own with anyone, be they politician or plumber, lawyer or laborer, cleric or clerk. Perhaps even more importantly, you do it all with warmth and caring. For my own part, as much as I admire, respect, and am in awe of you, you're also an extraordinarily hard act to follow. You make it all look so easy, but of course it isn't. Despite your now 81 years, you still come across as youthful and enthusiastic, with a boy's charm and a young man's apetite to make each

April 6, 2017

Dear Dad,

It occurs to me that you, too, are now a "merchant of words." But on reflection, you always have been. Increasingly, I've come to appreciate how brilliant you are. As I think back over hundreds of conversations, your grasp of history, politics, literature, and your ability to pull it all together, is extraordinary. And as I read your book, there is that ability evidenced in print. I think of your abilities as a racanteur – able to more than hold your

moment count. You're a blessing to all who know you, and to your family most of all. You poo-poo our appreciation, but I hope you know how deeply felt it is. If the world is indeed divided between "life enhancers" and "life diminishers," you alone have made up for any lack in several of the latter. You deserve no less than twenty more years of happy and healthy birthdays and all the days between them.

Love, Mark

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