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# Mr. Nixon's Speeches to 'Friends'

In his public appearances in his last year and a half in office Lyndon Johnson, as a crippled President who had renounced re-election, stayed with few exceptions within the confines of audiences certain to be safe, if not sympathetic. Military installations, hawkish groups supporting his bombing of North Vietnam and the expansion of the war in South Vietnam—this was the arena in which he could hopefully get applause and where protesters would be at a minimum.

This is a dismaying precedent for President Richard Nixon who has three and a half years to go. He chose for his first appearance after his televised address the national convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars in New Orleans. Sounding a clarion call to patriotism—coupled with an appeal for help against those who would exploit Watergate to interfere with his responsibilities to the nation and the world—he could anticipate a roaring response. Here, too, was a precedent that finally found its way to the courts.

When the President went to Charlotte, N.C., for "Billy Graham Day" his mission in behalf of his great friend had been carefully plotted. A memorandum introduced in the Ervin committee investigation told of the threat of violent protests and demonstrations to disrupt the celebration. On this memorandum H. R. Haldeman, then one of the President's two chief lieutenants, had written "Great," and "Good."

"Did you really think that these demonstrators were subversives?" Sen. Lowell Weicker asked Haldeman.

"That was the information I had," he replied.

At the rally in Charlotte strong-arm tactics were used against young people, some of them with long hair, some passing out pamphlets "Nixon is a sinner." Fourteen young people brought suit for damages charging they had been assaulted and deprived of their civil rights. In a remarkable opinion, United States District Judge James B. McMillen spelled out in detail the bully boy tactics used against the young protesters and ordered the case to trial on its merit.

The chief bully boy was Ernie Helms of the Veterans of Foreign Wars with a build, as Judge McMillan put it, like a Washington Redskins tackle. He seemed, as chief bouncer, to be coordinating the efforts of the army of Secret Service agents sent into Charlotte. Called to testify in the suit he refused citing the Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination.

In his 62 page opinion Judge McMillan found that the young people were no threat whatever to the President. Although they carried no weapons of any kind and for the most part were circumspect in their behavior, they were hustled out of the hall even when they had been admitted with bona fide tickets. Under Helms' direction these tickets were declared counterfeit and the youths shoved back out. The Charlotte police and the Secret Service agents Judge McMillan found "partici-

pated in a wholesale assault upon the civil rights and liberties of numerous citizens, in violation of the First, Fourth, Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution." Secrecy in government, refusal to account to oppressed citizens for actions they suffered, is a way, the judge wrote, to breed tyranny.

One of the few public addresses the President has made in the past three months was in late May when he spoke to the prisoners of war returned from Vietnam. Touching a half dozen patriotic themes he drew cheers and applause. The crescendo came when he said, "I think it is time for this country to quit making national heroes of those who steal secrets and publish them in the newspapers."

As he stated in the supplement to his Watergate television address, he had known as early as March 17—rather than March 21 as he had previously stated—that the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist had been broken into by the "plumbers." So in denouncing Ellsberg without using his name in his talk to the prisoners of war, he chose to ignore the fact of an illegal act to try to convict the alleged thief of secret papers.

"Bring us together" was the slogan Nixon picked up on the campaign trail in 1968. He may buttress his position with the right wing by the loud patriotic theme with its echo of the Communist hunter of the past. But this will not help to unite a deeply divided and doubting country.

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