

NORMAN W. GEORGE
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Plano, Texas 75074

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Dear Mr. Weisberg:

I've just completed Case Open, and I must say it is a breath of fresh air in an atmosphere stagnated by the smell of the "Little Wall Street Lawyer" Posner! Once again, those of us seeking the truth owe you an immense debt.

Your comments on revisionist history were also right on the mark. I'm sure you read the enclosed article already. It only echoes the comments you have made.

I'm currently working on some computer enhancements of the backyard photos, particularly Warren Commison's 133A. It's been done to death, but I've found some most interesting features concerning the hands. Well, one more look can't hurt, huh?

We, of the Dallas Research community will deeply miss Larry Howard. Mr. Howard was always a willing source of information and sounding board for any theories.

Mr. Weisberg, I have a question: You commented on the fact that there is a record that Oswald had a Top Secret, Crypto Security Clearance. All I have read has indicated only a "confidential" clearance, the lowest of all security clearances. Can you shed any light on these new facts for me?

Also I'm looking for your Never Again, has it been published yet?

Thanks again for all your good work.


Norman

VIEWPOINTS

Revisionist history renders Nixon



**ANNA
QUINDLEN**

Nixon won.

Wednesday he was laid to rest amid a wave of revisionist history that has rendered him almost unrecognizable, like one of those pastel portraits done by street artists, all the harsh features smoothed away, designed to flatter and to sell.

He had read his own obituary once, in the newspapers of Aug. 9, 1974, and it was not nearly so nice. Smart as he was, perhaps he set about to alter it. In two decades, he succeeded.

In the days after his death, politicians,

It is difficult not to imagine that the last 20 years of his life had been leading up to this week, this moment.

And as he had so many times before, against all odds, with many setbacks, Richard

commentators and ordinary citizens were full of praise.

They spoke of his detente with the Soviets and the opening of China to the West. They somehow forgot the bombings of North Vietnam and Cambodia, the thousands upon thousands of Americans and even more Vietnamese who died in the senseless war he had promised to end and instead prolonged.

They spoke of his ability to come back after crushing defeats and his wise counsel as an elder statesman. They somehow forgot how he tried to destroy Daniel Ellsberg by digging up dirt on the man who had leaked the Pentagon Papers, and how his rigidity and demagoguery helped widen rifts in the deeply divided nation he had pledged to bring together.

They spoke of how indomitably he had worked his way back from disgrace. They somehow forgot how very much he had to expiate.

They forgot how he ordered a halt to the FBI investigation just days after the

Watergate burglary, how he privately suggested paying hush money to the burglars but publicly denied any involvement in a cover-up.

They forgot his attempts to subvert due process in the Saturday Night Massacre, to stonewall investigators seeking the tapes he'd made of his Oval Office conversations.

They forgot the unexplained 18-minute gap on one of those tapes.

"When the president does it," he said afterward, "that means it is not illegal."

And they forgot how his actions fomented a cynicism about government that endures to the present and has transformed the American character, perhaps forever.

In an effort to avoid speaking ill of the dead, many lied by omission in remembering Mr. Nixon, turning Watergate into a subordinate clause. Only that television hard guy Sam Donaldson captured the surrealism of all this when he told former Sen. Howard Baker, "in listening to you discuss President Nixon, I almost

almost unrecognizable

forget that there was a Watergate."

Only an anonymous caller to CNN captured the tenor of times past when he said: "Richard Nixon was responsible for the deaths of every man, woman and child in Vietnam from January 1969 until he resigned in disgrace. He also killed four of my brothers and sisters at Kent State, and he did all of this in the name of law and order while he and his henchmen were breaking every law in the land."

The former president was a complex man whose record of accomplishment in office was considerable and whose personality was often unreadable. But his complexity has been smoothed out in the remembering, replaced with encomiums and evasions. His family and his friends will remember him fondly.

But because his personal history is our national history, we must remember him accurately.

The microfilm tells the truth of the enormity of the trauma of August 1974. My colleague Anthony Lewis wrote then

of Mr. Nixon: "He denied his country the empathy and release it desired. For he made clear he had not changed. He was still trying to escape reality."

And an editorial in the *Arkansas Gazette* thundered, "Now Richard Nixon's name will live in obloquy, at least pending some distant work of revisionists which challenges the imagination."

In death he has done both, escaped reality and challenged the imagination with a portrait — eked out over the years in political exile through his own tenacity, political savvy and hard work — that softens and shades, conceals and refines.

Such a denouement serves him well, but history very poorly indeed. The misdeeds of ordinary men can be buried with them, and their lives described in half-truths that are really half-lies. But not a public man. Particularly not this one.

Anna Quindlen writes for the New York Times.

