

Add on p. 5, GL's last)o bomb Niorea from Tris Coffin notes

Conclusion: A Gamy Without Ecstasy

It takes a special kind of man to have a career like Nixon's. Beginning with his Congressional witch-hunting career, which also required a special kind of character, a willingness to credit the irrational coming from the irrational. A man of scruple, a man both balanced and genuinely principled, could not possibly have hunted^{down} the American he didn't like simply for personal gain or from dislike of their beliefs the way Nixon and those who preceded him did. I had personal experience with those he copied. And this is one of the clues to Nixon - he is a copier, or words and of ideas. He is not a man of original thought or concepts. I knew them well enough to be on a first-name basis with several. I knew their methods because they tried to frame me to get at someone else they didn't like and because I was writing a book exposing them. That effort ended in what I believe to be the only conviction of any agent of any Congressional watchhunting committee. As a felon, the way Nixon ended.

While a man may be without conscience and not be irrational, Nixon so exceeded the excesses of those he copied from the beginning of his career I wondered if he, as he was later to put it, really had his head screwed on. He did what was without crooked all his life. His "Checkers" speech was prompted by his getting caught with his hand in the till. Yet he could thereafter make his accusers the crooks, himself the victim, wrap himself in the flag, trample on his children and their dog and even flaunt his wife's alleged cloth coat all to make it seem that he, the guilty, was the victim of forces of evil, that he and he alone was pure in mind and in act. Even then he almost blew it with an indignant telegram to Eisenhower that only the toughgutter Murray Chotiner prevented by interception. Had Ike received that telegram, what Nixon pulled with his stomach-turning speech would have been blown forever.

We thus owe The Watergate and all it has meant and will mean to the Chotiner who went to his reward during it.

No man not insane or not indecent could have red-baited the anti-Communists Kerry Voorhis and Helen Gahagan Douglas the way Nixon did. And no man not completely without any vestige of concern for truth could have laid "20 years of treason" to Truman and his party only to later be the one to officially ally himself with those he then called enemies.

the China to which he made pilgrimage and recognized, the first American resident to do that, and the Russia that was his particular personal enemy for all his prior career, then to boast of his "friendship" with those foreign leaders who were merely using him as he was using them in his extremity of need. He had no other accomplishment in his Presidency. And they were the same countries with the same principles he had professed to detest all his life.

The changes were not in China and Russia. The changes were in Nixon's preception of Nixon's survival needs. For his own survival then he launched the nation into an acute economic crisis, converting it almost overnight from a land of plenty into a land of shortages, a land in which almost as quick as he could boast how great he was prices doubled.

For all his career, for these reasons, I was a Nixon watcher. For all his sc career I could not help but wonder if this man were not, in addition to being uncontaminated by scruple and principle, not also irrational.

It is easy to mistake the overt signs. Nixon comes accross as a great ego, forever boasting, is always awkwardly, ~~xxxxxxx~~ of great accomplishments that are no accomplish-ments at all. He seems to be an overblown and undercontrolled ego. That, I think, is not the case.

His accomplishments that he foever boasted, through all The Watergate crisis, for all the world as though having done something not bad meant that he could not ^{do} and had not done anything bad.

The war in Vietnam did not stop. He pulled Americans from active participation years too late, delaying it until it was a means of fostering his reelection. It is something he could have done the day he took office. It was also ienvitable. The terms on which he settled were not better and in all probability not as good as were available the day he became President. And he did not end that continuing war, a war that no foreign power could or can end. It is a civil,war in which he played a major part by being part of the Dulles Red-devils policy that caused it initially.

Reconigition of China and detente with the USSR were the objectives of those countries. All that kept these necessary developments from comong to pass earlier was the opposition

of Nixon and those to whom he gave leadership. Kennedy had been groping toward it and had made getting out of Vietnam his policy before he was assassinated. Those in the Kennedy White House, particularly Arthur Schlesinger in his 1000 Days and Theodore Sorensen in his Kennedy Spell out in fine detail how Kennedy was terrified of the political consequences of negotiating the first military detente with the Russians. It is called the "limited Test Ban Agreement. It followed immediately upon the Cuba Missile Crisis of October 1962. Checking the indexes to these two books will show the ~~xxx~~ Kennedy fear of attempting this halting first step because of the political consequences he expected, the opposition especially in the Senate, from those led by Nixon. Nixon, who Kennedy had defeated, was head of the opposition party. Spiritually and politically he was also the leader of those most vocal in opposing any normalization of international relations, in any detente between the greatest powers.

His accomplishments, then, consist entirely of Nixon ending his opposition to the natural development in natural forces to serve all international interests. No more. He merely stopped making impossible what all the world needed. But even that he brought brought about as a national economic disaster.

The more I watched Nixon, who is my own age, the more I became convinced that he is a man ~~and through his entire life has been~~ through his entire lifetime to whom truth and honesty are the plagues of mankind. This may seem stark and unkind to those who have not watched him, but the example of Checkers serves to illustrate. Here he was taking money secretly and illegally while he was barnstorming the land calling for driving the crooks out of Washington. Over the gift of an inexpensive ~~cheap~~ household freezer insignificant in value compared with his hidden take. And nothing at all compared with his rakeoff of President, where he even gyped on his taxes, where he systematically raided the treasury for improving his own properties, where he used party campaign funds as his own bank account, even financing felonious crimes with them.

All the while holding well-publicized prayer breakfasts in the White House.

The more I watched Nixon and heard and read his incessant boastings none of which were not awkward for a man whose life had been spent in public speaking, the more I became

that rather than being a man eaten by ego he is a man obsessed with his own sense of his own incompetence. "He could do nothing good well. He was a good crook. He was good at dishonesty of all kinds, especially vocal. He could arrange an illegal gain of a half million dollars in his tax returns but, to use a phrase popular in his youth, he could not make the trains run on time. He is a negative man who keeps going on hatred of imaginary enemies. And he knew himself not to be an able man in any positive way.

No, what seems to be his boasting is the opposite. It is his constant reassurance to himself that he is really something.

It took strange forms. Like warning the returned Vietnam veterans he commercialized in every way he could to watch out for the "dogs" in Washington society, leaving it unclear whether he meant the women or their animals. A President with this message to those brought back from a living hell?

He staged his appearances in the White House like musical comedies, with vast tax sums wasted on spectacular rising, illuminated flags behind him and his prettyPat wife. Bans with ruffles and flourishes for his coming into a room.

No Andy Jackson with permanently unlocked White House doors was Richard Milhous Nixon.

Nixon had to keep telling himself endlessly that he really was something because deep down inside he knew he really wasn't.

This is why he had to isolate himself from everyone except his closest and most trusted advisers. This is why for friends he had only the tire-recapped Rebozo and the mechanic Abplanalp. There is nothing wrong with tradesmen or mechanics but are they the kinds of men from whom a President can take counsel in running the world's greatest power? Of all the men from whom any president can take counsel, with whom he can feel at ease, from whom he can expect the wisdom and advice any leader needs?

Nixon is an insecure man. Even his limited vocabulary is an evidence of it.

Imagine taping all that triviality and hate that were the spoken words in his White House and actually believing that he was preserving the quintessence of history! Defame those who made him, like Herb Klein, who had labored for him for 20 years, and vilifying almost anyone whose name was mentioned.

2

His June 23, 1972 tape, when he finally had to let his own version of it out, shows he did not understand what "floating the pound meant" and had to ask his advertisingman assistant if it meant devaluation and that the plight of the Italian lira was of no interest to him and inflation in Italy a bore, something he wanted no part of. Could any American President be so divorced from the realities of international life and what they meant to American life and still be any kind of leader?

And regard this unhidden display of abysmal ignorance of the most elemental factors in national and international life as what had to be preserved in every ungrammatical syllable, in every slang nuance, for the enrichment of the future?

This is a man at once sick and incompetent.

How sick, how unable to cope with problems, is illustrated by this story that comes to me from the experienced Washington correspondent Tris Coffin, now in his senior years.

It is this sickness that those closest to him had to manipulate when his end came, afraid that if they made a misstep he'd blow that, too, and force the Congress to impeach him and vote him a felon, which could also have enticed criminal prosecution. By then those who had defended him knew he was beyond defense. But they also knew he pretended he was the innocent victim of enemies who had beset him all his life. His paranoia, which could ruin him more, they had to edge him around.

The end was as Byzantine as all the rest of The Watergate.

It began Friday, August 2, 1974, according to a story that attracted little attention. (LATimes Service 8/7/74) "Strange White House Meeting," the San Francisco Chronicle headed it. (8/7/74) Nixon's most effective defender on the House Judiciary Committee, Charles E. Wiggins, the ultra-conservative from Nixon's old California district, was called to the White House by General Alexander Haig and counsel James D. St. Clair and given a sneak preview of that "smoking gun" June 23 tape. It left him agast. It also put him in a position to warn other Republican leaders to be cautious in the face of what was about to explode.

Those five typed pages that St. Clair pushed across the table at Wiggins proved beyond even unreasonable doubt that Nixon had been lying all along and that his lying was original.

"The significance of the transcript was immediately apparent to me," Wiggins later said. (To Paul Houston, LATimes 8/7/74)

It meant Nixon's defenders could defend him no longer and that the sole remaining question would be "conviction in the Senate." (LATimes 8/7/74)

Haig and St. Clair understood. This is why they first called in Nixon's defense leader. But they cautioned him that "obviously it was very difficult for a staff member to raise [resignation] with the President."

Imagine again - a President has to have resignation "raised" when he is caught with the smoking gun in his hand?

By this time nobody connected with the defense had any alternative. Nixon quit or they had to. The consequences to the lawyers could have included the ends of their careers. It was as final for the politicians. The sole problem was Nixon and his sick pretense that he was innocent.

and by then, as Haig and St. Clair told Wiggins, it could no longer be hidden that if Nixon had actually forgotten, which is impossible, he was reminded on May 2 when he personally had listened to that tape prior to the arguing of his case before the Supreme Court.

No Nixon innocence remained.

Except in his sick mind.

That "awful lot of people" who had "been led down the garden path" by Nixon & Wiggins words - (LA Times Service 8/7/74) as well as Haig and St. Clair, "had been put upon" by the way they defended and served.

"I don't know to this day why I was invited down there," Wiggins said. (LA Times Service 8/7/74) But those on his committee with whom he counselled "speculated that it was simply to test the reaction of the President's most articulate defender." (LA Times Service 8/7/74)

This tape, of course, was the end. But it was much more. It was another in the long taped proofs that rather than being divorced from all the dirty-works, Nixon was involved in them. ~~The~~ It and the others, even in his own versions, as Robert Shogun wrote (SF Chron 8/7/74) show his "painstaking/^{personal} concern with the political minutiae," that quite the opposite of Nixon's repeated claim to have run the country and let his re-election campaign be handled by others he had let the country go and had been in personal charge of the politics. He had defended himself by saying "I decided that the presidency should come first and politics second...to remove the day-to-day campaign decisions from the President's office. (LA Times service 8/7/74) But this same June 23 "smoking gun" tape did more than shoot Nixon himself down. It disclosed that there was nothing in his entire campaign too insignificant for his personal attention. Even the problems with the ~~hair~~ hair of his wife and daughters when the helicopter blades blasted air, where they would stay during the coming Miami ~~re-nomination~~ re-nomination convention, how long the trip by car from their quarters to the hotel would take. And the Haldeman who knew his boss' interests had all the answers in advance.

Even those with whom he would and would not be photographed occupied Nixon's mind and attention while his Hunt gun smoked in his hand that June 23!

This is also the moment he flaunted his ignorance of the most basic "residential problems, his total disinterest in the fundamentals of the world's problems.

When Haldeman asked, "Did you get the report that the British floated the pound?" after asking if it meant devaluation Nixon added, "I don't care about it." He cared about a single misplaced hair on one of his three women's heads when they would be on camera before his rubber-stamp renomination.

It was "O.K. Fine," according to his transcript, when Haldeman reminded him of the Federal Reserve expectation of a five percent devaluation of the lira against the dollar. When Haldeman persisted, ~~saying that~~ telling the man who should not have heeded to be told that ~~the~~ his agency government "is concerned about speculation about the lira [sic]" he received this statesmanlike response, quoted from ~~his~~ Nixon's own transcript:

"Well, I don't give a damn about the lira."
that

Why care about the world's economies are going to ~~the~~ hell, or even about that "smoking gun" ~~is~~ of unhidden ~~is~~ is ~~guilt that is not longer exhibited when~~ being President demanded that he look two months ahead and worry if a single lock or Nixon femal hair would be out of place on camera? What really took his time and occupied his mind is:

"Pat raised the point last night that probably she and the girls ought to stay in a hotel in Miami Beach. First she says the moment they get the helicopter and get off [sic] and so ~~on~~ forth, it destroys their hair and so forth [sic]."

The ~~first~~ fifth night after his men were caught in his oppoents' headquarters this is what tortured the Presi ent's wife, her hair and that of her daughters two months in the future. Not his future, not his crime and those committed for him.

The sickness infected them all.

Ni xon, too, spent little time on the inevitably fatal ~~and~~ unt confessions ~~on~~ this "une 23 tape. The hair took more of his time. The lira and the ~~and~~ pound none at all.

This, ~~unlike~~ unlike the Hunt confessions, is not criminal. But it could be almost as deadly, as ~~Maig~~ Maig and ~~St.~~ St. Clair knew, if Nixon was not with it, because it discloses the real non-performing character of the Nixon Presidency, a Presidency without Presidential leadership. And t at is close to possible to support or defend.

9

It took another five days for the rest of this consummate delicate Haig-St. Clair diplomacy to be leaked. Again it was leaked to another Nixon "enemy" in the press, The Washington Post. (8/12/74) This time it came from Nixon's Senate leader, Hugh Scott, a man who had himself to look out for by then.

He told Tim O'Brien how subtly, how exceedingly carefully, everyone had to be to keep Nixon from assuring his own conviction. They all had to cope with the sickness in his head, "in those critical last days." Then the two staffers were joined ^{On Wednesday, August 7,} by Kissinger and three from Congress, Scott's Goldwater and House Minority Leader John J. Rhodes. They told Nixon no more than that "his situation in ~~the~~ Congress was virtually hopeless."

But they dared not give him advice!

Haig had warned them not to.

As Scott recalled it, "Haig again said, 'We wish you would not suggest resignation... he is almost on the edge of resignation and if you suggest it he may take umbrage and reverse field here.'" (Post 8/12/74)

In the ultimate crisis, the Nixon language limitation and the conversion of all conversation into sports lingo, "reverse filed" as a delicate way of saying the crazy man may blow us all up.

Through all of this, with what had not happened in the two centuries of American history, Nixon, in Scott's recollection, "appeared serene, propping his feet on his desk, joking that he would become the only living ex-President because "Poor old Harry Truman is gone and I wouldn't have anybody to pal around with.'" (Post 8/12/74)

"Twenty years of treason" makes a "pal?"

Scott had known since Monday that "things were pretty bad down there," at the White House. Haig ~~then~~ had told Scott he'd quit if Nixon did not release the incriminating tape in accord with the Supreme Court's order. (Post 8/12/74)

Other accounts add Buzhardt and Haig to those who threatened to quit. (Phila. Inquirer 8/11/74) "Gently but firmly" Nixon was told "that they and the entire legal staff were about to quit." (Phila Inquirer 8/11/74)

Knowing more than any of his advisers who were only a little less irrational in seeming to take his word Nixon had to be persuaded by delicacy and indirection to quit

when there was no longer any possibility of escaping publicizing of enough of his guilt to guarantee conviction is still another measure of ^{his sickness.} ~~his sickness.~~

In quitting he still boasted "I am not a quitter." After he quit, his face contorted and running with a mixture of sweat and tears, this was his final goodbye except for a remaining utterly inappropriate touch, vintage Nixon and characteristically sicker.

But those who had pretended otherwise, those with political beliefs they thought coincided with his and thus told themselves he was other than sick and dangerous, "edged" him into quitting by giving him no real ~~choice~~ choice. He wasn't sick enough to proclaim every human his "enemy." With the end of his entire political and legal defense impending, he had to go.

It is the measure of their estimate of his sickness that the Haigs and St. Clair St. Clairs had to hold his figleaf for him and keep the pols from blowing it away. The man more troubled by the blowing of a single hair on the head of a single one of his women than by the floating of the pound of speculation in the lira had to be permitted to seem to make the last decision himself.

He could not be trusted to make it even when there was no real alternative if it was suggested to him as his most urgent need, his way of staying unimpeached if not out of jail. If someone told it to him as it was he would lose face in his own mind and blindly, unthinkingly, uncaringly plunge on to unprecedented disaster.

This the mark in the mind of the man who could bring himself to proclaim "I am not a crook" to the world on TV that those who had to protect him ~~himself~~ from himself had to contend with.

With these disclosures there is no need to draw upon a thick file collected over the years and labelled "Nixon-Psychological."

He went as he came and as he lived and ruled, in ersatz dignity and ersatz glory to the ersatz Valhalla he could not have owned without authentic dishonesty in his personal affairs, from earlier land investments through plundering the public purse in taxes and improvements. Even the heating system in his "Casa Pacifica" once called "The Western White House" was grafted from Secret Service funds as necessary to his personal security. He staged it all as he had managed all before, a hero's departure for the fallen felon.

He left on a red rug rolled out for him, the tears gone and his arms waving in heroic vigor while he smiled as though it were an occasion for smiles. He arranged arranged for his resignation to become effective while he was in the air. He arranged to leave by the President's airplane which he had actually renamed from "Air Force One" to "The Spirit of Seventy Six."

to his staff,
From his "farewell, // hardly to be compared with Washington's to his Metal Valkyrie it was, as evetran Washington correspondent Peter Lisagor put it so simply, "vintage Nixon." A ~~xxxx~~ retired reporter friend summed up this public display of unChurchillian sweat and tears, Nixon's last moment in the White House he had connived to capture, in perfect simplicity: "bitter, self-pitying, cravenly self-righteous and replete with subconscious extrusions the psychiatrists will be examining for years."

Back to Checkers, that innocent hound who saved him for the vice presidency, he here recalled, head twisted as the excreted fluids merged and dripped and the lips contorted, that his dead mother was a "saint." Her spirit was to wash him clean. She was a saint so he, her son, had to be a saint, too. Not the fleeing first felon President. The man done wrong by all the world, as happens to saints, to his mother who had suffered.

His arms thrust outward with vigor but as with everything he ever did, with awkwardness in a daylight nightmare from the chopper's door. To the very end he staged pictures, then the traditional one he had practised so often, pointing a finger through the clouding windows at the press cameras.

To the end the taxpayers paid. He switched at Andrews field to what became again what it had been until desecrated by Madison Avenue West, plain, American Air Force One. It carried him into the sun that was to set with him barricaded in the ill-gotten ~~estate~~ estate on the Pacific bluffs in the ^{waters} ~~xxxx~~ of which ordinary people could now again swim and surf. No more the Coast Guard to keep ordinary mortals away, the Secret Service to deny the public the public(s beautiful beaches.

Ahead lay a dèlegation of the Orange County hardcore, the unknowing who want not to know who gave him his start. They gave him a true heross welcome. They loved him still. To them he was the world of evil in the east, the real world they could and would never comprehend, finding comprehension of the realities of modern life made them uneasy.

Behind, not like what Columbus left behind as he sailed west, he left ~~his~~ not a gray Azores as in the poem but the devotees of authoritarianism, the more sophisticated and well-educated of the unthinking who also found thinking and understanding and reality unsettling, those who loved him for what he really was, their hero.

His symbol in this end as in the fight to prevent this end is Rabbi Baruch Korff, who ran something calling itself the "national Committee for Fairness to the Presidency," confusing the man and the institution they plagiarized from Nixon. "Baruch" in Hebrew is "bleded" the word with which most Hebraic prayers begin, "Baruch atoh Adnoi Adanoi," "Blessed art thou, oh Lord!"

His Reichskancellor having bit the bullet, Korff remained in his Boston bombshelter not deep under the Wilhelmstrasse, loyal past the end and threatening to "tear the capital apart." (UPI 8/16/74)

Loyalist Korff of the true religion shouted his Godly aspiration, "For these leftists and liberals to go to hell."

The true religion.

It makes "leftists and liberals of the Kissingers, the Hags, the Buzhardts and the St. Clairs and the dozens more who served past the point men of honor can serve and of those who risked their political lives in the same service, the Goldwaters, the Scotts, the Wigginses and the dozens of others in Nixon's rearguard.

Wotan had none more faithful than this man of religion who, on landing at Boston's Logan airport announced "Thor's lightning of vengeance on the "giants in the media [who] are fearful of history's judgement as assassins." (UPI 8/16/74)

For this thunder from the right he singled out The Washington Post, The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times and Newsweek.

There was no evil in the world that Korff could not attribute to "the saddest day in America," the day Nixon quit proclaiming himself no quitter. Even "the renewed fighting in Cyprus" was because these "cannibals" had forced Nixon to quit.

The religion and the deep philosophy Korff expressed had a special occasion appropriate to their utterance. He was "returning" to "his post as chaplain for the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health." (UPI 8/16/74)

~~There are many things that~~

The halt leading the blind.

It is the story of the life and of the end of Richard Nixon and of how for more than two years he remained unimpeached.

A quiter epitaph was written by one of his enemies, the Joseph Kraft whose home he had had bugged twice, once by the FBI and once by his personal gestapo, the Caulfield gang that preceeded the Hunt gang, Josphe Kraft:

"President Nixon has at last brought us together. The country is now united in relief at the resignation of the leader who betrayed every value and every friend in a desparate effort to save his own skin." (post 8/11/74)

Except for the blessed Korffs and the unregenerate ulxtras like him vowing fierce vengeance not against criminals but against the exposures of criminals the country was suddenly united. It was relieved. Hossannahs sangs from every headline, every tube, every earphone and speaker and every political mouth, hail to the first President ever appointed by the first felon President, Gerald Ford, the personification of all that is good, decent and honest in the greatest of all great lands, the United States of America.

With the blind leading the halt he became a man without past and without flaw.

In the euphoria there was no reason, there was emotion, relief, as Kraft put it so simply, succinctly and fully.

Nobody anywhere ever asked why Nixon with the entire country to chose from when his first chosen became the first self-confessed Vice President felon Nixon picked of the 200,000,600 Gerlad Ford.

Was Ford indeed the most suited of all Americans to bechme President if a ything happened to Nixon?

Of was he the man who could be confirmed with least difficulty and was least likely to tempt the Congress to throw Nixon out?

Ford's greatest disctinction, aside from ^{unquestioning} service to Nixon and his party's farthest right, was a lack of distinction. He was singularly without accomplishment, without

expectable capacity to cope with the heriatge of The Watergate but with one positive recommendation: he had avoided making powerful political enemies. add fnote here.

Fallen or not, Nixon held at least one firm grip on Ford, Ford's part in the pre-Watergating Nixon effort to get liberal Justice Douglas off the Supreme Court so he could replace him with a Carswell or a Haynesworth, a ~~rubber~~ political rubber stamp in black robes. A Ford linked to those Watergaters Hunt and Caddy and to the Watergating Mullen agency was not a free Ford when Nixon's future and freedom were in balance.

So, it was not the end.

It was a tainted, inauspicious new beginning, with the ghost of ~~the~~ evils past lurking on those distant Pacific bluffs.

The world was in chaos, wars of varying magnitudes everywhere except in the Wdstern Hemisphere, economies wrecked, inflation rampant, scarcities common in the midst of plenty, most Americans were without illusion or hope and had no confidence in either their government or their system of society.

But the papers heralded the breath of freshness and honesty coming from the White House. Political leaders vied in hailing this man of unquestioned honesty of whose own Watergating there was no breath anywhere.

It was again, as Voltaire had M. Cunegonde forever saying, the best of possible worlds.

The people didn't say this.

The stock market didn't say this.

The spirit of the country didn't say this.

The rest of the world also didn't say this.

But the politicians said it, the media said it, and time only will tell if indeed the man Nixon picked to replace himself is the same man Lyndon Johnson said had played football too long without a helmet or was to be a modern Moses leading us through the spread waters of The Watergate.