

Mr. Nixon, Our Smearless Leader



Arthur Hoppe

THE DEMOCRATS are growing increasingly desperate and who can blame them?

Take this transcript of a top-level conference at Democratic Headquarters in the Watergate Towers picked up the other day by an overlooked bug.

The participants are identified in the tape only as Larry, Gary and Frank.

Larry: I've been giving our plight a great deal of thought, gentlemen, and there is but one way to defeat Tricky Dick, elect Honest George and restore integrity and honor to our country.

Frank: What's that, Larry?

Larry: A massive, nationwide, all-out smear campaign.

Gary: Great thinking, Larry! Now if we could just dig up something like The Teapot Dome Scandal. You know, we say Nixon's cronies have been peddling favors to some huge conglomerate in return for millions of dollars. The public would rise up from their television sets in righteous wrath!

Frank: Have you forgotten the ITT affair already? The public rose up, yawned and went to bed.

Gary: What about the secret \$18,000 Nixon slush fund in '52? It almost cost him the Vice Presidency. Now if we could just somehow come up with an even bigger secret slush fund . . .

Larry: What's wrong with that \$350,000 in Maurice Stans' safe? The Mexican checks? The Miami bank accounts? I'll tell you what's wrong, nobody cared.

Gary: Maybe we need something along international lines. I've got it! Nixon negotiates a secret deal to sell rice to the Chinese Communists. Tipped off, his broker friends make a killing. The farmers go broke, the price of rice shoots up and you know what happens to Nixon.

Frank: Yeah, after the Russian grain deal he went up another five points in the polls.

Larry: Frank's right. These big financial scandals only seem to hurt us. Let's think of something else.

Gary: Well, there was Grover Cleveland. What if we start a whispering campaign that Nixon bought his secretary a Republican cloth coat in return for her favors?

Frank: Nixon and sex? Who'd believe it?

Gary: Kissinger, then. We catch him and this startlet at this motel, see . . .

Frank: That would win the vote of every male over 40 — for the Republicans. Besides, I think Kissinger rents them from a dating service.

Gary: Wait! Remember LBJ and the beagles? We get a picture of Nixon picking up King Timahoe by the ears and . . .

Frank: The damned dog's bigger than he is.

Gary: (desperately): Pat's wash isn't whiter than white? Trish suffers from ring around the collar? Or what about accusing the White House of dirty politics? Spies? Double agents? Buggings?

Frank: Now you've even forgotten where you are. No, it's no good. The trouble is that the public expects businessmen to buy favors and politicians to sell them. After all they wheel and deal themselves. That's probably why Nixon does so well every time we hit him with a scandal: they identify with him.

Gary: That's it! The perfect smear campaign! To win votes for George we start a rumor he's sold Nevada to Howard Hughes for \$500 million in unmarked bills.

Frank: With the debts we still owe? Who'd believe it?

Larry (after a long silence): Well, gentlemen, at least we've proved one thing in this campaign.

Gary: What's that?

Larry (gloomily): There's no way on earth to smear Dick Nixon.