

The Nixon record reveals that he has not changed

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by Brickman

WASHINGTON—When Richard Nixon ran for the Presidency four years ago, he benefited from the political equivalent of the statute of limitations.

It was tiresome, everyone agreed, to keep bringing up all that old stuff about how Nixon distorted Jerry Voorhis's record in 1946 or how he and Murray Cho-

WILLIAM V. SHANNON

tinier smeared Helen Gahagan Douglas as pro-Communist in the Senate Campaign in 1950.

Since Joe McCarthy was in his grave, did it really matter anymore all the nice things Nixon used to say about him or that he borrowed and refined so many of his techniques?

Newest of the new

So it was that in 1968 the newest of the many new Nixons was allowed to strike a statesmanlike pose. Voters forgot his brutal misdeeds of the 1940s and 1950s.

But, of course, veteran politicians rarely alter their character or their convictions. Like the rest of us, they are what they are and can hardly begin being much different at age 55. So Nixon has been the kind of President that everything in his earlier career had foreshadowed.

Nixon was elected on a "pledge" to end the war, but voters might have done better to recall that in 1954 he had urged American intervention to save the French in Vietnam and that as recently as 1967 he was saying that Vietnam was "the cork in the bottle of Chinese expansion." We might then have been able to foresee that under Nixon another 20,000 Americans would die in Vietnam, that today the Paris peace talks would still be stalled, that more bombs than ever would be falling on Vietnam, and that

the war would still be on the front pages.

Character assassination

Or consider character assassination. In 1952, Nixon denounced the members of the Truman Administration for their failure to stand up to Communist China. He described Governor Stevenson as "Adlai the appeaser... who got a Ph. D. from Dean Acheson's College of Cowardly Communist Containment."

In 1969, the same Nixon sent Vice President Agnew out to defame Averell Harriman. In 1972, he sent H.R. Halde- man, his White House chief of staff, on a television interview show to say that Sen. Edmund Muskie and other critics were "consciously aiding and abetting the enemy"—a very slight paraphrase of the constitutional definition of treason.

Klein against Muskie

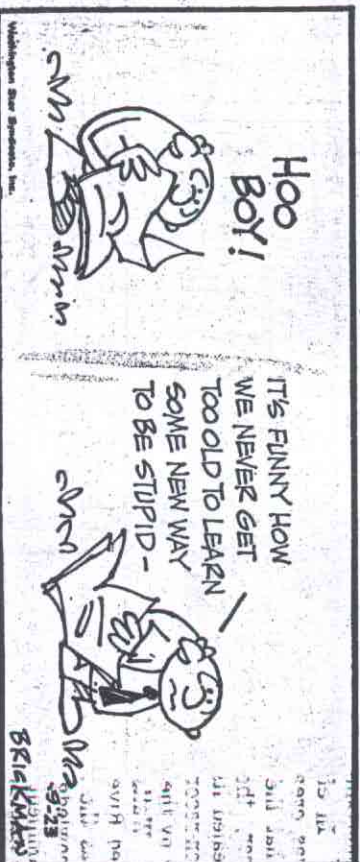
Then he had Herbert Klein, his director of communications, characterize Muskie as "bolting beyond the bounds of criticism and dissent."

Having orchestrated this smear campaign, Nixon naturally then came forward, wringing his hands, and said, "I do not question the patriotism or the sincerity of those who disagree with my policies to bring peace..."

In 1966, Vice President Nixon took par-tisan credit for the Supreme Court's school desegregation decision. It had, he said, "been achieved under the leadership of 'a great Republican justice, Earl Warren.'"

Political field day

The man who made that remark became the President who has turned every Supreme Court vacancy into a political



field day. When the Senate quite properly refused to confirm G. Harrold Carswell of Florida for the Supreme Court, Nixon distorted a question of personal incompetence into "an act of regional discrimination."

"I understand the bitter feeling of millions of Americans who live in the South," Nixon declared, presumably hoping to profit from any "bitterness" he could whip up.

Secret campaign funds

In his first national campaign in 1952, Nixon was shown to be the beneficiary of a secret \$18,000 fund subscribed by a clique of Southern California businessmen. Twenty years later he begins this campaign as the beneficiary of a secret \$10 million fund subscribed by wealthy donors whose names he refuses to divulge.

Nixon entered political life with political lawyer Murray Chotiner as his gray eminence. In 1956, a Senate investigation showed that Chotiner was engaged in influence peddling. He seemed to recede into the background, and in 1958, Mr.

Nixon told Stewart Alsop, "It was a tragedy that he (Chotiner) had to get involved in the kind of law business that does not mix with politics."

So did Chotiner

Tragic or otherwise, when Nixon arrived in the White House so did Chotiner. He is busy in Washington today practicing the "kind of law business" he always has, doing secret political chores for the President and acting as a conduit for hot political money from the dairy lobby and other special interests. With him in the Nixon entourage are a number of other political fixers, wiretapping henchmen, and propaganda peddlers, as seedy a crowd as ever surrounded any chief executive.

In the 1950s, young Mr. Nixon was imitating Joe McCarthy and playing for the McCarthyite vote. In the 1970s, mature President Nixon is imitating George C. Wallace and playing for the Wallaceite vote.

Four more years?

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