

4-29-74
NYT

Nixon-Phobia

To the Editor:

In an April 10 news article, you paraphrased Le Monde to the effect that "the American President had spectacularly demonstrated his continuing ability to dominate international politics—even without the presence of Secretary of State Kissinger,"—but in the same article you temper that assessment with an anonymous quote from an anonymous letter by an anonymous high official of an anonymous French ministry that President Nixon "shamelessly substituted a publicity campaign for the mourning of an entire nation."

Even the most obsessed Nixon-phobe would have retreated from such assessorial judgment, particularly when nine aspirants to the French Presidency declared their candidacies at the time of Pompidou's interment. Was this in keeping with "the mourning of an entire nation"?

It was generally conceded that the initiative for "superpower dialogue" came not from Nixon but from President Nikolai V. Podgorny as well as Chancellor Willy Brandt, Premier Kakuei Tanaka of Japan and President Giovanni Leone of Italy.

The Times obviously conserves all its reverence for the dead. The editorial wreath "The Watergate Summit" The Times laid on Pompidou's grave [April 10] is sheer perfidy. What probably rankled The Times more than anything else is the President's rapport with people and the genuine respect and esteem in which he is held by the world's leaders.

You appear determined, in your con-

summated hatred for Richard Nixon, to sabotage the most sensitive negotiations with foreign governments crucial to world peace and stability. Is it your contention that the President should be quarantined while you exploit Watergate?

Precedents for such meetings may be culled from The Times itself. President Nixon, while in Paris to attend the memorial mass for Charles de Gaulle in November of 1970, visited with Pompidou. At that time, he also met with President Podgorny and other foreign dignitaries. And in April 1967, when the heads of state gathered for Konrad Adenauer's funeral, The Times reported "Western allies seen using funeral as occasion for political talks" (April 20, 1967, 42:1).

Similarly, the funeral of President Kennedy was the occasion for diplomatic maneuvering. "Johnson confers with Deputy Premier Mikoyan; stresses willingness to settle U.S.-U.S.S.R. differences" (Nov. 27, 1963, 1:8). On Nov. 27, 1963, The Times even ran an editorial lauding "Johnson and Khrushchev moves to bar damage to ties" (and how fragile they were then).

The Times is full of columns describing receptions and conferences involving every foreign dignitary, and this was at a time when a young martyred President was barely cold in his grave.

Honi soit qui mal y pense—"evil be to him who evil thinks" (motto of ancient English Order of the Garter).

(Rabbi) BARUCH KORFF
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for Fairness to the Presidency
Washington, April 19, 1974