

The Better Man

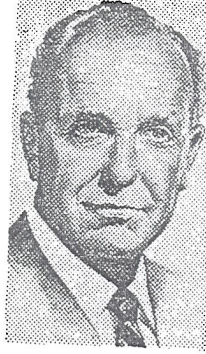
By William Randolph Hearst Jr.
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NEW YORK—Today, just two days before the national elections, it will hardly come as a surprise to my regular customers that Richard M. Nixon will be getting my vote on Tuesday. He has had my support for reelection all along, as you know from many previous columns.

What I have never done, however, is to summarize the major arguments in the case of Nixon vs. McGovern as I see them. Here and now is my last chance to do so—so here goes.

In all fairness, as a starter, you must give credit to George McGovern for one of the most remarkable performances in American political history. There has never been anything quite like it.

Starting from scratch, with literally no support but his own convictions and ambitions, he set out on what every professional observer agreed was a hope-



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less quest for the most important elective office or position in the free world.

He proclaimed his aim a full year in advance of any other Democratic candidate. He defied ridicule and even the bosses of his own party. Yet he won that party's nomination in Miami Beach, thanks almost solely to his dogged determination and his brash challenge to party traditions.

It was an all but incredible personal triumph, and not for one moment do I underestimate the tenacity of purpose of this man. He is nothing less than a phenomenon, as the old-line Democrats have discovered.

Having said that, it is instructive to observe that determination and personal ambition are not — by themselves — enough to convince the public that a man deserves the top leadership of the nation. Or at least so all the public opinion polls would indicate.

Determination, fortunately, still must be matched by practical ideals. And ambition must be matched by loyalty and personal integrity.

George McGovern is lacking in both respects.

He has proved it time and again in the campaign.

By his switching of positions, his vacillations in crisis, his alternate desertion and wooing of allies, his frequent revisions of half-baked panaceas, he has created for himself a credibility problem which is far more than a gap.

In his case it is a canyon, a chasm.

As a result, despite his personal charm and his tremendous tenacity, he is almost certain to lose when the voters render their verdict Tuesday.

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RICHARD M. NIXON is not the kind of man who inspires wild enthusiasm. He is introspective, withdrawn, coldly calculating, and has a kind of Puritan outlook which his left-wing critics consider to be the essence of being "square."

At the same time, on the record, he has long since proven that his own personal ambition and determination can be translated into practical action and bold initiatives of a truly historic import.

The Nixon record in the White House during the past four years is by no means ideal in some respects. But it is a record of generally solid and sometimes brilliant achievements.

Production versus promise, that's what the election boils down to. We can have four more years of stable, experienced, responsible government — or we can launch into an era of experiment with a captain whose guidelines are chiefly rainbows.

Despite what George McGovern says, the economy of this country is far healthier than it was when Richard Nixon took office. Runaway inflation was braked by wage-price controls. While great stress seems to be laid by the news media each month on the increase in unemployment, I find few people who know that **SEVEN MILLION** more men and women are working now than when he took office. McGovern's cure-all would be a \$16 billion boondoggle in federal make-work programs, naturally supported by tax revenues.

Speaking of taxes, the President has pledged there will be no increase next year unless the Democrats—expected to control the next Congress—make it mandatory by profligate spending bills. McGovern, by contrast, promises all sorts of sweeping social programs whose estimated tremendous additional cost of some \$147 billion — he vows — would not cost a penny more in taxes from Americans whose income is from wages or salaries.

Well, I simply don't buy that. It makes no more sense than many of the constantly changing programs he has been offering to correct domestic financial and social

woes — programs so varied and often self-contradictory that space precludes their discussion here.

If you listen to George McGovern, and believe him, he is going to spend more for every social welfare activity the federal government is now engaged in and it isn't going to cost the average taxpayer an added nickel. He isn't quite sure how he will do it, to put it gently, but he swears he will if given the chance.

The whole point is that **YOU** would be taking a terrible chance to give **HIM** such a chance.

Nothing in McGovern's record, or in his far-out visions, suggests that he could ever command the mass public backing he would need to get any of his domestic programs off the ground.

What he says sounds great to idealists and would-be reformers.

It would sound great to me if I didn't know just how tough it is for any President to alter the structure of our society—even slightly.

What impresses me, and seemingly the preponderance of Tuesday's voters is the fact that our nation—under President Nixon—has slowly but surely been led from the morass of bitter division and violence to a dawning new era of relative stability, unity and peace.

For this accomplishment alone, and regardless of any failures along the way, Richard M. Nixon deserves the support of his countrymen when they go to the polls this week.

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BUT WHAT IS MOST SCARY and shocking to me about the candidacy of George McGovern is his apparent vision of a United States surrendering its role of world leadership.

He has the idea, expressed in many ways, that the U.S. can and should practically disarm itself on the theory that Communist Russia and China thereupon would be swept by waves of benevolent brotherhood.

Like blazes they would. The only thing they respect is strength, and the willingness to use it if necessary.

They know that Richard Nixon, as proven in Vietnam, has such willingness—and there certainly is no doubt about our present strength. It was because he is a strong man, representing a strong nation, that Mr. Nixon was able to achieve the tremendous personal triumph of his diplomatic overtures to both hostile nations.

George McGovern seems incapable of grasping this basic truth of international relations. Not only does he think that the Communists are our secret friends, he would simply give in without any further argument to their claim for jurisdiction over all of Southeast Asia.

He would even do more than that. Disgusting as it seems to me, he had the incredible gall to declare that if elected he would send his Vice President to Hanoi to literally beg for the release of the American war prisoners.

With an attitude like that, what do you suppose McGovern would have done last week when North Vietnam served notice that unless the U.S. signed the proposed peace treaty by its deadline the whole deal would be off?

I'll tell you what he would have done. He would have given in—just as he promised to end the war by giving in.

The greatest danger McGovern would bring to this nation in the White House is not his lack of experience, his inconsistency and his half-baked ideas. It would be his weakness as a national leader in the event of another showdown crisis with the Communists.

You've got to face up to them and call their bluff, as Jack Kennedy did in the Cuban missile showdown.

You've got to face up to them and call their bluff, as Richard Nixon did in refusing to accept the Red peace treaty deadline.

What Nixon did was the greatest act of political courage I have witnessed in my lifetime.

For that one act alone he deserves to win by a landslide on Tuesday.