

WWES: Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string.

*28 December
Iowa City*

I had a super Christmas. As usual, I enjoyed being home with my family for the Holidays, even though the visit was short. I noticed I was more geared up than I realized from the pace of the campaign. Friends came down from Austin, and my sister brought her roommate home. Politics and Christmas cheer – what a cocktail.

On our return today, we rose early (4 am) and the candidate shook hands with union workers changing and arriving for their shifts at a plant gate outside of town. I am amazed at two things here: the access to the candidates by voters, and secondly, how many kids have a wrestling headgear tacked to their walls rather than football pennants.

The vote is less than a month away and the candidate is being hit hard on the abortion issue. He is good on the stump, and getting better.

WWES: The true scholar is no cloistered bookworm; he takes part in the affairs of the world.

*2 January
Carroll, Iowa*

Today is my first opportunity to lead an advance team and Kent Roberts, our boss in Washington called me at my hotel room at three in the morning to discuss the event. He yelled and pushed like always, but he makes us a better team. That makes for a better campaign – I believe that. I sort of like his way. He and a friend helped start Rolling Stone magazine.

Catholic school enrollment in Carroll is larger than in the public schools, yet nearly a third of the town came to hear the ambassador's views. Good thing Roberts mentioned something about an overflow room for a larger than expected crowd.

The candidate bolted from his Secret Service detail, much to their chagrin, and shook hands with every last person in the room before he boarded the plane for Marshalltown. He was one hour late for the fundraising dinner there and I got a good butt chewing – Roberts said I showed little respect for the next team and that I had to be more aggressive in keeping the candidate on schedule.

WWES: Remember Murphy' Law; humility is good.

*14 - 17 January
Creston, Iowa*

I have been loaned to the field operation in southwestern Iowa through caucus night. It is a mad scramble to the finish line, and almost all of the advance team has been farmed out.

The field director once worked in the White House and is former Muskie staffer. I flushed several pheasant beside the road today on the drive down. They were large and colorful birds, real beauties as they sailed on a low trajectory out of the snow.

Later: I must say one of the best experiences so far are the people that open their hearts, minds and homes to us. The candidate's sister came to town today and we leafleted workers at the Jimmy Dean Sausage plant this morning.

I'm no longer a rookie. Stevenson lost Iowa 59-31 last night and there is no time for regret - we're off to New Hampshire.

WWES: Sometimes, my pen refuses to spell.

VI

“What do you think I should do about the campaign?” he asked

“I hope you push on,” Ben said, pulling the car to the curb by the shuttle gate.

“By the way, that event at the dairy farm outside of Lincoln, Nebraska, last week was one of my favorites of the campaign,” he said. “It was amazing wasn't it?”

“What was, sir?” Ben asked.

“The fresh lilacs the woman had on the table, where we sat and talked. The name of the family was Rockenbach, right?”

“Marie and LaVerne,” Ben said.

“Have we written them?”

“Yes sir.”

“Thanks Ben, I'll see you sometime tomorrow.”

“Good luck, sir.”

VII

The candidate lost the primary in New Hampshire 49-38, and the defeat delivered the campaign to the brink of political disaster. It was difficult to run any campaign without money and support, and both elements are a function of winning; and winning elections was tricky business with momentum being a critical factor in the process.

The man that waited for Ambassador Stevenson at his law office in New York that morning was a former protégé; a man he first met during the civil rights movement in the sixties, but whom he had lost contact with for almost a decade. Without warning and from close range, the man emptied the contents of a .357 magnum into the ambassador's body. Nicholas Stevenson passed away at the scene. At his trial, the defendant testified the CIA had hidden listening devices in the fillings of his teeth.

At the memorial services on Lexington Avenue in New York, the crowd overflowed into the avenues and side streets. Friends of all political persuasions spoke about their friend that cared so much about others, and the man that left behind a wife, two sons and a daughter. None could make sense of the violence that gripped American life. Kent Robbins selected Ben to advance the event.

Ben Adams moved back to Texas and for the longest time felt as if he had arrived at the train station just after the Orient Express had left the platform. He considered graduate school, the Peace Corps, among other things, but eventually returned to the classroom. Today, he is a member of the Houston City Council, and last month decided to announce his own candidacy for a seat in the U.S. Congress.

Some of the old gang will help him with the race, but he felt a strong obligation to travel to Washington and tell his friend about the decision; to ask his advice. Like the ambassador always said, you never want to get caught in the cotton candy. As Ben rose to leave Arlington that day, he read the inscription on the marker beside the grave:

*“If a single man plants himself on his convictions and there abide,
the huge world will come around him.”*

A letter was found inside Nicholas Stevenson's coat jacket on the day of the assassination. It was from the Egyptian writer he had quoted in his announcement speech and in part said, "Skepticism can be a useful tool in the search for understanding, or it can become an end to itself. Others will disagree, but if one starts at point zero rather than parrot or accept what others say...one can arrive at their own beliefs and conclusions. You have the skepticism of a scholar and not a cynic."

WWES: I believe he would agree.