

Rolling Stone,  
10 Oct 74  
[] filed W/gate

Nixon

filed 20 Sep 74  
(on stands  
this date)

The Scum Also Rises

by Hunter S. Thompson

p. 35:

Nixon's entire political career - and in fact his whole life - is a gloomy monument to the notion that not even pure schizophrenia or malignant psychosis can prevent a determined loser from rising to the top of the heap in this strange society we have built for ourselves in the name of "democracy" and "free enterprise." For most of his life, the mainspring of Richard Nixon's energy and ambition seems to have been a deep and unrecognized need to overcome, at all costs, that sense of having been born guilty - not for crimes or transgressions already committed, but for those he somehow sensed he was fated to commit as he grappled his way to the summit. If Nixon had been born Jewish, instead of Black Irish, he would probably have been a pawnbroker instead of a politician, not only because the suburbs of Los Angeles would never have elected a Jewish congressman in 1946, but because running a big-league pawnshop would have fueled him with the same kind of guilt-driven energy that most of our politicians - from the county assessor level all the way up to the White House - seem to thrive on.

On any given morning, both the politician and the pawnbroker can be sure that by sundown the inescapable realities of their calling will have forced them to do something they would rather not have to explain, not even to themselves. The details might vary, but the base line never changes: "I will feel more guilty tomorrow than I feel today, just as I feel more guilty today than I felt yesterday. . . . But of course I have no choice: They have made me what I am and by god, they'll pay for it."