

One of the more literate Nixonians and a continuing defender despite himself having been bugged when in the White House without rhyme or reason is William A. Safire. Safire became a New York Times columnist. His capitulation column '8/12/74) missed the inherent and lingering paranoia of why Safire, defender to the end, called Nixon's "epitaph:" "...those who hate you don't win unless you hate them - and then you destroy yourself." Of this curse upon his world of enemies Safire said it "showed that the underlying lesson of Watergate had finally sunk in."

However, elsewhere Safire did understand, as did others, when there was nothing left to hide or protect except the continuing ^{official cover} ~~cover~~-up, which remained unexposed. When Nixon capitulated to what had become the inevitable, it was less embarrassment to his loyalists to admit what they had understood all along but all along had staunchly refused to say, electing loyalty to a political figure whose imagined beliefs were close to their own over loyalty to the obligations of writers to inform the people.

Safire said it well in two ~~sentences~~ paragraphs he might better have written earlier and could have because it was obvious save to those who would not see:

"In retrospect, all the maneuvers his supporters considered so ill-advised in establishing his innocence gain an intelligent pattern when viewed as a means of preventing revelation of his guilt. He 'knew'; he knew that there was proof ~~of~~ that he 'knew'; and all his actions for the last year, from the firing of Archibald Cox to the rejection of subpoenas in the ~~falsely~~-based appeal to the Supreme Court were absolutely consistent.

"No wonder, then, he would allow no lawyer to listen to the tapes; he was stalling for time and playing for breaks, and on such a course there was nobody he could trust without making him a co-conspirator. Mr. Nixon was never indecisive, never floundered, as so many of us had anguished: his plan was to protect the tapes at all costs, and their cost was all."

To the bitter end - and the end was bitter- the bitter-enders defended themselves and in condemning Nixon for too little they condemned him less than personal honor and integrity demanded. It was not Nixon's "actions for the last year" but his actions for the more than two years of The Watergate agony. From the first, Nixon "knew" not "from the firing of Archibald Cox," which was less than a year earlier, but from the moment his men were caught and his and his others began a systematic series of interrelated criminal acts to obstruct justice.

Bitter end for a Safire means not drinking the cup.

In the evidence Nixon had to release himself - and it was effective in ending further revelations that would have been more revelatory, even more incriminating - ~~was~~ there were at most less than a week of that more than two years before Nixon, personally, began committing what Nixon, personally, knew to be criminal acts. The June 23, 1972 tapes is overwhelming proof of conspiracy, of obstructing justice and of misprison of a felony.

In the bitterness of his end Saffire synthesizes a sort of principle not unlike "afia loyalty for his guttered hero. It is, of course, true that "there was nobody he could trust without making him a co-conspirator." But this was ~~only~~ not to be loyal to those he would trust, to protect them from becoming part of his crime. By the time John Dean went to jail on September 3, 1974, he was the 14th of those ^{jailed} who served had ~~been~~ and had remained faithful to Nixon until he alone had made it impossible for them to continue. Keeping secrets from Dean did not keep Dean from become a co-conspirator. It guaranteed that Dean would become and continue to be a criminal. Nixon alone made a criminal of the willing Dean whose willingness was not selfishness but was loyalty to a trusted leader.

In avoiding making otherd co-conspirators Nixon was not being an honorable man. His sole interest was in protecting himself no matter how many others paid the price for him. He had less principle than the average common street-crime criminal.

So, when Nixon finally admitted that Nixon was guilty, his defenders who had protected him from the consequences of his guilt hailed him as a principled man and admitted what they finally had no alternative but to admit, that he was guilty but of less than he had already admitted; that he "knew" he was guilty of of so much less that he and they both knew he had been guilty of longer than the Saffire's admitted.

Nixon in disgrace had the red rug rolled out for him as he flew off to his imagined Vlahalla. The Saffires, in their disgrace, rolled the printed red rug out not for him but for themselves, to hide themselves from themselves and to pretend that they, too, were unaware only "because of all the maneuvers" only "so ill-advised in establishing his innocence." in which his "supporters" had faith.

naked
When their/emperor strutted in what he proclaimed the most beautiful of raiment
imagined
they revealed in his and its/beauty. He said he was beautiful, they said he was beautiful.

And once their naked emperor could no longer avoid saying he was as naked as he had been all along, they lamented he had abused their trust in saying he was so magnificently decked out, that they had not seen he was naked, that he had deceived them.

Evans and Kovak did the same thing. (Column of 8/7/74, Post) They found that "The tumultuous anger of the House Republican cloakroom" was "matched by silent despair inside the White House stemming from a common source: All had been betrayed and deceived by the President."

General Haig, who had been firing it for so long, they claimed had not known of that "smoking gun" of Nixon's personal guilt until ~~three days~~ ^{a week} before they wrote that column.

It simply wasn't true.

It was not Nixon who had betrayed them. It is they who bet^{er}trayed the country to keep in power a man they had to know was guilty of many crimes. He did not deceive them. He merely made it possible for them to continue to deceive themselves while they, espousing what they saw as his ^{political} beliefs, continued with him, as Saffire put it, "was stalling for time and praying for breaks."

Their guilt and their guilty knowledge was not dependent upon his confession. It is not his confession that made them aware of all the crimes of which each in his way was part whether or not strictly criminally guilty under the United States Code. Their ethical and moral guilt is as offensive as their legal guilt. His confession merely made it impossible to pretend any longer that he was not guilty. Then each, to protect himself, alleged the betrayal of loyalty and faith.

Thus each hid himself from himself, his guilt from his own recognition of it, and pretended a non-existent, a totally impossible innocence from a betrayed trust. They had not been "deceived by the President," as Evans and Kovak tried to explain away their personal and special guilt. Nor had they deceived themselves. Even Dean was

aware from the very beginning that what he was doing was criminal. He was man enough to admit it and not to blame it on Nixon. He did not deceive himself and the others and he was not deceived by Nixon. They needed no "smoking gun." The realities of their official lives denied them ignorance and the innocence they could claim by innocence, that he "had betrayed and deceived" them.

They are the deceivers, they the betrayers.

Their responsibility is not ~~xxx~~ to a man but to a nation and a trust. They deceived the nation, they betrayed their trust.

Blaming in on Nixon was their final betrayal of the public trust, their latest deception.

It is the deceit and the betrayal of trust that each practised in putting the protection of a criminal if not a dangerous ill President in the day of nuclear power ahead of all else that endangered the nation more than did the crimes they conspired to hide.

Without this from so vast a number, the nation would have been spared the agony of more than two years of The Watergate and the terrible suffering it made more terrible because it was perpetuated. Without this the economic disaster inevitable when all of federal power is bent on protecting a guilty President would or at least could have been avoided. Nixon would not have been able to make all those ruinous deals to keep himself in power and the economy need not have gone to hell.

No, Waldeman's gun had smoked for almost a year when Haig took it in his own hands. There was no innocence for Haig, and the man junior ~~Nixon~~ Haigs. They knew what they were doing and they did what they did from a dedication to the authoritarianism they preferred and a Nixon symbolized to them. It was their hope, not their betrayer or deceiver.

Their guilt is personal. It rests on their shoulders, not Nixon's, as it should on their consciences.

Their intent was not to protect the nation. It was to change the order/ as they could no other way. This may to them have been service to their principles and hopes but it was not service to the nation.