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# Reflections on 'Year One of Our —Or, 'Double Standard' in

FRIDAY, AUGUST 8, 1975

By Patrick J. Buchanan

## Deliverance'

## Washington

Hatred of Walpole was almost the only feeling which was common to them. On this one point, therefore, they concentrated their whole strength. With gross ignorance, or gross dishonesty, they represented the Minister as the main grievance of the state. His dismissal, his punishment, would prove the certain cure for all the evils which the nation suffered. What was to be done after his fall, how misgovernment was to be prevented in future, were questions to which there were as many answers as there were noisy and ill-informed members of the Opposition. The only cry in which all could join was "Down with Walpole!"

—MACAULAY

WASHINGTON—It was anticipated that the anniversary celebration would be an unctuous affair. And it was predictable that the first bouquets to Pete Rodino would come out of the typewriters of Mary McGrory and Tony Lewis.

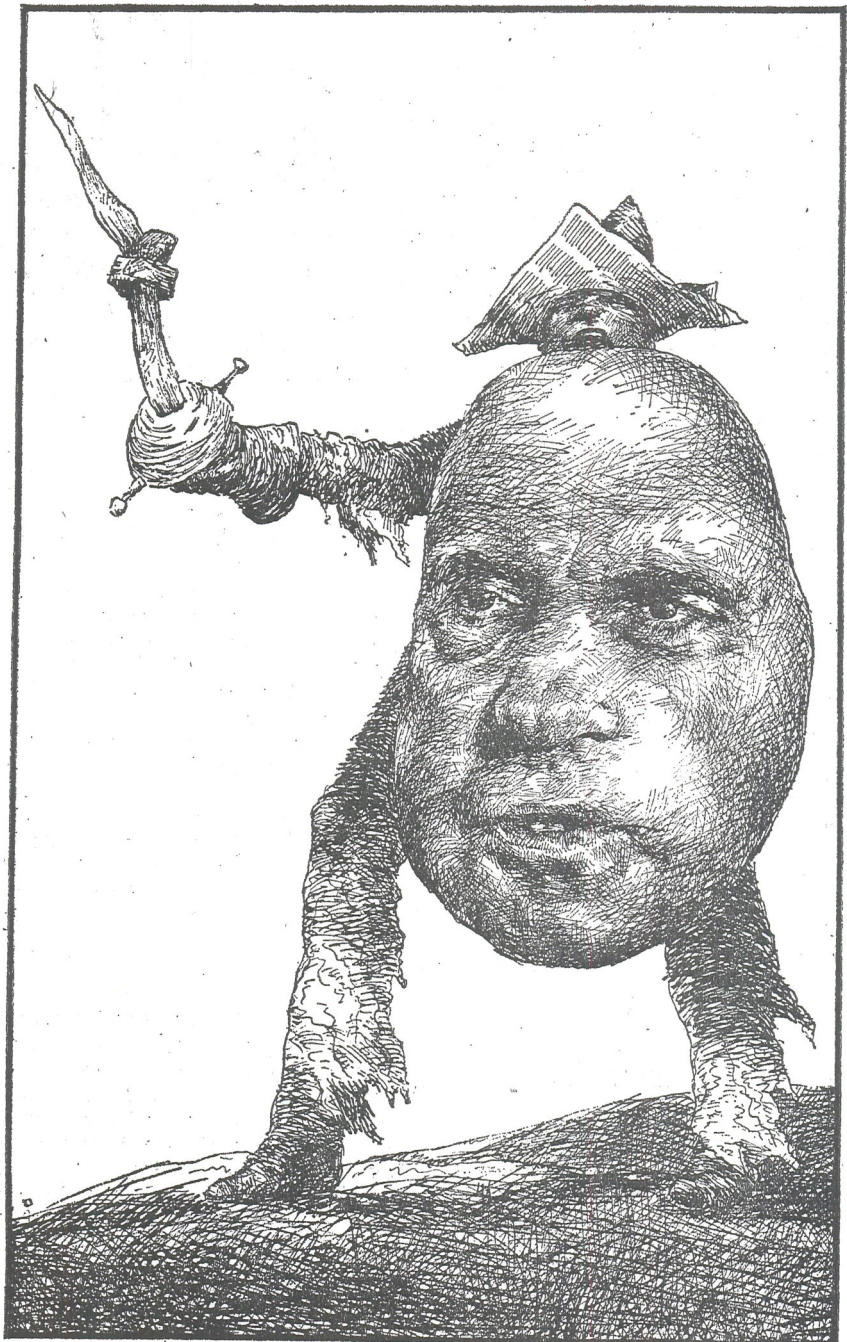
Mary's valentine was titled, "Golden Moment's Gone, But You Can't Lose Heart," and she serenaded the pride of the decaying Newark political machine as our "gentle Italo-American poetaster." Tony's madrigal, "The Glorious Revolution," closed with this sigh of remembrance: "Nothing should make us forget that moment of shared wonder and love of country in the summer of 1974."

Isn't it pretty to think so?

Yet, looking back at Year One of our deliverance, 8 August 1974 looms as less a victory for morality in government than a triumph by one set of politicians over another. And the conspicuous bond among the victorious seems less "love of country" than hatred of Richard Milhous Nixon.

From the atrocities unearthed and the skeletons exhumed since our "moment of shared wonder," one claim can surely be validated: When Mr. Nixon said his Administration was being judged by a double standard he was indulging in uncharacteristic understatement.

Recall now the "Huston Plan," the



Brad Holland



blueprints of those who "almost stole America." It transpires that what Tom Charles Huston proposed and Mr. Nixon approved for five days—mail covers, surveillance, surreptitious entries and infiltration of extremist and terrorist groups—was a matter of routine for the Army, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Central Intelligence Agency in the Kennedy-Johnson years. And the significant difference between the Nixon wiretaps and those of his predecessors was that the latter were more numerous, productive and professionally managed. What Gordon Liddy failed to do to Larry O'Brien, the Kennedy brothers and L.B.J. did successfully to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

There have been changes, however. The moral indignation so much in surplus in August, 1974, is nowhere visible now. Remember Senator Lowell Weicker almost fainting dead away, before the cameras, as he reflected on the bugging discussions "right there in the office of the Attorney General." Where is Mr. Weicker now, as we learn that in the Oval Office and Attorney General's suites in the early 1960's the talk was of political assassination? And the single objection Robert

Kennedy raised was that the Central Intelligence Agency went and gave the contract on Fidel Castro's life to the private concern of Sam Giancana and John Roselli.

It has not been a pennant year for Watergate heroes. While saving us from the Imperial Presidency, the 93d Congress also managed to save itself. Clandestinely appended to "campaign reform" was an amendment shortening the statute of limitations on fund violations from five years to three, which neatly mooted half a dozen investigations into the hanky-panky of Democratic campaigns. Neither our crack Special Prosecution Force nor our vigilant adversary press has discerned just how that amendment was smuggled onto the statute books.

The civil liberties lobby also covered itself with glory by looking the other way as John Mitchell and John Ehrlichman were denied the right to a change of venue out of this poisoned city—a right routinely conceded to Russell Means and Joan Little.

There was also that unfortunate oversight when the special prosecutor, to the amusement of all, let the three-year statute of limitations run out on accusations that the amiable Democratic National Committee chairman

Robert Strauss had as party treasurer accepted illegal corporate contributions from Ashland Oil.

The truth that dares not speak its name in this town is that both press and judiciary had a vested interest in Watergate convictions, an interest they were unprepared to jeopardize over something so insignificant as the civil rights of Mr. Nixon's men. Without those Democratic and black jurors to rely upon, the special prosecutors had no guarantee they could run up a won-lost record to rival that of Andrei Vishinsky.

They pressed their luck too far, however, when they indicted John Connally on evidence so flimsy and tainted that even the Washington press was asking, before the trial was over, why it had ever begun.

Yet Leon Jaworski's men did more to blacken the reputation of John Connally than Charles Colson ever did to the name of Daniel Ellsberg. And while Mr. Colson spent six months at Maxwell Air Force Base for his sins, this "abuse of power" by the special prosecutor goes, to this day, unremarked.

But the year has not been without comic relief. In early 1974, Mr. Nixon's men were coping with the thesis, pro-

mulgated by liberal scholars and journalists, that Presidents could be impeached for their subordinates' misdeeds. Comes now a hotly perspiring Frank Church to beg that the Kennedys not be held accountable for all those assassination plots gestated in their tenure, since the C.I.A. was, heh-heh, a "rogue elephant."

So it goes. The respected Richard Helms is permitted to refresh his memory and revise his testimony concerning C.I.A. conduct in Watergate and the Chilean operations, while on Sunday Dwight Chapin begins a ten-to-thirty month prison term for misremembering what Donald Segretti told him about political pranks.

Only the Marys and Tonys any longer embrace the myth that, at Watergate, the "Good Guys Finally Won."

Good guys do not conduct de-Nazification programs against innocent Nixon holdovers in Government. Good guys would not savage Henry Ruth for not getting more indictments. Good guys would not have filled the airwaves with malevolent bellowings—like 10,000 Shylocks cheated of their pound of flesh—when Gerald Ford pardoned Richard Nixon to put the

"long national nightmare" behind us.

Still, the "Get-Nixon" gang could never have succeeded without Mr. Nixon's cooperation. They had been hacking away at his lifeline to Middle America, with indifferent success, for 25 years. It was Mr. Nixon himself who severed that lifeline irreparably when he implored his people, again and again, to believe that which the "smoking pistol" tape of the 23d of June showed not to be true.

It was this breach of faith that broke his Presidency, not, as Brother Safire suggests, "his own hatred of the press that slowly, steadily and then suddenly pulled Nixon down."

If he had leveled with his people they would have pulled him through. Still, when the trap door dropped beneath him, it was not truth, justice and morality visible at the foot of Mr. Nixon's scaffold, but—heads bowed as in prayer—malice, vindictiveness and hypocrisy.

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