

Media Phonies

DR. RANDO (F.A.T.) sent me a story 9/14/74
The full pardon granted Nixon by President Ford is, I feel — and I was one of the many who had been deceived by Nixon — an altogether wise and compassionate act. Whatever his sins, there could have been no punishment greater than his forced resignation from the world's premier post, and the knowledge that it will forever be recorded on the pages of history.

Morrie Ryskind



I feel certain that most Americans will approve Mr. Ford's decision, but I realize that the hard core of Nixon-haters will resent it, especially the holier-than-thou Pharisees of the liberal media. And with them will be a host of leftist college professors and a certain group of alleged psychoanalysts, psychiatrists, behaviorists and the like.

EACH PROFESSION has its phonies as well as its dedicated servants, but I suspect there is more quackery among the last-mentioned set than in the others. E. g., I am assured no reputable head-shrinker would dream of analyzing a man's id or libido without meeting the subject and having some discussion with him.

Yet in 1964, when the publisher of a snide magazine (who later went to jail for pornography) sent a letter to a number of practitioners, questioning Goldwater's sanity, over 1,000 who had never met Barry, let alone having interviewed him, replied with statements that the GOP candidate was a dangerous psychotic. It made headlines and that issue of the magazine was a sellout. Let me add, however, that I received a goodly batch of notes from men high in the profession who denounced this dangerous and demagogic nonsense as savoring more of palmistry and phrenology than psychoanalysis.

WELL, EVER since the revelation of the Nixon tapes, various articles have appeared in the highbrow media offering psychoanalytic explanations of why Nixon permitted recordings that put him in so unfavorable a light. We now know that both JFK and LBJ used tapes to record what they deemed important data for their archives, but were careful to eliminate (quite naturally) matters that might damage them. Why, then, didn't Nixon do the same?

The (Sept. 9) issue of New York

magazine offers yet another explanation, entitled, "Why Nixon Did Himself In: A Behavioral Examination of His Need to Fail." The coauthors boast Ph.D.'s: Frank Fox, a history professor and Stephen Parker, a poet. Let me say the article is so full of historical inaccuracies and innuendoes about Nixon's early career that it demolishes Dr. Fox as a historian so

thoroughly that I became automatically suspicious of Dr. Parker's poetry. Like calls to like, doesn't it?

AT ANY rate, as the title indicates, these two disciples of Freud, Jung and, for all I know, Krafft-Ebing, come up with the startling conclusion that Nixon's great goal was not to gain the presidency, but to be ousted from it! Apply that to Nixon's keeping the damaging parts of his tapes, and you might decide they had a point.

My information is less exciting but then I boast no Ph.D. When Nixon first came to the White House, he threw out the various bugging devices LBJ had left, saying, "There'll be none of that here."

Later, however, he was persuaded the tapes might be important in recording material for posterity. A record of significant meetings with heads of state might prove of great value in detailing the give-and take of historical negotiations. And Nixon, who saw himself as contributing mightily to world order, was prevailed upon — without too much urging — to have his own tapes,

BUT AFTER a while, he (and his aides) took the tapes for granted and forgot they were there. (Apropos, you might reread Poe's famous tale, "The Purloined Letter.") And that's how, in addition to what may prove invaluable historical data, the tapes also contain the sort of sleazy material no president would want to be remembered by.

All of which is not a guess, but is what I have reason to think is the truth. Which is often, alas, less exciting than historical fiction.