

Once the king was dead telling the truth about the dead king was not the taboo it had been. Thus conservative columnists Evans and Novak headed their column of August 9 "A Deep-Seated Hostility." (post 8/9/74) They wrote that "The ~~disproportionate~~ malignancy that finally destroyed the presidency of Richard M. Nixon was exposed at its very outset following the 1968 election when the President-elect established temporary headquarters," before he moved into the White House. Then one new recruit to his staff "was surprised in his first close-up observation of the new President by a uniquely un-presidential aspect of his discourse: the intensity with which Mr. Nixon attacked his "enemies" - particularly liberal Republicans and the press. ...Instead of declining under the actuality of Presidential power Mr. Nixon's animus grew in direct proportion to his political success..."

Even when Nixon purged Republicans he did not like and even in populous New York State, this aspect of the paranoid President was not spelled out for the people as it was when Nixon was ousted. After the press failed, after all the damage was done except that which was the inevitable harvest of this sowing of thorns, then truthful reporting was acceptable and safe.

Except for details of specific conversations the tapes were not required to tell the people the kind of man and the kind of President Nixon was. But when it had become safe Evans and Novak, ~~as an example~~, did interpret that "The tapes ~~disclose~~ do reveal incessant discussion of public relations unrelieved by issues or ~~of~~ serious ideological considerations. One longtime Nixon associate, a top presidential aide in the early Nixon days, put it this way: Most presidents stick to the business of government for their first three years, then campaign for re-election. In the fourth year; Mr. Nixon governed for six months, then turned his / whole attention to re-election for the next 3 1/2 years."

Why did this have to be secret until after disaster it made inevitable? Did neither the aides nor the press understand the inevitability? Did neither comprehend the inevitable toll on the nation? Or was some other consideration more important to both? That either met its obligations cannot be said. That both remained silent can be.