

AS EVERYONE knows, there are two Richard Nixons, the "old" Nixon and the "new" Nixon. It is not generally known that just before the presidential campaign got under way, the two Nixons had a bitter fight at a strategy meeting in Miami Beach. The "old" Nixon was told he was no longer needed, that the Republicans had decided if they were going to win in 1968 they were going to have to go with the "new" Nixon.

"You can't do this to me," the "old" Nixon cried. "I've given the best years of my life to the Party and you can't throw me out now."

A Republican strategist said gently, "We're not throwing you out, Dick, but you had your chance before and you blew it. If you blow it again, it could mean the end of the Republican Party. We can't take that chance."

"What does the 'new' Nixon know about politics?" shouted the "old" Nixon. "Does he know how to get in there and fight? Does he know how to hit them in the groin and knock them over the head? Does he know how to accuse them of being soft on communism and squishy on Vietnam and disrespected all over the world? Can he slug it out toe-to-toe?"

"No, Dick, that's exactly what the Democrats expect us to do. But we're not going to play their game. We're going to talk about the forgotten man who works and pays his taxes and we're going to talk about how wonderful it is to live in the suburbs and how nice it is to go to the seashore in the summertime."

THE "OLD" NIXON jumped to his feet and yelled, "What kind of campaign is that? You have to go for the jugular. Nice guys finish last."

The "new" Nixon said, "Sit down, Dick, and listen carefully. This is a unique election situation. We don't have to attack the Democrats because they're going to make mincemeat out of

each other. In order for Humphrey to get anywhere in the election he's going to have to attack Lyndon Johnson's policies in Vietnam. Then to defend himself Lyndon Johnson is going to have to attack Hubert Humphrey. Gene McCarthy will attack both of them, and all we have to do is sit back and talk about crabgrass in the United States."

"It's too risky," the "old" Nixon said. "You'll bore the heck out of the people. The public doesn't want a 'new' Nixon. They want the 'old' Nixon they used to kick around all the time. They're used to me and they know what to expect. You throw another Nixon at them now and they'll go out and vote for George Wallace."

ONE OF THE Republican strategists said, "Dick, you know that I have more respect for the 'old' Nixon than anybody in this room. But times have changed and we need a fresh image, someone, and I have to be frank now, who can make the voter forget the 'old' Nixon."

The "old" Nixon pointed

his finger at the "new" Nixon and screamed, "He's out to get my job. Do you think he could ever get the goods on Alger Hiss or debate the cold war with Khrushchev in a kitchen, or get pelted with rotten vegetables in South America? You bet your sweet life he couldn't. Now, after all I've done, old Tricky Dick is getting the heave-ho from the Party."

The "new" Nixon said sadly, "I'm sorry you had to bring it down to personalities, Dick. I was hoping that because of what the Party means to you that you would support me and get behind me, if not for my sake, then for Ike's."

The "old" Nixon stared at the floor and one of the men said, "We still need you, Dick. You could play a big part in this election. We can use your tactics and your experience in gut fighting."

The "old" Nixon said finally, "What do you want me to do?"

"Will you become Spiro Agnew's campaign manager?"

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Art Buchwald

'Old' Nixon Confronts the 'New' —And Comes Off Second Best