



Richard Plays Realtor in San Clemente

Not long ago
Julie and Tricia gave
President Nixon a surfboard
for a present.
Some would say
this was like giving the Pope
a waterbed, but they may
have had reasons. . . .

Photos by Don Peterson

THE CHOICE OF a summer White House always reveals a great deal about the President as an ordinary human being, even a President whose ordinary humanity is as elusive as Richard M. Nixon's. From the selection of a President's vacation spot, we learn where he really wants to live, what kind of neighbors he prefers, what he wants to do with his spare time, how he fixes up his surroundings. At the White House these choices are all made for a President. Custom, protocol, and the physical presence of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue as a kind of national monument all dictate how he is to live, and even what pictures he can put on the wall. But while the Washington White House tends to standardize its occupant, the Summer White House has distinctive imagery that helps define the individual character and direction of each Presidency:

John F. Kennedy, the Irish aristocrat yachting gracefully off the family compound at Hyannis Port.

General Eisenhower golfing at Camp David, basking in the afterglow of military nostalgia from nearby Gettysburg.

Harry Truman playing poker and getting drunk with his pals at Hot Springs, Arkansas.

LBJ barreling down the trackless steppes of the LBJ ranch in his Lincoln Continental, beer cans flying out the electric windows as he heads into the Texas void.

At first glance, in the case of Nixon and his summer residence at San Clemente, it's not so easy to see the place as a reflection of the man and his administration. Outside of spectator sports, Nixon has no hobbies. His cement walls protect him from his neighbors and he's had the 14-room Spanish stucco house that came with the old Cotton Estate redecorated by the Los Angeles firm of Cannell and Chaffin (in gold and yellow—Pat's choice of warm colors). Still there are a few personal touches at San Clemente to give us some of the Nixonian *gestalt*: from the great plastic wall that separates the Nixon family swimming pool from the ocean front, to the artificial flowers—manufactured in Japan—that have replaced the soil-grown variety, to the red lacquered picture of the Mekong Delta that hangs over the double bed in the Presidential bedroom.

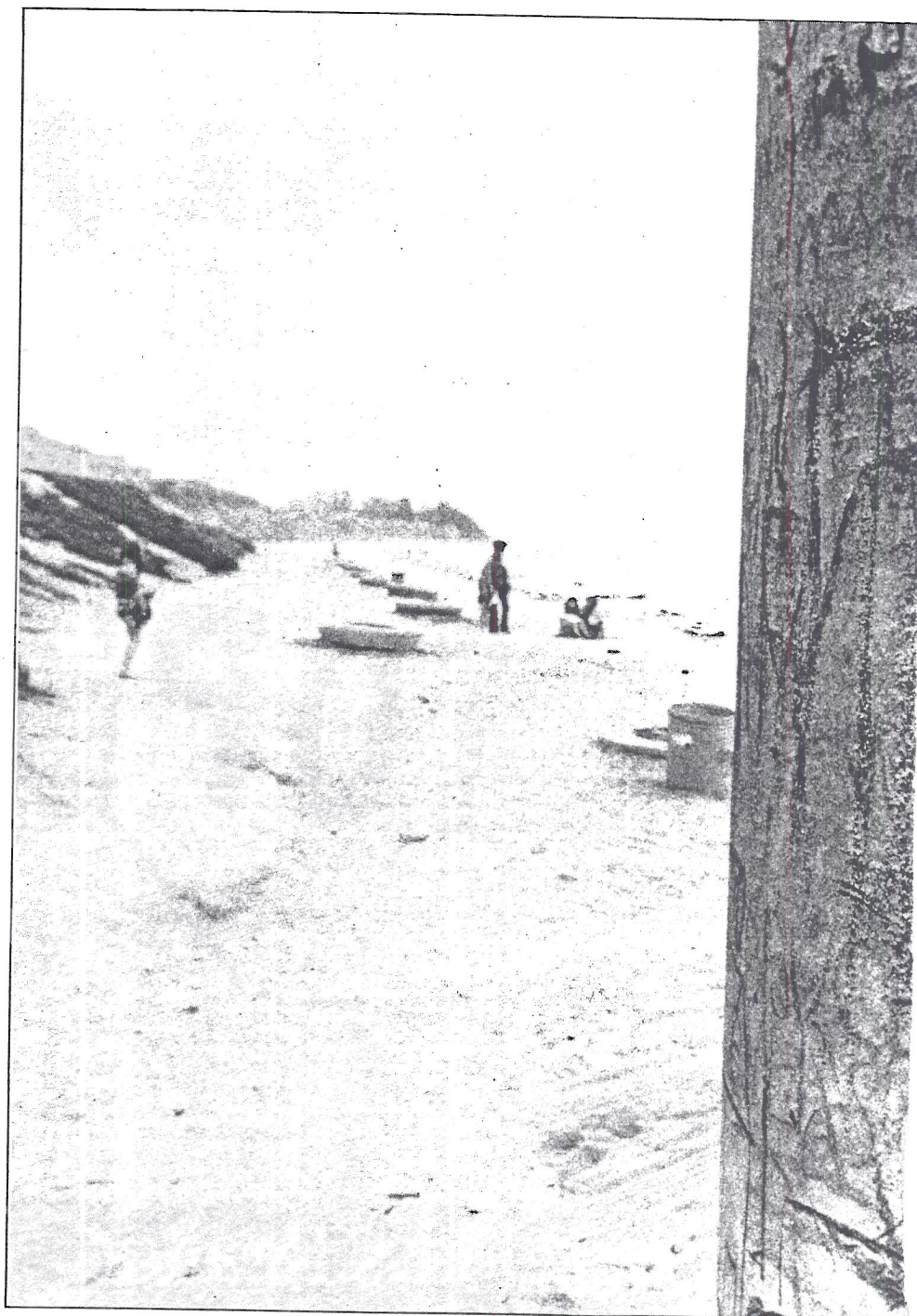
by Robert Fitch

Still the question remains, what does the man do to relax? What does he do when he's not playing world or national politics? The answer is that he plays local beach politics. Sadly enough, it's just not like Nixon to come to the surf, sand and sun of San Clemente for its own sake. But the man can't help it. He's a compulsive politico. An obsessive finagler. From the behaviorist point of view, the Summer White House episodes in Nixon's life show that if you change his environment, if you take him out of the steam-room pressures of Washington, D.C. and put him on vacation under the languid San Clemente sun, nothing changes. He still maneuvers, still finds it hard to be spontaneous. The only way Nixon can relate to nature is to turn it into some ersatz political issue or into a real estate development.

THIS AT LEAST is what happened when Nixon hit the beach at San Clemente on a lot he bought bordering the Camp Pendleton Marine Reservation. Before Nixon arrived in San Clemente, there were plans to make a public beach out of the northern corner of Camp Pendleton bordering what turned out to be the Western White House. Nixon killed the plan. He didn't want any hippies kicking sand on his beach. At the same time it would obviously be bad to get caught playing king of the sand castle in recreation-conscious southern California, where little enough public beach exists as it is.

So Nixon ordered the Marines to give up another part of their beach farther south. But the Marines didn't want to. They needed it, they said, to train for amphibious assaults. Besides, as it turned out, they were already secretly leasing part of the beach to a small group of wealthy Southern California businessmen. Before Nixon's beach trick was turned, the whole crazy *mischpoche* of California Republican politicians had gotten into the act, including Ronald Reagan, Senator George "Tapdance" Murphy, Congressman Alphonzo Bell from Santa Monica, and the Orange County John Birch *apparat*.

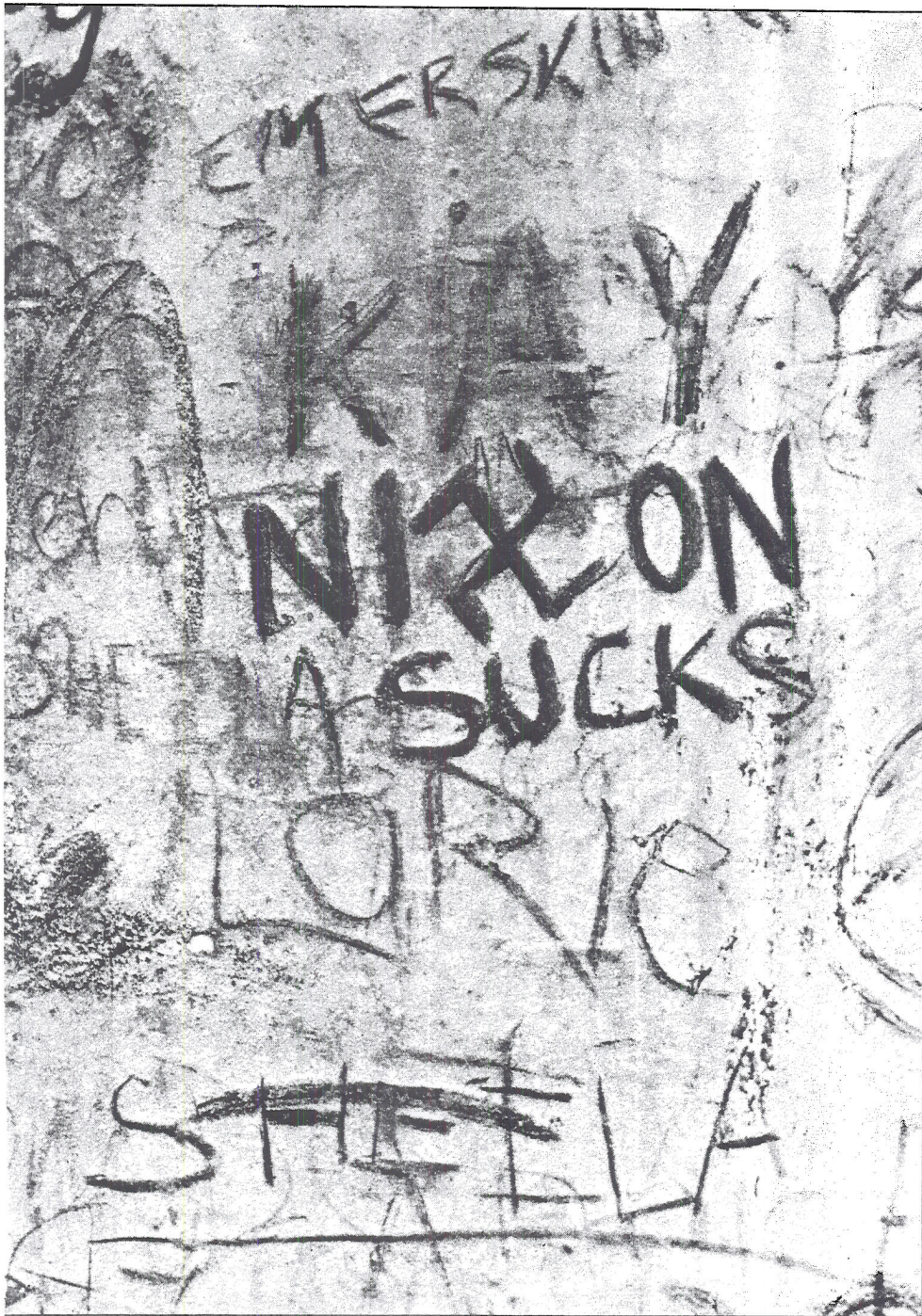
In the resulting confusion, Nixon thought he saw an opportunity to seize the time by seizing the land—3400



acres of Camp Pendleton bordering his back yard—and turn it over to residential "developers." Had Nixon been successful, some of the property might have wound up under the control of the little-known Richard M. Nixon Foundation. The Foundation, which has land bordering Camp Pendleton held in trust for possible purchase, is currently searching Orange County for 200 acres on which to build a Nixon memorial library. But Nixon's little move didn't work. He got caught with

his hand in the cookie jar by the Real Estate Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee.

The upshot, however, is no scandal of ITT proportions—just another attempt to combine political wheeling with petty real estate promotion *à la* Nixon's Florida land deals with Bebe Rebozo. Still, it's an exemplary tale: Another load of ready-mix to form the Via Ricardo as it stretches hard and long across middle America. A Republican Congressman and otherwise



An 800-pound bust of Richard Nixon, which for months remained unsold in San Clemente.



staunch Nixon supporter put it rather charitably. "Let's say it just smells a little bad in a way. Maybe the odor isn't like it seems. But it doesn't seem like too pleasant an odor, this whole matter."

* * *

LOOKING BACK TO SEE how the peculiar odor hanging over Nixon's beach got there in the first place, one is struck by its seemingly accidental character. It appears as if in

choosing San Clemente Nixon was trying to get away from politics, away from people altogether. But so it is with all fundamentally neurotic behavior patterns: if you could either escape them or truly enjoy them, they wouldn't be neurotic. And Nixon can't help playing politics, even on so unspotlighted and unlikely a stage as San Clemente. The small coastal retirement city tucked in the southeast corner of ultra-conservative Orange County has perfect demographics. Population

18,000; Blacks—0.01 percent; "Other"—0.77 percent.

Along with the favorable statistics, the physical lay-out of Nixon's five-acre plot on the old Cotton Estate seemed to insure almost total privacy. Bounded on the west and south by Camp Pendleton, the Nixon manse fronted the ocean on the west. And whatever exposure to ordinary people Nixon faced on his eastern flanks he remedied by keeping the remaining twenty acres of

(Continued on Page 57)

Vietnam is now stripped clean of ideological pretensions. To make holy war on communism in Indochina but meet amicably with the communists in Korea is somewhat contradictory. The Joint Communique states that Korean "unification shall be achieved through independent Korean efforts without being subject to external imposition or interference." If foreign interference is rejected in Korea, the justification for 37,000 South Korean troops in Vietnam is gone.

Justification or not, the ROK forces remain in Vietnam, where they continue to fight and to commit the barbarous acts which have become part of their *modus operandi*. As hired guns, they perform effectively, wiping out whole villages, terrorizing whole provinces. And because of their strategic importance to the Nixon Administration, they escape even that token of retribution visited on the American Army after My Lai.

It goes on and it will continue this way so long as the United States pursues its present course. For this is the day-to-day reality behind the Nixon Doctrine. Stripped of the rhetoric, it emerges as a grandiose protection racket, the likes of which Vito Genovese never dreamed, the cost of which it is beyond our power to calculate.

James Otis is a pseudonym for an eminent professor in the Asian field who served as a military intelligence officer in Korea during the 1950s.

NIXON (From Page 23)

the Cotton Estate in trust for possible purchase by the Richard M. Nixon Foundation.

The Foundation itself, bringing together as it does the inner circle of Nixon's inner circle, bears some examination. The degree of mutual gratification achieved between the business and political members of the Nixon Foundation and Nixon himself recalls the remark made by a great naturalist about the tapeworm and monogamy. He observed that if monogamy is indeed virtuous the tapeworm must be the most virtuous member of the animal kingdom, since it copulates with itself 3,650,000 times during its lifetime. A considerable amount of cross-fertilization action goes on at the Nixon

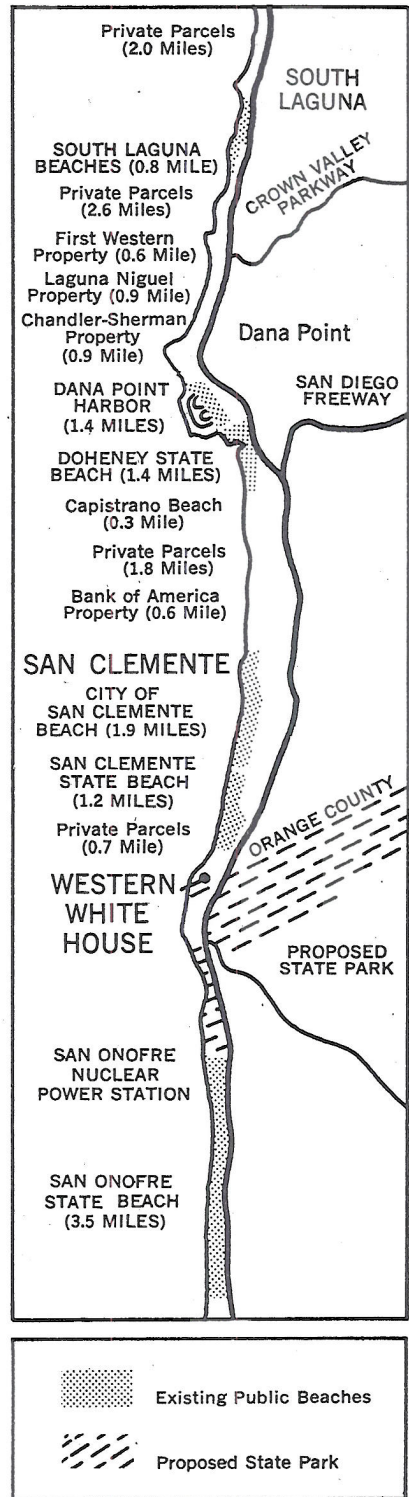
Foundation too, between Nixon and his most faithful retainers.

There's Donald Kendall, Board Chairman of Pepsi Cola. Kendall helped get Nixon his job on the Wall Street law firm of Mudge, Rose when Nixon's political career had hit the skids in 1962. Just last April Nixon reciprocated by bringing back with him from his trip to Russia an agreement with Brezhnev to install Pepsi machines—and only Pepsi machines—in the Kremlin and throughout the Soviet Union.

Elmer Bobst, Chairman of Warner-Lambert, is another example of the fruits of cross-fertilization within the Nixon inner circle. "Uncle Elmer," as Julie and Tricia always called him, has contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars to the innumerable Nixon campaigns. But it was a good investment. Last year a merger took place between Warner-Lambert and Parke-Davis, one of its main competitors, in flagrant violation of the anti-trust laws. Warner-Lambert & Company is now the world's largest drug company with thanks due in no small part to Nixon & Company.

Then there's Donald—Donald Nixon, the President's often wayward brother and the leading figure in Don Nixon Associates. Donald has had striking success recently as a consultant with the Marriott Corporation, which runs a major catering service. A surprising number of corporations—including the federally regulated airlines—have switched to Marriott when approached by Donald with an offer they just couldn't refuse. Donald's new-found success has all but wiped out the memory of his role as the guiding entrepreneurial spirit in the ill-fated "Nixonburger" venture. Howard Hughes, whose Hughes Tool Company is a major defense contractor, evidently thought so highly of the commercial possibilities of the Nixonburger franchise that he loaned Donald over \$205,000, requiring only \$52,000 collateral in the form of a Nixon family property in Whittier.

So it goes at the Nixon Foundation, whose purpose, suitably enough, is to raise money to commemorate the Administration of Richard M. Nixon. Eventually a library housing all the Presidential papers will rise from somewhere in Orange County. San Clemente has been designated as one possible



site, the Irvine Ranch another, and the community of Whittier has offered a plot of land purchased expressly for the purpose, for, \$220,000 from an oil company.

According to Foundation sources, the President wants it to appeal to youth. He wants scholars to use it for research. He wants it to reflect the of-

office of the President rather than himself. All this seems laudable enough. But what most local observers seem to question is the morality of Nixon fundraisers crossing the country trying to hit big businessmen for funds, many of whom inevitably will, or should, have regulatory problems with the government. With previous Presidents' libraries it was the practice to raise the money after the President left office. Nixon has reversed the precedent. Observers also question the grandiosity of the plans. Spokesmen for the Foundation have indicated that they'll need at least 200 acres for the library—27 acres for parking alone. Why Nixon needs 200 acres for his library when the Library of Congress itself occupies only 13 acres remains a mystery. Foundation plans to carve 200 acres of rich Orange County real estate have to be kept in mind as we note the further developments in the struggle for Nixon's beach.

Remember that Nixon's house seemed perfectly protected on all four sides—by Camp Pendleton, by land bought up and held vacant for the Nixon Foundation, and by the Pacific Ocean. But it was from the ocean that Nixon was to lose his invulnerability. What Nixon probably didn't realize when he chose the Cotton Estate is that it fronts on two of California's best surfing "breaks"—Cotton Point and the Trestles (the latter so named because it lies off the Santa Fe railroad tracks). Surfers come from all over Southern California to these two breaks to ride the waves down to what is now Nixon's front yard. Nixon could hardly be expected to know this—he hardly seems to travel in beachboy circles.

Under ordinary circumstances, with the help of the Secret Service, Nixon could no doubt have kept the surfers at a distance. But even as Nixon occupied the Cotton Estate, plans underway since the administration of California Governor Pat Brown were coming to fruition, turning 3½ miles of beach directly south of Nixon's house into a state park.

It would have been easy enough to simply issue an executive order killing the state park, crediting the Secret Service preoccupation with Nixon's security with the wipeout of the surfers.

But Southern Californians would get the message: another part of California's coast foreclosed for recreation. Currently only 353 of California's 1072 miles of coastline are publicly owned. The rest is owned by private individuals and corporations. For example, just north of San Clemente's municipal beach there is Bank of America beach. North of Dana Point, the next town up the coast, there is Otis Chandler's beach, which borders the Laguna Niguel beach (a subsidiary of AVCO Corp.), which borders First Western Bank beach, etc.

Nixon's problem was to stop the development of the beach near his property and at the same time avoid getting caught in the political undertow that cancelling the state beach would be sure to cause. His solution seemed ingenious enough. Instead of announcing the cancellation of the state park, in February 1970 he announced the creation of a state beach—six miles from his house, on the Camp Pendleton Marine base. The beach Nixon proposed was relatively unsuitable for surfing and it was practically inaccessible. It was located at the foot of the San Onofre Bluffs and could only be reached by climbing down the bluffs through winding trails. But it was still beach land, and it did enable Nixon to pose as the beach-boys' friend and ally—at least to those who knew nothing about the merits of Southern California beaches. Meanwhile, Nixon's aides claimed he was unaware that his presence had cancelled the beach at the Trestles. And he directed his aides to pressure the Marine Corps into relinquishing part of their 17-mile coastline. Nixon's aides figured about 4.5 miles would do, but the Marines agreed to relinquish only 1.5 miles. The rest, said high brass, was needed for amphibious landing practice. Base Commander General Bowman even refused to allow planners from the California Department of Parks and Recreation to enter Camp Pendleton to survey the land which the White House had given to the state.

In addition to their training for wars of the past, however, the Marines had another reason for holding on to the beachhead—namely a secret agreement between the top brass and a small group of prominent Southern California businessmen and movie stars. The

agreement came in the form of a lease between Camp Pendleton and the so-called "San Onofre Surfing Club," which included such worthies as L. A. Times publisher Otis Chandler, "Gunsmoke" star James Arness and top Justice Department figure Robert Mar-dian. The Marines allowed this group of private citizens to lease 2500 feet of beach at a dollar a year.

Sensing an exploitable issue, wealthy Congressman Alphonzo Bell moved in to expose the San Onofre Surfing Club. He attacked it as a private spa for "a small group of Marine brass and socially prominent Californians." Bell's own family background was to get him into trouble on much the same score. Bell's father organized Bell Oil Company and "developed" what is now known as Bel-Air. "He sold all of his beach to private individuals," Base Commander General George Brown counter-attacked. "Now he doesn't understand why we don't give up our enlisted [men's] beaches." The John Birch Society poured more solid waste on Bell's position when the office of Congressman John Schmitz accused Bell of supporting the land transfer because of secret oil interests he allegedly had in the area. "That's the most ridiculous thing I ever heard of," replied Bell. "I don't own any oil land in California. In San Onofre," he corrected himself. The noise and odor overhanging Nixon's beach increased as General Bowman, called before a closed session of a House Armed Services unit, offered the following explanation of the San Onofre Surfing Club:

"Well, sir, they had been using this beach a long time and I got there last August and this beach was coming up for renewal of the lease and frankly I wasn't very happy about it."

"It's not open to the public," pressed one committee member, "and yet they have a contract which allows them to use it for a dollar a year. That's a strange arrangement."

"Well, sir, I would just like to at this time [sic] was that this beach holds about 1000 people here. And I don't have the Marines nor the money to police and maintain that area. As I recall from the figures this surfing club which is limited to 1000 people as I recall. You had to

put your name on a list to get in. A thousand people that I could rely on, or turn it over to someone that would be undependable."

MEANWHILE, AT THE Western White House itself, with the negotiations between the Administration and the Marine Corps at a standstill, on the evening of July 27, 1970 President Nixon was meeting with Governor Ronald Reagan and the then Senator from California, George Murphy, the former movie star who had served thousands of Technicolor, Inc. investors while serving simultaneously as a U.S. Senator and as a consultant to that corporation. The revelation of this affair had hurt Murphy's re-election chances against John Tunney. How about giving Murphy credit for bringing the park to Southern California? Reagan suggested it would cut into Tunney's liberal support and reverse the prevailing tide. Maybe Murphy would even wind up a hero in the ecology movement. Nixon agreed. He asked Reagan to send him reports on how his Department of Parks was coming in the negotiations with the Marine Corps, with recommendations to be routed through Murphy's staff. Reagan told the California director of Parks and Recreation to send all the announcements of beach-front victories to Murphy's office so he could announce them and thereby assume the role of dynamic ecology activist.

Unfortunately for Murphy, his staff failed to do even the minimal amount of paper shuffling that would have made his credit-grabbing credible. News of the plans reached John Tunney's campaign headquarters just as Governor Reagan prepared to launch Murphy as a great lover of the outdoors. Forewarned, Tunney threatened Murphy and Reagan with exposure of the media hype. Tunney argued that Murphy had done no real work in preparing the transfer of the beach from the Marine Corps to the state. This warning stopped the Murphy media juggling before it ever got rolling.

By August 1970, despite the desperate struggle to take credit for creating a public beach, there was still no public beach. The Marines were willing to give up only 1.5 miles of their 17-mile beach and that portion lay right in

front of the San Onofre Nuclear Reactor. The state had been asking for 4.5 miles, arguing that 1.5 miles was too small to develop. The State Department of Parks and Recreation offered a compromise of 3.5 miles. Still the Marines remained dug in. Local liberal congressman Alphonzo Bell called a press conference the same day to denounce the Marine Corps: "The thought that the prime beach frontage at Camp Pendleton should be fenced off to the public so that the Marines can use the land for maneuvers a few days each year—if that—is preposterous." Bell went on, "This situation is even more infuriating when it is realized that the Marines have authorized use of part of this land for a private, closed-membership, surfing club."

This was the first time mention of the San Onofre Surfing Club had ever been made in public. Its members had always tried to keep a low profile and now they were being flushed out in the open. Six days later the club sought to gain some leverage with the master of the low profile by inviting the President to join. In charge of recruitment was Club member Robert Mardian, a

Pasadena Savings and Loan executive who'd been a Nixon backer since the early '60s. Until recently Mardian headed the Justice Department's internal security office under John Mitchell and now works with the Committee to Re-elect the President, sponsors of the Watergate Waterbugs, who sought unsuccessfully to listen in on the Democratic National Committee.

Mardian persuaded Nixon to take up membership in the San Onofre Surfing Club. A local account on August 25 described Nixon emerging dutifully from his office in the bright summer sun to greet a contingent of surfers from the club. Mardian, dressed in nappy pinstripes and smiling happily at parade rest, was there. So was Rolf Arness, the world's champion surfer whose father, Gunsmoke's James Arness, is a club member and occupies a summer house in Cypress Shores, near the Western White House. Nixon shook hands with the surfers, stood by for pictures, and accepted a plaque making him an honorary member of the Club. He also received a special decal for the Presidential limousine that would get him past the Marine Corps

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sentries at Camp Pendleton. This seal of unearned federally-bestowed privilege, from the all-white businessmen's club, forms a fitting emblem for the Nixon Administration as a whole.

Meanwhile, months of haggling had passed between the Marines and the California Department of Parks. The President himself stayed out of this controversy until, finally, the Marines executed a surprising maneuver. The Marine Commandant called Sacramento and ordered the state to get their men off Camp Pendleton until the lease was signed in Washington.

When the White House heard about the harassment of Reagan's park officials, top aides were instructed to countermand the Commandant's order, and President Nixon took personal charge of the affair. On April 5, 1971 he announced that, instead of turning the 3½ miles of Camp Pendleton into a state park, he would carve out 6 miles of the Marine beach. In addition, in a move that proved even more controversial, Nixon decided to annex 3400 acres of Camp Pendleton that lay directly behind his house—a tract that abutted land being held in trust for the Nixon Foundation.

On May 25 the White House announced that the Federal Property Review Board (FPRB) had recently carried out a survey of all Federal lands, acting through GSA, and found part of this land "excess" to federal needs. "Federal Property Review Board" has a nice, official, non-partisan sound to it. Actually, it is composed of top

Nixon advisors including Don Rumsfeld, John Ehrlichman and Clark McGregor, who is the newly appointed Chairman of the Committee to Re-elect the President. Their process of review turned out to be most unusual. Instead of surveying the land and determining how much could be excessed, the FPRB first decided how much land needed to be transferred from the federal domain and *then* declared it excess. This peculiar sequence came out when GSA people came to Camp Pendleton. When they measured the plot that they had originally selected behind Nixon's house, it turned out to be only 2700 acres. According to one Congressman, they said, in effect, "Oh my God! We thought it was 3400 acres. Could you please give us 700 acres more to bring it up to 3400 acres?" Far from being excess, the inland 3400 acres demanded by the White House contained Camp Pendleton's water wells and its sewage treatment plant, along with helicopter landing pads and other structures worth several million dollars.

BUT IF THIS LAND was truly "in excess," what did the Administration want to use it for? This is a touchy point these days with White House ecology fighters and Congressman Alphonzo Bell's staff. They all claim now that the 3400 inland acres were to be used as a park by the state. This is untrue. The original Government survey recommends quite clearly "that the 3400-acre parcel marked in blue on exhibit B and C be

reported excess and sold for *residential development.*" (italics added) The rationalization underlying the government's original case for turning Camp Pendleton over to the real estate people was that the state could get enough money from the sale of inland parcels to provide public toilets and other facilities for the 6½ miles of beach.

John Ehrlichman, Nixon Foundation director and perhaps the ranking White House aide on the Federal Property Review Board, explained that he doubted the State of California would have enough money to develop the whole 3400 acres as a park and that what they couldn't maintain would be sold to developers.

The White House transfer of Camp Pendleton to the State of California for eventual sale did not go unnoticed by the House Armed Services Committee. "This thing reminds me of the time they tried to steal Fort DeRussy out in Hawaii—they have been working at it ever since in order to build high-rises along Waikiki Beach," recalled one Congressman. None of the hawkish committee members really objected to taking away the Marines' beach. It was the lifting of the 3400 inland acres out of the public domain in order to create a real estate development that aroused even the Republican committee members. "The beach unquestionably should be opened to the public," said one Republican. "There is no question about that. But the thing that arouses my curiosity is this other land, 3400 acres—it isn't 3400 but that is what they call it. First it was to be used for real estate development, and the value of that land for that purpose is astronomical. After they said it was for real estate development, then they came back and later said it was for a park. No item of a park was ever mentioned until after the committee dug into the matter and found some things that didn't look quite right."

Even today, over a year later, no one on the committee staff is willing to say what it was that the committee found "that didn't look quite right." Still, as Congressman Hunt observed at the time, "There must be some underlying reason to grab that 3400 acres that is now the buffer zone up against Camp Pendleton."

Who wanted to grab the 3400 acres?



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Nixon, that's who. White House Assistant Press Secretary Gerry Warren readily acknowledges that the beach park plan was Nixon's. The claim is, of course, that the idea was always to keep the 3400 acres as a park. But this, as documents prove, and as many Congressmen know, is a lie. At the risk of committing further *lèse majesté* against the President, it must also be asked who stood to gain from the transfer. Once again, the answer is Nixon. Executive Director of the Federal Property Review Board Darrell Trent admits that land values near the 3400-acre plot have increased substantially. This would include, of course, Nixon's property and the land held in trust for the Nixon Foundation.

Too petty a deal for someone invested with the cares of state and the panoply of office? We have seen already how the President likes to spend his summer vacation. And if more evidence is required to establish the rather petty limits of Nixon's capitalist horizon, we need only recall Nixon's role in the Fisher Island Corporation. That was the deal in which Nixon was brought in by Bebe Rebozo. Fisher's Island needed only a bridge to the Florida mainland to send its value skyrocketing, and Nixon's role was to get the Federal government to build the bridge. Nixon failed then too. And remember Citra-Frost? Nixon's scheme to make a fortune in the frozen orange juice business, just after World War II? For a year and a half, Nixon came home nights after working in his Whittier law office to squeeze oranges with Pat. Then, during the War, there was Nixon's Snack Shack, where he traded everything from captured Japanese rifles to introductions to the Army nurses who arrived to take care of the casualties. . . . With a business record so consistent, it's no wonder Nixon has remained in politics.

None of the shoddy machinations preceding the transfer of Pendleton to the state prevented Nixon from taking full public credit as an environmental warrior victorious over petty bureaucratic interests. "This magnificent beach," said Nixon on the day of its dedication last summer, flying over in a helicopter. "This is one of the last great swimming beaches in America. Just two years ago," the President went

on, "I was walking along this beach and I realized that here in Southern California there were millions of people who wanted to go to the beach, and that when you go by Santa Monica, Long Beach, or any of the other great beaches I used to go to as a youngster, that they are just too crowded these days and there is a great need for more beaches where people can go."

These beaches, Nixon said, would never have become a reality "unless I had taken a walk on the beach two years ago in San Clemente and walked an extra mile and saw the great possibility and decided that the time had come for Presidential initiative." What he didn't say was that as he walked that mile what was flashing through his one-track politician's head was not the image of surf on sand but the upward movement of Gallup polls, the smiles of satisfied retainers, and the roar of distant, preferably very distant, crowds.

McGOVERN (From Page 9)

McGovern is in any sense a leader, spokesman or representative of "the movement," or that his views and commitments are an authentic expression of movement politics. But McGovern's success, his nomination, what the press calls the "McGovern phenomenon" as if it were an emanation of his personality and will—these do reflect the unexpected power of that new political force. And if we look at the sources of McGovern's support and success, and consider how little help the usual power brokers were willing to offer to him (and how little they were able to deliver to anybody else), we realize that this time the biggest political debts are owed to us—not to us as individuals or a group, but to the principles on the basis of which our considerable political muscle was thrown behind his campaign. That amounts to a political deal, and we ought to regard it as binding on McGovern as—say—dairymen would consider a deal for price supports or textile industry fat cats would regard an understanding on import quotas. Beyond his Vietnam pledge, McGovern has made a deal with us on a broad range of subjects—abortion, marijuana, etc.—and we would be selling ourselves short if we let him

forget it.

Still, there is a feeling that wanting to collect on our political debts is short sighted and merely penny wise; our overriding concern now is that McGovern win, or else he will be in no position to deliver anything to anyone. In practical politics, so the thinking goes, unstinting compromise of principle is the only winning way. However to accept the strategic options of the McGovern campaign in these terms, one would have to be disasterously obtuse to the lessons of the campaign's success. The common wisdom defines clarity and principle as politically dangerous; obfuscation and compromise, as playing safe. Yet the fact is that, in this election year, the political dangers of playing safe have proved to be the greatest ones of all.

If compromise brought power, Hubert Humphrey would be God. No one could accuse him of a finicky aversion to expediency. He was a phenomenon of readiness to satisfy expediency's demands, even its whims, instantly, in all directions, with a compulsive energy that bordered on the apoplectic. He was like a one-man band, deluged

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with innumerable requests for songs and attempting to keep up and play them all. He was a hurricane of compromise, raging across the land, belching out torrential gusts of his political vacuity, lurching, twitching and thrashing in a frenzy of opportunism. Ebullient, extravagant, he would contradict himself at every turn with the wanton pugnacity of a method actor trying to play the part of an unruly mob.

Since Muskie was the front runner from the start, all he had to do was sit tight, lie low and not make enemies. He was not about to blow it by saying something that might get people all upset. He chose the largest issues—alienation, the credibility gap, the issues that were profoundly disturbing and non-controversial; it was communication and trust versus division and discord. He was relentlessly forthright trustworthy, honest and sincere, always about nothing in particular. For a while he came across as Honest Abe Muskie. Then he raised his honesty to an even higher plane and strove to personify the old solid values. His craggy face became a legend; he was Maine granite, American bedrock. In fact it began to look as if he had bypassed the White House entirely to assume the solid crustacean presence of a Mount Rushmore apotheosis.

Humphrey and Muskie, instinctively inclined towards opposites of style, saying everything and saying nothing, differed in the campaign images they were striving to project—the Humphrey vitality and the Muskie dignity. But each in his own style shared the strategic principle of keeping political content to a minimum.

And they lost.

McGovern followed an alternate scenario, rejecting the passive strategy for the active, the inoffensive posture for the inspiring. At first, to be sure, it was the only approach open to him; had he been "realistic," he would have discounted his own prospects and backed Muskie. But as the strategy began to pay off, as he won commitment and support, as his campaign developed momentum, the pressure to edge to the center increased. At every stage of the game, the argument could be made that what was necessary before is counterproductive now—"We've gotten all the mileage out of these issues that

we're going to." It was, however, too late for such faintheartedness.

To take a specific case, William Chapman in the *Washington Post* reported from the convention that, "At several points in the past few days, the McGovern forces had considered abandoning the Singer-Jackson anti-Daley group and going all the way with the Mayor. For a mixture of reasons the idea was rejected. 'Even if we had wanted to, we couldn't have delivered the votes [for Daley],' said Gary Hart, McGovern's national campaign director. 'That would have been straining our people too far. It would have compromised the senator too much, his posture as a man'."

It is a moot point whether the delegates' scruples *enabled* or *compelled* the leadership to go with the Chicago insurgents. In either case, the scruples made it the politically correct decision, even granting that the stakes were high. To be sure, Daley is widely seen as the way to a November victory in Illinois, and Illinois may well be the key to the election. McGovern will need more than acquiescent support from him. But the stakes on the other side were higher still. McGovern's strategists are aiming to register millions of "new voters" through the efforts of 100,000 registrar volunteers. Lacking the traditional big money sources, they talk of having a million contributors donate \$25 each. Their aim is to arouse and energize, to activate and intensify support. Under the circumstances, Daley's support was important, but the volunteer organization was vital. When the two proved incompatible, the McGovern leadership had to favor the latter.

Such is the logic of the McGovern "phenomenon." The candidate is only as radical as his constituency forces him to be, but precisely in the fact he is so extraordinarily dependent on that constituency lies the responsibility and the opportunity to demand that he stick by the commitments that make his constituency strong.

(From Page 13)

THE CITY COUNCIL of Denver, Colo., has passed an ordinance which prohibits anyone from keeping a crocodile which is more than 12 inches long.

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