

Stout's thoughts at the time. Stout himself had lost some friends over his own support of the Vietnam War and Nixon's war policies; yet he would not back down. He believed in the war and its aims. But equally steadfast was his anger and willingness to cast Nixon into the outer darkness over the subverting of the Constitution. Whatever Stout believed, he believed with passion.

So I leave you with the "Nixon book." It makes a fine companion piece, should you choose to link them, to another of his later novels, *The Doorbell Rang*, which is the "J. Edgar Hoover book." Taking on Hoover and the FBI may have required even more of a damn-the-consequences attitude on Stout's part. But most important, he is a novelist always in character himself, taking on both Hoover and Nixon toward the latter part of his life and sending them both packing.

Stout is dead. Long live Stout and what he stood for. Great writing is always more than what it appears to be at first look. With that admonition I leave you to it. Pay attention!

—Thomas Gifford