

The New Nixon Dictionary of Double-Speak, Part II

By Edward S. Herman

ey who have put out the people's eyes, roach them of their blindness." (John ton, Collected Historical, Political and scellaneous Works, 1698, Vol. I, p. 192.)

Introduction

The reign of King Richard, although a gorgopia for humorists, including satirical icographers, has been no boon to the English guage. The Nixon prose is at best pirting, lacking in both style and substance, ded down with homilies and banalities - less ictical and less sincere than those in Poor hard's Almanac of the 18th century. There in fact, an excess of sincerity in the Nixon ublic manner, that gives it an unreal and show ality - the crown does not sit easily on the rowed and manicured brow. Both the style l substance seem and are contrived, kaged for a purpose that has little or hing to do with genuine and frank human nunication. The packaging of messages t carefully avoids both a serious discussion issues and any need to contend with retrating questions is by now a Nixon dition, very well documented for the 1968 ncampaign in Joe McGinniss' *The Selling of the sident*.

he minimal content of a Nixon message, l the obvious use of language to manipulate, ve always struck me as demonstrating a tempt for both the democratic process and the capacities of the American public. The dain of Nixon conservatives for democracy s been manifested in many ways; most tantly, perhaps in the political espionage l sabotage attempted or carried out against

Democratic Party at Watergate and ewhere during 1972. The contempt for orary people finally surfaced openly in the on interview with Garnett Horner, where he ned the average American to "a child in the nily" who needs to be given responsibilities order to be protected from his natural clivities. (See the definition of "My Fellow ericans" in dictionary below.) According to liam L. Shirer, a long-time Berlin espondent and author of *The Rise and Fall e Third Reich*, Hitler used almost identical ds in describing his own "Dummkoepe" owers, children at heart, incapable of ight, but manageable with sound leadership e Shirer's "The Hubris of a President," *The on*, Jan. 22, 1973).

he sophisticated analyses falsify because fail to recognize the ease of rationalization gut-based decisions; and the Anderson ers mentioned above make clear how onal the making of decisions can be under on. Shirer describes an episode in which, on 'ch 26, 1941, another weak-egoed person, lf Hitler, was faced with an unfavorable nge in governments in Yugoslavia. This put nto a wild rage as he took this develop-it as a personal affront. He ordered Goering estroy Belgrade from the air, and Shirer rts: "That was done the town was razed, e large parts of Hanoi these past days."

People have argued for years over the question of whether Mr. Nixon has "principles" or is a pure power-seeking opportunist. This is perhaps a fruitless debate since nobody has yet invented a sincerityometer, and since the definition of "principles" and proof of "having" them are hard to come to grips with.

Yet Mr. Nixon presents so many seeming paradoxes in this sphere, and his actions have such large consequences, that it is difficult to avoid speculation. For example, as a spokesman for the simple verities it is hard to believe that the President would not claim to believe that honesty is the best policy and that telling lies is improper. Yet Mr. Nixon has lied incessantly, and so have his closest associates and press representatives. In fact, really audacious lying has become the basis for special honors and rewards under Nixon. Thus Jerry Friedman's late December series of lies on "enemy propaganda" about the bombing of Bach Mai hospital, "pure Goebbels" according to Shirer, who attended many a Goebbels press conference, was immediately followed by his being honored in early January with the Defense Department's Medal for Distinguished Public Service (for providing "accurate" information).

Returning to Mr. Nixon's own fabrications, let us take just two cases: on June 29, 1972 he asserted that North Vietnam never returned 15,000 French prisoners of war after 1954, a statement immediately labelled totally false by the French Embassy. On July 27, 1972, he claimed that a "million" people had been killed in North Vietnam during the land reform of the 1950's, a gross inflation of even the CIA-fabricated sources previously relied on by Mr. Nixon in earlier untruths. (See D. Gareth Porter, *The Myth of the Bloodbath: North Vietnam's Land Reform Reconsidered*, Ithaca, 1972, p.54). Perhaps Mr. Nixon can convince himself that a lie is true, or that a lie can be told when used by himself on grounds of higher interests of state, with one principle having to be sacrificed to another of greater importance. My own view is that truth-telling is simply not an important value for Nixon; it is part of an orthodox surface, like the Boy Scout Oath taken in childhood, but not an operative factor in his own behavior (although he is lavish in offering this and similar principles for application by his fellow Americans).

The same applies in other spheres: President Nixon may in some parts of his mind believe in "freedom of speech," but in no sense can it be regarded as an operative principle, either in personal behavior or as an end which he actively pursues, either in Saigon, Greece, or the United States. In fact, no President in American history has made a more concerted attack on the fundamentals of media freedom and the right and ability of the public to know and to hear criticisms of those in power than has Richard Nixon. The Nixon administration's attempt to destroy the protection of confidential sources used by media reporters (Caldwell, Farr, Bridges, Whitten, Ellsberg) is a very serious threat to freedom of the press.

A reporter now who learned the true story of

Watergate from confidential sources could only divulge it if he were prepared to go to jail or to betray (and thus lose) his sources of information. The Agnew-Nixon-Whitehead attacks on those elements of the communications system not goose-stepping 100 per cent with their Leader, including the recent major and damaging cuts in funds for public broadcasting, and the politicization of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, plus the quite open threat of license removal for non-conformity by commercial TV networks and stations, are direct and brazen assaults on freedom of speech. It is a very consistent and ominous pattern that has led the American historian Henry Steele Commager to conclude that "Never before in our history...has government so audaciously violated the spirit of the Constitutional guarantee of freedom of the press."

Two ironies and hypocrisies should be noted here. First, while Nixon claims that the federal government is "too big" and constitutes a threat to freedom, anyone dissenting from the party line of his particular government is seen as a fit subject for bullying and discipline. This supposed enemy of Big Government is doing more than anyone in recent times to centralize political power and insulate the allegedly menacing federal government from criticism, thereby further enhancing its power. The second irony and hypocrisy is the extent to which Nixon and other self-styled conservatives, lovers of the Constitution and freedom, couldn't care less about the Bill of Rights. In a quite literal sense the "strict construction" of Nixon and his Supreme Court appointees is "loose construction" of the first 10 and the 14th amendments to the Constitution; the "strictness" is in the rights of the supposedly too big government to discipline its unruly children (the citizenry) pretty much without regard to the fine points of the law!

Nixon "conservatives" talk a lot about "freedom," but if one examines closely their behavior and reactions to events at home and abroad, their gut interest turns out to be confined almost exclusively to "freedom of enterprise." Even this is highly compromised, frequently boiling down to "letting the fur fly" on the basis of the existing structure of economic power. And when substantial free enterprise interests find this going too rough on this basis, the principle of non-intervention will quickly be shunted aside (as in the case of the oil quota system, the use of tariffs, quotas, export loans and export subsidies, and the wage-price control system of 1971-73). The determinative, true operational principle of Nixon-type conservatism, then, is, I believe, to do that which conforms with the interests of major economic owning and managing groups in the United States, who sometimes, but not always, benefit from relatively unconstrained free enterprise.

Is President Nixon really a "conservative"? This is debatable. It is true that he is trying to preserve and enhance the power of the business-military elite that he represents so effectively, but he has also been trying hard to turn the clock back to about the age of William McKinley on domestic social policy, which is reactionary, not conservative. Despite some contradictions, in his Second Inaugural Ad-

ss, Nixon's core philosophy seems to have been expressed in his conversion of a sorry hero of John F. Kennedy into low grade Ayn Rand—From Kennedy's "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country," President Nixon revised to: let each of us ask not just what will our government do for me, but what I can do for myself." Both the use of language and the philosophy expressed here are worthy of attention. Note the change from "country" (Kennedy) to "government" (Nixon). Nixon uses the word country only when he wishes to convey a positive image—our "country" bombsanoi or needs a B-1 bomber for its security—government" is that dirty old thing that has gotten too big, collects taxes, and pays welfare to non-workers.

The philosophy espoused here is really a form of reactionary anarchism—think only of yourself, "grab and run," and let the devil take the hindmost. This is hardly conservatism, as it is destructive of any sense of community and it flies in the face of patriotism itself. It would be interesting to hear the Reverends Jerry Falwell and Norman V. Peale explain why it fits into their concepts of Christian brotherhood.

But although the manipulative element in the Nixon speeches is considerable, they also appear to reflect the real Nixon, genuinely attempting to convey his true feelings—which undoubtedly the most depressing aspect of Nixon prose. For it reveals an almost incredible simplicity and superficiality of thought, considerable personal insecurity, weakness of character, a hunger for power and delight in its exercise, an absence of empathy and compassion, and an apparently limited capacity for rationalization of questionable conduct in pursuit of chosen ends (see "Bizarre Incident" in dictionary below).

Such a terribly dangerous combination. In his recent book, *Licensed Mass Murder, A Sociological Study of Some S.S. Killers*, the fish psychiatrist Henry V. Dick shows that the worst of the Nazi torturers and exterminators were not madmen but were, on the contrary, rather weak-egoed individuals whose repressed fears and insecurities surfaced only in the context of an encouraging social climate, aiding acquisition of power.

For the reader of the documents made public by Frank Anderson relating to the India-Pakistan conflict must be struck by the extent to which Nixon's highly personal likes and dislikes were involved in his "tilting" toward the military dictatorship of Pakistan and against Bangladesh and India—Khan's deferential and sycophantic attitude toward Nixon, India's lack of deference and willingness to pursue its own interests in a way conflicting with Nixon's plans. Notable also is the total indifference displayed by Nixon toward the huge bloodbath carried out by his son-in-law and the Bengalis of what was then East Pakistan.

Even more revealing was the Christmas 1972 bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong. There have been many fancy, sophisticated explanations of this deliberate slaughter of several thousand Vietnamese, but nobody, with the possible exception of Shirer, has suggested a simple one that I believe is probably the closest to the truth; namely, that this particular bloodbath was mainly a result of the personal character-



Characteristics and propensities of Richard M. Nixon, with his simple-minded belief in the efficacy of brute force, his obvious pleasure in the exercise of power, his identification of greatness

with a willingness to employ the Big Stick (see below, "Great Man"), and whose psyche seems to require a variety of proofs of virility and decisiveness, of his being a really big man and not the insecure and superficial fellow that he sometimes (and quite accurately) feels himself to be.

The New Nixon Dictionary Of Double-Speak Part II

(Note: Some cross-references below refer to items in Part I of the Dictionary, DP 9-29-72. For reasons of space footnotes have been omitted.)

Bargaining chip. A huge military boonboggle whose rationale is that its development now will put us in a better position to bargain in the next Arms Agreement for a relative advantage in developing new chips. (See "Arms Agreement" and "Follow on".)

Bizarre incident. Breaking, entering, theft and espionage by the forces of law and order. As in, "I can say categorically that his investigation indicated that no one in the White House staff, no one in this Administration, presently employed (sic - employed today, as opposed to yesterday), was involved in this very bizarre incident." (Nixon on Watergate, Press Conf. on Aug. 29, 1972.)

Bug. A small electronic device for listening in on other people's conversations, widely used during the New American Revolution to help "bring us together" in the central files.

Bug out. To abandon a course of action or merely rational considerations of costs and benefits.

Busing, Conveying children to school on buses where the purpose or effect is racial integration or desegregation, as in, "the vast majority of Wilcox County (approximately 4,500 whites (there are around 11,500 blacks) insist that they have had no busing until now. 'We don't call what we've been doing busing. That's just carrying the children to school,' says Roland Cooper... Today there will be one shattering difference. Instead of passing by the black youngsters waiting for a later bus with a black driver, Mr. Collins (the bus driver) will pick them up, too. It will be their first ride on a 'white' bus. And that, to City of Alabama whites, is busing. And, like an apparently huge majority of U.S. citizens, they don't like it." (Neil Maxwell, "Anger in Alabama," Wall Street Journal, March 20, 1972)

Busing for arbitrary racial balance. Nixon-Wallace code phrase meaning: "I am with you in your opposition to the use of busing for desegregation; so let us agree that we shall focus on 'arbitrary quotas' and 'coercion' and not discuss the merits, bases and effects of the racial segregation that we wish to preserve."

Casualties. See "Our Casualties."

Compassion. Regretting what must be done to the unfortunate in the interest of reestablishing and maintaining self-reliance and the work ethic, and in order to avoid spending the people's tax money on their "whims," "new goodies," and "to help them." (See, "Self Reliance".)

Defense Expenditure The only government outlay which is non-inflationary; also important in the struggle for a favorable balance of overkill. (See "National Security" and "Bargaining Chip".)

Double Standard. Criticizing our policy of Restraint (q.v.) without at the same time deploring as equally or more objectionable their policy of deliberate Terror (q.v.). As in, "Those who question our policies toward the Jews ignore the nefarious behavior of the Jews toward the great German people." (Hitler, Berchtesgaden, June 1944.)

Ending the war, terminating our direct role, while allowing the natives to keep fighting it out among themselves under our general supervision. (See "Nixon Doctrine" and "Peace with Honor".)

Fat. The chronic condition of excessive resources of agencies and budgets concerned with health, education, and welfare, as perceived by the leaders of the New American Revolution (q.v.). These agencies and budgets are therefore prime candidates for New Revolutionary cuts, in the face of the pressing demands of the always "lean" Defense Expenditures (q.v.). As in, "But there are other areas where you can (make cuts). That includes the new agencies - HUD, HEW, Transportation and so on. They are too fat, too bloated. When I speak of Defense, in terms of the

aware of defense, in terms of the military personnel in Defense, the cuts that can be made are minimal...."

transportation are all too fat, too bloated. When I speak of Defense, in terms of the hardware of defense, in terms of the military personnel in Defense, the cuts that can be made are minimal...."

Follow on, A militarily pointless successor to an obsolete weapons system, necessary to maintain the level of employment and GNP and to preserve the balance of power between the military services.

Foreign aid. Welfare payments made to Third World Leaders to help them bail out their ailing economies, finance the level of repression necessary for their survival, and to arrange for their prospective retirements on the Riviera. (See "Leader.")

Freedom Fighter. Fighter against freedom; a mercenary Alouette airplane (F-4 Phantom II) built by the United States for its own use and for that of the Free World forces in South Vietnam, South Korea, Taiwan, Greece, etc.

Great Man. A man with power who, when confronted with difficult decisions, opts first for the Big Stick, as in, "the little man from Missouri had that indefinable quality, as did the big man from New York, Theodore Roosevelt, for character that made him a man capable of making tough decisions...."

Historic Occasion. One in which I, Richard M. Nixon, the leader of the world's greatest power, have therefore makes history in every movement and action, deign to participate.

Ideological plugola. The selection of facts and impressions of viewpoints inconsistent with those being pushed by the forces of corporate ideology.

Internal affairs of another country. Unpleasant events occurring in another country which our leaders favor (e.g., the massacre of several hundred thousand Indonesian Communists, suspects, and their families), or to which they are indifferent (the Sharpsville massacre in South Africa), or which are carried out by a friendly military junta whose power our leaders wish to preserve (the West Pakistan slaughter of Bengalis). These are to be distinguished from developments in another country that violate principles of morality, rights of property, and involve subversion. See "Assistance" and "Subversion.")

Medieval-Christian ethic. A system of beliefs and ideals capable of accommodating within a single individual an exacting petty morality (e.g., on length of hair) side-by-side with a supreme callousness on issues of large humanistic significance (e.g., human slavery, genocidal warfare). One of the sources of strength of Western societies in dealing with others possessing less moral flexibility.

Armageddon. The chronic state of our preparations for Armageddon. (See "Defense Expenditures" and "FAT.")

Limited Accidental Damage. Total destruction of a target theoretically off-limits; as in, "Pentagon spokesman said the Bach Mai hospital and Gia Lau airport apparently suffered 'some limited accidental damage' during the intensive U.S. bombing."

Limousine Liberal. Set Traitors to the limousine owning class.

Moral Fibre. Willingness to get screwed continuously without diminution of work efficiency.

Morality. Adherence to conventional standards of dress, hair style, comportment, respect for hard work, money, the flag, and established institutions; and the avoidance of disruption based on the stubborn pursuit of ethical values, as opposed to those justified by self-interest (e.g., picketing against utility rate increases and the raising of wages).

My fellow Americans. I bail out children, for whom my contempt is about to be shown by a stream of contradictory banalities.

New American Revolution. Reestablishment of the structure of power and the verities of circa 1896; counter-revolution.

Our Casualties. Deaths and injuries suffered by citizens of the United States; or, Net Casualties, which equal gross casualties less those suffered by "allies," mercenaries, enemy troops, and the civilian population being saved.

Overzealous. Engaging in illegal acts on my behalf; as in, "overzealous people in campaigns do things that are wrong." (Nixon on Watergate, Press Conf. of Aug. 29, 1972.)

Peace with Honor. Leaving the field of combat around election day, having saved a people from aggression and successfully built up a client police state able to survive for the moment on the basis of repression, a heavy infusion of Foreign Aid, and a continuing threat of forceable reentry by the Savior. (See "Save," "Aggression," and "Foreign Aid.")

Perfectly Clear. Somewhat murkier now than previously.

Permissiveness. The failure to spank during Democratic administrations, which explains existing social problems.

Qualification for public office. Record of financial support and personal loyalty to the Leader and his Party.

Rad-Lib See, Effete Intellectual Snob.

Reform. Government contributions to improved health, education and welfare that are consistent with zero increases in expenditures; also, instead of spending billions more of their own money on people, allowing them to "help themselves." (See "Sociology of the Haves.")

Self reliance. Acceptance of a tax-expenditure structure in which the Haves get and the Have Nots give. This is necessary because when the Haves get, this contributes to growth and progress; if the Have Nots got, this would damage their Moral Fibre (q.v.).

Sociology of the Haves. Explanations of social disorder in terms of Outside Agitators, Coddling of the disorderly, and lack of Moral Fibre on the part of the Have Nots. Solutions are fewer Outside Agitators, less Coddling, and more Moral Fibre; or, in practical terms, more Police, fewer Doles, and homilies on Self Reliance. (See, "Outside Agitators," "Coddling," "Dole," "Moral Fibre," and "Self Reliance.")

South Vietnamese. n. The Saigon military junta; or, the small minority of urban upper class South Vietnamese dependent on and desirous of a continued foreign ravaging of their country. As in, "it is now up to the South Vietnamese to win the political contest awaiting them, as we have always maintained."

Space Shuttle. adj., n. A long lead time device for digging and filling up holes in outer space.

Spending, Reckless. n., adj. Inherently inflationary expenditures for health, education or welfare; as in, "This bill (H.R. W. and Dept. of Labor Appropriation bill) is a perfect example of the kind of reckless spending that just cannot be done without more taxes or more inflation, both of which I am determined to avoid."

Staying the Course. Continuing to kill without limit up to election day, at which point we may be able to arrange Peace with Honor (q.v.).

Sufficiency, Superiority.

Support. n. or v. Bail out, substitute for, or make possible the continued existence of; as in, "we will continue to use it (air power) in support of the South Vietnamese (q.v.) until there is a negotiated settlement or, looking further down the road, until the South Vietnamese have developed the capability to handle the situation themselves." (Nixon, Press Conf., Nov. 12, 1971).

Technical Violations. Illegal acts carried out by the forces of law and order; as in, "with regard to the matter of handling of campaign funds, we have a new law here in which technical violations have occurred and are occurring, apparently, on both sides." Because they are only "technical," such violations are subject only to token prosecutions, dropped as soon as this can be done without undue publicity.

Welfare. n. Payments made to shiftless and lubricious non-workers which encourage them to continue their immoral behavior at the expense of taxes collected from the Silent Majority. The lightning rod of Nixon era frustrations and demagoguery. (See "Boondoggle," "Subsidy," and "Defense Expenditure.")

Watergate. n. A place in Washington, D.C. at which some Bizarre Incidents involving possible Technical Violations of the Law of Overzealous agents of the New American Revolution took place. (See, "Bizarre Incidents," "Technical Violations," "Overzealous," and "New American Revolution.")

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Two other articles by Edward S. Herman
on Vietnam, filed POWs:

2 Feb 72

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