



The President welcomed the Nixons back from their harrowing South American "good will" tour last May.

# The Mystery of Richard Nixon

A Post editor's penetrating examination of one of the most disputed figures in America—the man who at the moment probably has the best chance of becoming the next U.S. President.

By STEWART ALSOP

Reception committee at Caracas. Even Nixon's enemies admitted that he faced the mobs courageously.



There is at least one point about that much disputed figure, Richard Milhous Nixon, which no sensible person can now dispute. Despite a surface blandness which sometimes makes him seem quite ordinary, Vice President Nixon is a most extraordinary man. Consider one measure of just how extraordinary he is.

Since 1836, when Martin Van Buren inherited the crown from crusty old Andrew Jackson, no Vice President has been nominated as his party's Presidential candidate. Yet already, two years in advance, Vice President Nixon has the 1960 Republican Presidential nomination sewed up in a nearly puncture-proof bag. And even allowing for the current low state of Republican fortunes, he unquestionably has a better chance than any other



The young Nixon (right) with his parents, and brothers Harold (left) and Donald. Their father lived to be 77. Harold died of tuberculosis in his youth.



THE  
ACROPOLIS

After one of the most successful years the college has ever witnessed, we stop to reminisce, and come to the realization that much of the success was due to the efforts of this very gentleman. Always progressive, and with a liberal attitude, he has led us through the year with flying colors.

RICHARD  
NIXON  
PRESIDENT  
A. S. W. C.

Nixon became student-body president of Whittier College by advocating on-campus dances. He personally disliked dancing but, as a good politician, knew how to pick a winning issue.

man to be the next President of these United States.

Yet to the vast majority of Americans, this extraordinary man remains a cardboard figure, oddly inhuman and impersonal. To his enemies—and he has, probably, more enemies than any other American—he is a cardboard devil, utterly without scruple or conviction. To his admirers—and they also number in the many millions—he is a cardboard saint, whose strength is as the strength of ten because his heart is pure.

Sometimes the dislike of Nixon is pure bile, undiluted by rational content, as in the case of the elderly lady in Whittier, Nixon's home town in California, who telephoned this reporter to say: "I know it's against religion to hate anybody, but I just can't help hating that Nixon." The worship of Nixon can be equally irrational, for a case against Nixon—in some respects a strong case—can certainly be made.

The purpose of this report is not to please the old lady from Whittier, who will certainly go on hating Nixon to the end of her days. Nor is its purpose to please those to whom any criticism of the Vice President is tainted with treason. What follows is, instead, an attempt—doomed to partial failure, since a part of any man always remains hidden—to see through the cardboard figure to the human being underneath.

The maker of such an attempt should give his credentials at the start, since Nixon is one of those men—like Franklin D. Roosevelt—

about whom no one can pretend to be wholly objective. Until rather recently, I inclined more to the view of the old lady in Whittier than to Nixon worship. Nixon seemed a shrewd, tough, ambitious politician, and not very much more. But especially in the second Eisenhower Administration, like many other Washington reporters, I found myself, almost in spite of myself, increasingly impressed by Nixon.

In certain almost impossibly difficult situations—notably President Eisenhower's ill-

nesses—Nixon has handled himself brilliantly. Reporters who have covered him on his trips abroad, some of whom started as strong anti-Nixonites, have come back praising him for his deft sense of personal diplomacy; and, after his trip to South America, for plain physical courage in the face of that most terrifying of phenomena, a mob gone wild.

What is more important, Nixon has repeatedly displayed a knack—useful in a potential President—for being right. In the pre-Sputnik era

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Nixon wept on Senator Knowland's shoulder during the 1952 campaign-fund crisis, after Ike said, "Dick, you're my boy."



Nixon remains loyal to Murray Chotiner (right), his controversial ex-manager.

## The Mystery of Richard Nixon

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last summer, Nixon's was almost the only voice in Administration raised against the policy of defense cutback and slowdown. He instantly recognized and publicly acknowledged the real meaning of the first Soviet satellite, when other Administration spokesmen were smugly attempting to laugh it off with weak jokes. He was the first to recognize that the recession was a serious matter, demanding a serious Government policy to deal with it. And it has been difficult for even the most cynical of the anti-Nixonites to detect a political motivation in some of the positions Nixon has taken, like his strong advocacy of the politically unpopular foreign-aid program.

I also discovered something else—that Nixon is a most interesting man to talk to. Unlike so many denizens of the Washington zoo, he never wraps himself in the American flag or recites his latest speeches verbatim to a restless audience of one. He talks politics sensibly and well. Indeed, where the subjects of politics and government are concerned, Nixon is something of an intellectual, as the excerpts from my notebook which accompany this article suggest. He has read a great deal, and he has thought a great deal about what he has read.

Nixon also has another quality which is hardly characteristic of most politicians—he listens. An interviewer is apt to find himself suddenly transformed into interviewee, with Nixon taking notes on a large yellow pad. State Department officials who have briefed him before his trips abroad, accustomed as they are to the glazed eyes and unstified yawns of junketing politicians forced briefly to listen to the facts, have been amazed by Nixon's incisive questions, his intense determination to master the essentials.

Nixon, in short, is certainly far more than just another tough, shrewd, ambitious politician. But then, what kind of man is he? The best way to try to answer that question is to consider the kind of man, and the kind of boy, he has been, and then to try to understand the ways in which he has changed, and the ways in which he has not changed.

Among Nixon's critics and rivals, it is fashionable to scoff at the notion that Nixon has changed at all. And in one sense they are right. There are ways in

which men do not change. The psychologists have proved that a boy's intelligence quotient at the age of nine will be about the same when he is forty-five. A born fool or a born coward will almost always so remain. As the Bible warns, a man cannot "by taking thought . . . add one cubit unto his stature."

Yet time and experience do change a man, not in his inner nature, but rather as saline deposits change the outer size and shape of a barnacle exposed to the sea. It is silly to suppose that a man of Nixon's intelligence and capacity to learn has been in no way affected by the extraordinary experiences through which he has passed. The following attempt to understand how Nixon has changed and how he has not, takes the form of a drama in three acts.

In Act One we examine the original barnacle—the boy who was father of the man. In Act Two we consider Nixon in midpassage, in the greatest crisis of his life, when charges in the 1952 campaign that he was the beneficiary of a "secret millionaires' fund" all but destroyed him. In Act Three we consider Nixon today, with six years of the Vice Presidency behind him, standing within a long arm's reach of the nation's highest office.

Start, then, with the bare bones of Nixon's early life, before trying to clothe them in a little flesh. He was born in 1913 in a hard-working, impecunious Quaker family, and he was brought up in the pleasant, sunlit Quaker town of Whittier, just outside Los Angeles. His school and college records have a Horatio Alger consistency. In Whittier High School, he was first in his class scholastically, president of the student body and a champion debater. In Whittier College, he was second in his class, president of the student body, a champion debater and a very bad football player. At Duke University Law School in North Carolina—he went there on a scholarship and was graduated in 1937—he was third in his class, the equivalent of president of the student body and on the law review.

Even these bare bones tell something about the young Nixon. He was intelligent—his scholastic record proves it. He was popular—an unpopular boy is not consistently

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"I guess he wants to close up."

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

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CLEANS YOUR BREATH WHILE IT CLEANS YOUR TEETH

(Continued from Page 54) elected president of the student body. He had a strong political instinct even then—a boy who is not politically minded does not run for president of the student body every time he gets a chance. But what kind of boy was Richard Nixon, really?

In an attempt to answer that question, this reporter has corresponded with all Nixon's college and law-school classmates, and interviewed many of them, as well as relations, teachers, friends, enemies and casual acquaintances of Nixon's youth. It has been a fascinating pastime, rather like that old favorite of children's birthday parties, in which the eager player follows a string around and about and over and under until he comes at last on the hidden prize. For again and again the digger into Nixon's past comes upon something in the nature of the boy which leads directly, in a flash of recognition, to something in the nature of the man.

Take, for example, the odd contrast provided by a couple of pages of photographs in the 1931 edition of the annual yearbook of Whittier College. From one page, the self-conscious faces of the members of the Franklin Society peer out. Every Franklin is clad in the obviously unaccustomed splendor of a Tuxedo.

On the opposite page are the pictures of the members of the Orthogonian Society. Every Orthogonian is dressed in a simple white shirt, sleeves rolled up, collars open over boyish throats. Comparing the two, one cannot help feeling that the Orthogonians are somehow more natural, more likable—in a word, more American—than the aristocratically garbed Franklins.

Among the Orthogonians appears the familiar face—the ski-jump nose is there already, and the jowls are faintly beginning to appear—of Richard Milhous Nixon, founder and first president of the Orthogonian Society. It was founder-president Nixon's idea, of course, to have the Orthogonians photographed in simple, democratic, open shirts, to underline the contrast with the highfalutin Franklins.

Not long ago, this reporter was talking with the Vice President about the most famous speech he ever made—the television address at the height of the fund crisis. I said I had been looking over some old Whittier yearbooks, and that I suspected I might have found the origins of his wife Pat's famous "respectable Republican cloth coat."

"You mean the Orthogonians and the open shirts?" Nixon said, chuckling, with instant recognition. "Sure, the Franklins were the haves and we were the have-nots. I was only a freshman then."

Obviously freshman Nixon shared with politician Nixon an unerring instinct for telling political symbolism. Or take another example of the sudden sense of recognition which rewards the digger into Nixon's past—this one more calculated to please his critics than his admirers. Nixon tried out for football every year at Whittier. He was slight and ill co-ordinated, and he never made the team; he was useful chiefly as a kind of tireless, indestructible, animated ninepin for the better players to knock down. "He was a lousy player, but he sure had guts," recalls a football star of his day. Once in a long while, Nixon would be permitted to play in the last few minutes of a game. When that happened, a classmate who was then football linesman recalls: "I always got out the five-yard-penalty marker. Dick was so eager I knew he'd be offside just about every play."

His critics will enthusiastically agree that Nixon has been offside more than once in his subsequent career. One of his

law-school classmates, recalling charges that Nixon as a politician had used "questionable tactics," wrote this reporter the following revealing sentences: "He was a man of such high ambition, and a man capable of pursuing his ambition with such intensity, that I could the more easily believe that he would and could do whatever was necessary to attain the goal he had set for himself. However, I have serious doubts whether he himself did those things, because I got the impression of Richard, in college, that he had very high morals and was motivated largely by a very high sense of duty."

Those two oddly contradictory sentences tell a lot about the kind of boy Nixon was, and the kind of man he became. Nothing more infuriates his enemies, especially the more cynical and sophisticated, than what one Democrat called "Nixon's damned holier-than-thou attitude." But call it what you will, a holier-than-thou attitude or a "very high sense of duty," Nixon comes by it honestly.

His Quaker background is very much part of him. His great-grandmother and his great-great-grandmother on his mother's side were well-known itinerant Quaker lady preachers. His mother, a strongly religious and personally charming old lady—she looks like Whistler's mother with a ski-jump nose—hoped

Most children lose their fear of the darkness when they become teen-agers.

MILDRED SILVER

Richard would become a preacher, too, but she soon learned that he had his heart set on being a lawyer. She remembers when little Richard was sprawled in front of the fire, reading in the papers about the Teapot Dome scandal. He turned to her and said: "I know what I want to be when I grow up—an honest lawyer who doesn't cheat people but helps them."

Again and again, one catches echoes of that early pronouncement, with its note, faintly priggish to some ears, of high moral principle. When Nixon arrived at Whittier College, the Franklin Society was the only men's club on the campus, with all the special joys which such a social monopoly entails. Nixon, whose reputation as a coming man had preceded him from high school, was asked to join. He refused—on principle. The Franklins' social monopoly, he held, was unfair and undemocratic. But it was also typical of him that, a mere freshman, he immediately organized a successful rival club.

When he was a young lawyer with OPA at the beginning of the war, he insisted on taking the lowest possible salary. "He reasoned," writes his OPA boss, Prof. Jacob Buescher, "that the boys who were then being trained to hit the beaches were paid a lot less." But again, it was typical that Nixon rapidly climbed up from his self-imposed low rung on the bureaucratic ladder.

In college, Nixon was a very model boy. He neither drank nor smoked—although he took an occasional beer in law school—and he went to church four times on Sunday. The only youthful escapade any of his contemporaries can recall involved his crawling over the transom to get into the dean's office, law school. But his purpose was not to booby-trap the dean's desk or some such shenanigans. (Continued on Page 60)

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STAPLERS AND STAPLES

(Continued from Page 58) It was to discover, from the dean's records, where he stood scholastically.

As this episode suggests, those other qualities in Nixon, his "ambition" and "intensity" were also very much a part of the boy, as they are of the man. Nixon says of his father, Frank Nixon, "I guess I got my competitive instinct from him," and he is doubtless right. Frank Nixon, who died in 1956, was not a worldly success. His grocery store brought in just enough to support the family, and the Milhous family tended to think that Hannah, whose family founded Whittier in 1897, had married beneath her. Perhaps this explains why Frank Nixon, who suffered from bad ulcers all his adult life, was so cantankerous and argumentative, and such a disciplinarian. At any rate, Nixon's mother apparently acted as the carrot, and his father as the stick, in spurring on the boy to try to be "good, not just at one thing, but at everything."

He certainly tried hard, as he has been trying ever since. And, although he was a bad football player, he was good at almost everything else. He was a good actor, for example. Dr. Albert Upton, his drama coach, remembers a play in which Nixon, as a sadly bereft old innkeeper, was to appear alone on the stage, weeping. "I told him, 'Dick, if you just concentrate real hard on getting a big lump in your throat, I think you can cry real tears.' He did too—buckets of tears. I couldn't help remembering the play when I saw that picture of Dick crying on Senator Knowland's shoulder. But mind you, Dick is never spurious. He really felt it."

He was more than good at debating—he was brilliant, the champion college debater in Southern California. Debating was taken seriously at Whittier, almost as seriously as football, and being president of the Debate Team automatically made Nixon a very big man on the campus. The Rev. William Hornaday, now a well-known California preacher, then Nixon's debating teammate, recalls how shrewd Nixon was. "He used to pass me little notes, 'Pour it on at this point,' or 'Save your ammunition,' or 'Play to the judges, they're the ones who decide.'" Mrs. Norman Vincent, his high-school debating coach, remembers, "He was so good it kind of disturbed me. He had this ability to kind of slide round an argument, instead of meeting it head on, and he could take any side of a debate." Mrs. Vincent, it should be noted, is an ardent Democrat. Moreover, the abilities that "kind of disturbed" her were precisely those which made Nixon a champion debater.

And Nixon was also a brilliant campus politician. The Whittier yearbook for his senior year records how Nixon became student-body president "in a campaign in which mudslinging was noticeably absent. . . . On a platform advocating a new deal for those who enjoy the social niceties, he stormed to his position." The "social niceties" were on-campus dances, previously outlawed on that Quaker campus. Nixon disliked dancing, and still does, but he clearly had a well-developed instinct for the winning issue, even then. Yet the odd fact is that many of his classmates did not think of Nixon as a natural politician at all. "He was the last person in the class I would have picked to be a political headline," one law-school classmate wrote; and another: "I would put him down as the man least likely to succeed in politics."

Most Americans think of a politician as a backslapper, and Nixon was, and still is, anything but a backslapper. That is another note his contemporaries repeatedly strike in their letters about Nixon. "He was personally somewhat

shy." . . . "Definitely not an extrovert." . . . "Basically aloof, very sure of himself, and very careful to keep people from getting too close to him." . . . "He was not what you would call a real friendly guy." . . . "He tended somewhat to shyness."

Yet his contemporaries liked him. One lady classmate recalls that she "thought Dick Nixon was too stuck up." But she is an exception. Very few of his contemporaries felt really close to him, but almost all remember him in retrospect with admiration and respect. Typical is a law-school classmate, who had the trying experience of sharing a double bed in an unheated shack with the future Vice President (they were both too poor to afford anything better). "Dick Nixon," he wrote, "is the ablest man I ever met."

From all this, there emerges at least in rough outline a picture of the kind of boy Nixon was. There is the quite genuine Quaker strain, the "very high sense of duty." There is, as becomes an instinctive conservative, also a certain conventionality of outlook; Nixon has never got over his college boy's admiration for football heroes, and the club song he wrote for the Orthogonians is almost a take-off on the conventional college song: "Brothers together we'll travel on and on, Worthy the name of an Orthogonian." There is the fierce drive, the great

A cop is a police officer who stops you for speeding.

H. D. BILLINGS

ability, the first-rate mental equipment. There is the urge to manage, to influence, to lead, and an instinct for the means of doing so. There is—especially worth noting for future reference—the brilliant mastery of debating techniques. There is the touch of the ham, which most successful politicians have. And there is also something highly unusual in a politician, a withdrawn quality, a lack of easy warmth, a loneliness of spirit.

This, then, is the basic Nixon, the original barnacle on which the rest is built. Every one of the characteristics Nixon displayed as a boy is still clearly and visibly present in him. Now let us plunge into what would certainly be Act Two in any competent play about Nixon—the great crisis of the \$18,000 fund. In two episodes of that crisis—both involving Dwight D. Eisenhower, and neither fully told before—we shall see that something new has been added to the original barnacle; that the earnest Quaker boy has somewhere acquired an amazing inner toughness of fiber.

But first, again, the bare bones of Nixon's life. The years from 1937 to 1946 are quickly told. They were precisely like the same years in the lives of some millions of other young men. After law school, Nixon became a junior partner in an old family friend's law business. He was president of the Twenty-Third Club, and active in Kiwanis and in the Whittier Little Theater movement. There he met Thelma Ryan—"Pat"—a pretty high-school teacher and occasional Hollywood bit player. He married her in 1940. There followed the brief stint in OPA, and then a commission as a Navy supply officer, with some months in the Pacific. In the fund speech, Nixon described his war career as "not particularly unusual." It was unusual in only one way—Nixon became an unusually brilliant poker player, and came back with a useful nest egg of poker winnings.

In 1946, Nixon, still in uniform, accepted an invitation from another family friend, a Whittier banker, to appear before a local Republican group which was looking for a Republican hopeful to oppose Representative Jerry Voorhis, a high-minded, well-entrenched Democrat. Nixon was chosen, and beat Voorhis in what he has called a "fighting, rocking, rolling campaign." He was elected easily again in 1948, and in his second term he won a national reputation when he was given a large share of the credit—which he deserved—for bringing Alger Hiss to justice. In 1950, he beat Helen Gahagan Douglas in a race for the Senate—another "rocking, rolling" campaign. At the 1952 Republican Convention, Dwight D. Eisenhower rather casually selected his name from a list of suitable running mates. And in mid-September, 1952, when the campaign was just gathering steam, the story hit the headlines that Nixon was the beneficiary of a "secret \$18,000 fund"; and Nixon was almost destroyed.

So much for the bare bones. But before going on to examine the great fund crisis, it is necessary to consider two new characters in the dramatis personae of Nixon's career. One is his wife, Pat. Like Nixon, his wife is not easy to know well. But according to those who do know her, she shares many qualities with her husband. Besides the interest in the drama which first brought them together, she shares with him a good intelligence, much energy and a strong ambition. Her chief influence appears to have been to magnify Nixon, to intensify those qualities, especially his drive and self-confidence, which were present in him from the first. She has acted as a sort of extra backbone for a man whose backbone already had great tensile strength.

The second new character is Murray Chotiner, who was Nixon's campaign adviser in 1946, and his manager in 1950 and 1952. Chotiner is out of politics now; in 1956, still-unproved charges that he had used his political connections in his law business destroyed his political usefulness. Nixon, who is still outspokenly loyal to Chotiner, considers it a "tragedy" that Chotiner became involved in "the kind of law business which does not mix well with politics." Chotiner is—or was—a remarkable political phenomenon in his own right. He managed campaigns for Earl Warren and William Knowland as well as Nixon, and he has often been described as a political genius.

He is a shrewdly humorous fellow, with something of a Hollywood touch about him—he affects such eccentricities as miniature watches worn as cuff links. He is fascinating when talking about the one subject on which he is a genuine expert, and the one subject which really interests him—the art of winning elections. Chotiner was Nixon's chief mentor in that art, in Nixon's early days, and there is no doubt that his influence on Nixon was very great.

Both Pat and Chotiner were on the campaign train with Nixon, who was whistle-stopping on the West Coast when the fund story broke on September eighteenth. Nixon's first reaction to the story was simple unconcern. It is important to understand that the unconcern was quite genuine. Neither Nixon nor Chotiner, who also knew about the fund and who was no political babe in the woods, had foreseen that the fund might be a political booby trap. The fund was never a "secret"—the treasurer, Dana Smith, had publicly solicited contributions up and down the coast—and Nixon and Chotiner regarded it as no different from any other political-campaign fund. Earlier,

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## Auto glass lets all the wonder in

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PITTSBURGH PLATE GLASS COMPANY  
PIONEERS IN AUTO SAFETY GLASS

(Continued from Page 60) when columnist Pete Edson had asked about the fund, Nixon had given him Smith's telephone number and suggested that Smith could give him all the details.

But Nixon soon realized that he was in desperate trouble, especially when the New York Herald Tribune, the paper of his closest newspaper friend and collaborator in the Hiss case, Bert Andrews, called for his withdrawal. "That was the worst shock," Nixon has recalled. There were other shocks. Harold Stassen wired him, asking him to withdraw for the good of the party. Thomas E. Dewey telephoned him to say ("I hate to tell you this, Dick") that the consensus among his powerful New York friends was that Nixon should step aside. General Eisenhower said only that Nixon must be as "clean as a hound's tooth," and Nixon was well aware that a number of those who had the general's ear were urging him to dump his controversial running mate.

Nixon himself thought briefly but seriously of withdrawing. But his wife Pat repeatedly said two things. "If you withdraw under fire," she said, "you will carry the scar for the rest of your life." And she said: "If you withdraw, Ike will lose." Chotiner also maintained that Nixon's withdrawal under fire would defeat Eisenhower, and he insisted from the first that the crisis could be turned decisively to Nixon's advantage. "I did what I always do," Nixon has said. "I considered all the worst alternatives, as cold-bloodedly as I could, and reached an analytical conclusion—that if I withdrew, General Eisenhower would probably lose. So I decided to make the effort to stay on, if possible with honor."

Although he has not said so, it is clear from the events which followed that Nixon's analysis led him also to the conclusion that the key to his situation lay with Dwight D. Eisenhower. If his personal reputation and his political career were not to sustain a mortal wound, the general must exonerate him completely and on his own initiative. Nothing less would do. Moreover, Nixon must at all costs avoid being summoned to judgment, like a naughty little boy, to be punished or excused by an indulgent parent.

On Friday, September nineteenth, while the storm was still gathering force, Nixon accordingly issued orders—quickly conveyed to the general's train—that he would under no circumstances speak to anyone in the general's party except Eisenhower himself. Friday, Saturday, and the daylight hours of Sunday passed without the expected telephone call from the general, who was under heavy con-

flicting pressures. Then on Sunday night, while Nixon was in Portland, the call at last came through from the general in Kansas City.

Nixon must have given a lot of thought to what he, a mere junior senator, thirty-nine years old, would say to the revered conqueror of Hitler. An ordinary man might have adopted a meek and defensive tone, giving his side of the fund story with much self-justifying detail. But Nixon is not an ordinary man, and he hardly mentioned the fund.

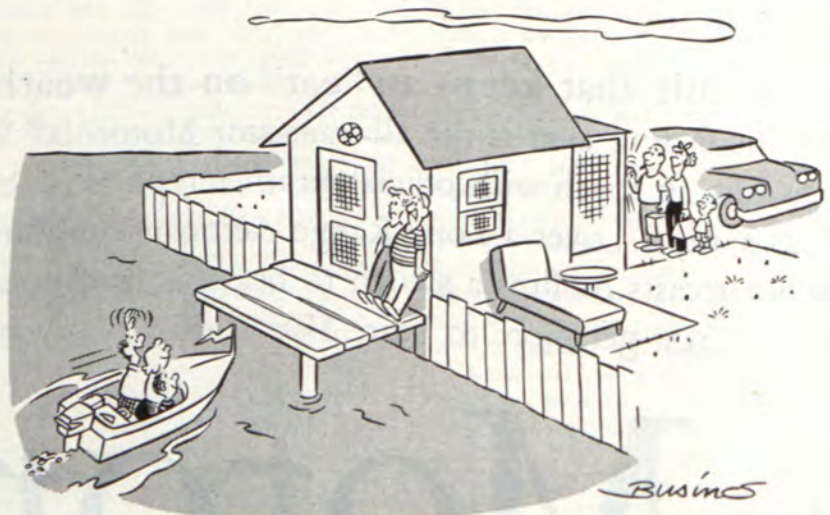
He started the conversation by saying flatly that he would withdraw if the general—and the Republican National Committee—so wished. The general replied that "this is not my decision—it is yours." Nixon answered immediately that he would be glad to take exclusive responsibility for the decision, either way. But first, he said, the public, and the general himself, ought to have a chance to "hear my side of the story." He warned the older man against listening to "some of those people around you who don't know a damn thing about it." And he concluded by giving the head of the ticket a small lecture about practical politics.

The longer there remained any doubt about whether or not he was to stay on the ticket, the more harm it would do, not only to himself but to the whole ticket. In a situation of this sort, a decision had to be made; it had to be made firmly, and it had to be made as quickly as possible. And, according to at least three people who should know—not including Nixon—and who recall Nixon's words with a certain retrospective awe, he concluded with a bluntly worded admonition which can be delicately paraphrased as follows: "General, in politics a time comes when you have to fish or cut bait."

It was an extraordinarily bold and aggressive line for a young man in Nixon's position to take. But it worked, as Nixon knew it must; Nixon could not possibly be dropped from the ticket without being given a chance to defend himself. Before that night ended, the money to put Nixon on a nationwide television hookup, which had hitherto been lacking, was quickly found.

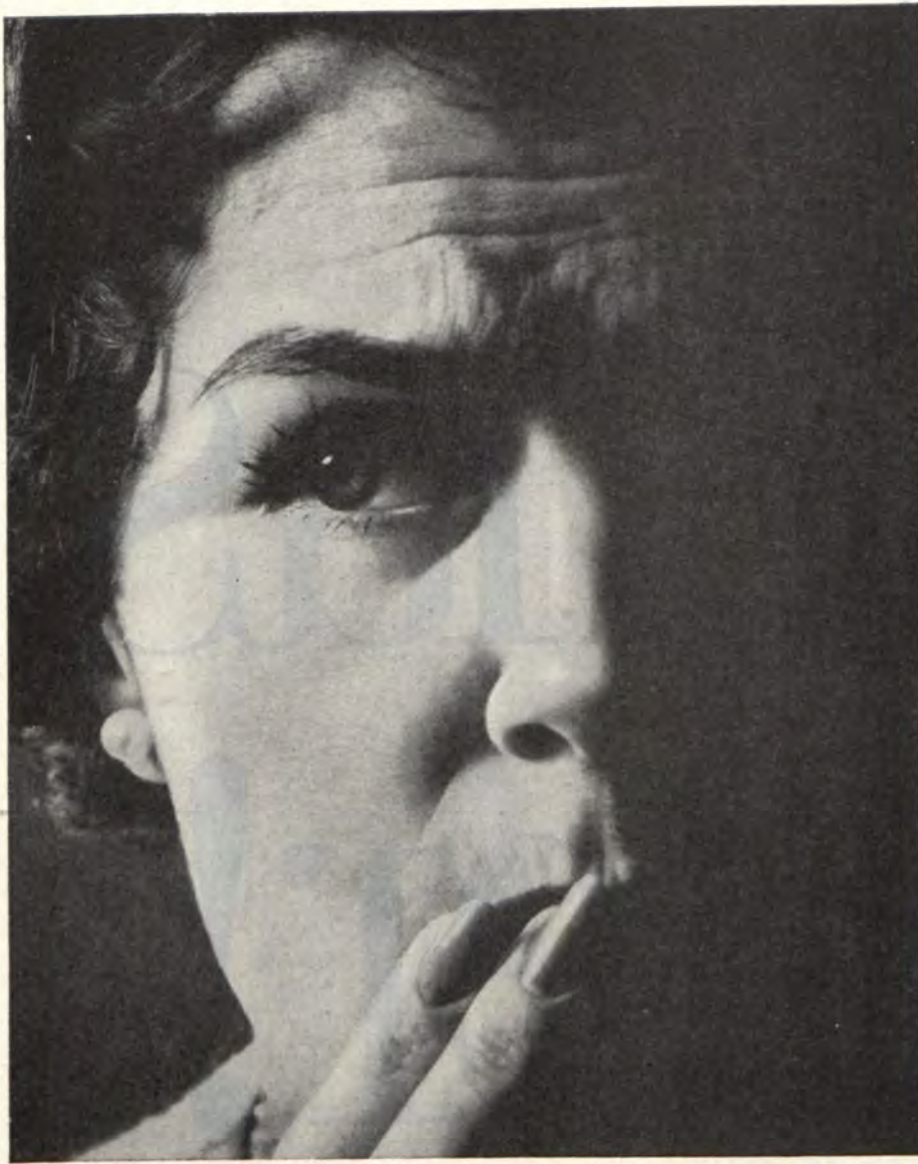
Nixon's famous broadcast the next Tuesday night, September twenty-third, was his most decisive political triumph, transforming him from a youthful would-be Throttlebottom into the really major political figure he has been ever since. It is also still in some ways a millstone round his political neck; those who dislike Nixon often explain their dislike by pointing to that "tear-jerking soap opera about the fund." Yet it is interesting to read the

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"Hi, folks!"

BUSINO  
THE SATURDAY EVENING POST



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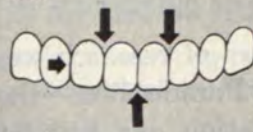
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(Continued from Page 62) speech now, all passion spent. Bar a few frills and furbelows, it is not at all hard to imagine Nixon making much the same sort of speech a decade and a half earlier, fresh out of law school.

There is that instinct for telling political symbolism, of course, in the "respectable Republican cloth coat," and there is the touch of the ham, in his daughters' "little cocker-spaniel dog, Checkers." Nixon got the idea of Checkers from Franklin Roosevelt's famous Fala, and he has confessed that it gave him a certain pleasure to hoist the Democrats on their own canine petard. There is the old mastery of debating techniques, in the series of telling debating points, some wholly specious, against the Democrats.

And there is the high moral tone, the air of injured innocence—"I come before you tonight... a man whose honesty and integrity have been questioned"—which infuriated the passionate partisans of Adlai Stevenson more than anything else in the speech. And yet Nixon did in fact consider that he was wholly innocent, and it did in fact come as a genuine shock to the Quaker boy with the "very high morals" to have his "honesty and integrity questioned." Nixon's emotion may have been conveyed in a hammy way, but as in the college play, "he really felt it."

There is, in short, nothing particularly surprising about the speech, once you understand the boyhood and background of the man who made it. What happened after the speech, like what happened before it, tells a lot more than the speech itself about the kind of man Richard Nixon, at thirty-nine, had become.

Eisenhower heard the speech in Cleveland, and immediately wired Nixon asking him to come to Wheeling, West Virginia, to help him "complete the formulation of my personal decision." From Cleveland, Republican Chairman Arthur Summerfield and his public-relations expert, Robert Humphreys, together called Nixon's Los Angeles headquarters to make the necessary arrangements.

They were in a jubilant mood, for they already knew the Nixon speech had been a political triumph. They finally reached Murray Chotiner. The conversation which ensued went approximately as follows:

"Well, Murray, how are things out there?"

"Not so good."

"What in hell do you mean, not so good?"

"Dick just wrote out a telegram of resignation for the general."

"WHAT? My God, Murray, you tore it up, didn't you?"

"Yes, I tore it up, but I'm not so sure how long it's going to stay torn."

A horrified pause.

"Well, Dick's flying to Wheeling to see the general, isn't he?"

"No; we're flying tonight to Missoula."

Missoula, Montana, was Nixon's next scheduled speaking engagement.

"WHAT? My God, Murray, you've got to persuade him to come to Wheeling."

"Arthur, we trust you. If you can give us your personal assurance direct from the general that Dick will stay on the ticket with the general's blessing, I think I can persuade him. I know I can't otherwise."

Recollections differ as to whether Nixon actually wrote out a telegram of resignation. But the above conversation is accurate in substance, although it is of course not verbatim, and there is no doubt at all that the line Chotiner took accurately reflected Nixon's mood and intentions. Nixon had heard only a part

of Eisenhower's telegram over the radio, and what he had heard sounded chilly and equivocal. Moreover, the general's summons to Wheeling represented precisely the summons to be judged which Nixon was determined at all costs to avoid.

So again, Nixon took a remarkably bold and aggressive line. And again it worked, as Nixon knew it must. At dawn the next day, Summerfield reached Chotiner in Missoula with a message for Nixon; he had reached the general by telephone on his way across Ohio to Wheeling, and had the general's promise that Nixon would be welcomed on the ticket with all honor. So Nixon explained for Wheeling, and the rest is history—how the general welcomed him with a "Dick, you're my boy," how Nixon cried on Senator Knowland's shoulder, and all the rest of it.

But clear away the sentimental underbrush, and what do you see? You see a young man of thirty-nine, undergoing a terrible personal crisis which could well

## Scarecrow

By Richard Armour

The scarecrow in our garden  
 scares  
 The crows away, would  
 frighten bears  
 And wolves, no doubt. But  
 what I need  
 To save results of toil and  
 seed  
 Is one that would, to spare  
 my plants,  
 Scare off the aphids and  
 the ants.

... ..  
 have destroyed him, and reacting with remarkable toughness and coolness. You also see a young man with only six years in politics behind him, with a sure, instinctive grasp of the political realities, and a bold willingness to act upon them.

Nixon, in short, was already a thoroughgoing professional politician at thirty-nine. He is a professional politician still—and proud of it. For when he says that it is "the function of the politician to make a free society work," he is speaking a simple truth which many people have forgotten. But there are different kinds of professional politicians; Lincoln was a professional politician, and so were Aaron Burr and Boss Tweed. What kind of politician had the Quaker boy, Richard Nixon, become in 1952, at the age of thirty-nine?

To ask that question is to pose the case against Nixon. As this reporter told the Vice President in the interview accompanying this article, I have amassed a vast dossier of anti-Nixon material, courtesy of the Democratic National Committee and Nixon's numerous enemies in California. What is striking about this dossier is that it is based not on the kind of Vice President Nixon now is, but on the kind of professional politician he was; it is based on the past, not the present. Moreover, it is based not on anything Nixon has done, but on the kind of things he has said.

To understand the case against Nixon, it is only necessary to quote a few words from his own mouth. The words were spoken, moreover, not in one of Nixon's "rocking, socking" California campaigns but in 1954, (Continued on Page 70)

(Continued from Page 66) when he was already Vice President. In that year, Nixon made a telecast defending the Eisenhower Administration's foreign policy and praising Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. In an aside, he asked this question: "And incidentally, in mentioning Secretary Dulles, isn't it wonderful finally to have a Secretary of State who isn't taken in by the Communists?"

In so saying, Nixon did not say that Dean G. Acheson and George Marshall, Dulles' predecessors, were "taken in by the Communists." But he implied it, and

the implication is grossly misleading and essentially untrue. To make his implication, Nixon used a rhetorical question, which is an old and rather sleazy debater's trick.

Other items from the anti-Nixon dossier might be cited, but that rhetorical question is the most damaging item. It is also the most typical, in its use both of an old debating trick and of an essentially specious "Communist issue." But the purpose of this report is not to make the case for or against Nixon. It is to try to understand the man. And it is not really

hard to understand why Nixon, even as late as 1954, was the kind of politician who could ask that rhetorical question.

Remember that "competitive instinct" which almost always carried Nixon offside in football games. Remember the strong influence of the brilliant Murray Chotiner, to whom the essential function of politics is, quite simply, to win. Remember also, in fairness, Nixon's part in the Hiss case, his first important political experience, which led him to equate the internal Communist danger with the infinitely greater external danger. And remember, perhaps especially, Nixon's years as a champion college debater, which formed his speaking style. The object of college debating, after all, is simply to win the debate, without regard for the merit of the issues, using against the opposition whatever debating points come to hand.

The case against Nixon, in short, is that he was, even as late as 1954, the kind of politician who regarded winning as a politician's first function, and who was willing to use to that end the debating tricks he had learned as a boy and young man.

Nixon is still in some ways the kind of politician he was in the past. He still has, for example, the inner toughness, the instinct for the political realities, the ability to seize control of a political situation, which he displayed in the great fund crisis. He displayed all these qualities, indeed, as recently as 1956, in a second great crisis in his life, which very few people know about. In February of that year, just before he announced his own decision to run again, President Eisenhower called Nixon to the White House for a fatherly chat. He pointed out that no Vice President in modern history had succeeded a living President. Nixon, moreover, lacked administrative experience. Might it not be better for Nixon to consider a Cabinet post—perhaps Defense—rather than run again for the Vice Presidency?

The implication was clear—that the President was at least seriously considering finding a less controversial running mate. Nixon was dismayed. This time, moreover, his wife Pat did not provide an extra backbone; she had grown tired of the stings and poisoned arrows of politics, and in 1954 Nixon had promised her that he would not run again. For weeks, Nixon was moody, depressed and uncharacteristically undecided.

Then two things happened. In a press conference, the President said that the Vice President should "chart his own course." And Nixon's old mentor, Murray Chotiner, came under investigation by a Senate committee. Thus, at least at second hand, Nixon was again under fire, as in the fund case. On April twenty-sixth, Nixon took matters into his own hands. He went to see the President, reminded him of his press-conference statement, and said that he had decided to run again, if the President agreed and the convention approved. The President said he was delighted by Nixon's decision, and Nixon promptly announced it then and there to the White House press corps. After that White House announcement, there was no way on earth to force Nixon off the ticket, as Harold Stassen and Nixon's other enemies should have been sensible enough to realize. It was, again, the bold move of a brilliant professional politician.

Nixon will remain a bold and brilliant professional politician to the end of his days. But at the same time, he is in certain important ways a different kind of politician from what he was eight, or six, or even four years ago. This is not a matter of opinion. At least in a narrow sense,

it is a matter of fact, provable on the record.

In the anti-Nixon dossier, the case against Nixon ends rather abruptly in about 1954. In 1956, it was an essential part of Adlai Stevenson's campaign strategy to drive Nixon to extremes by brutal attacks on his integrity. The strategy failed. Nixon followed the advice he now gives younger politicians, and built his campaign around the ticket's "positive" asset—President Eisenhower's personal popularity. The change in Nixon's political style has been even more obvious since 1956. And the change is not really at all surprising. Nixon, after all, is a highly intelligent politician, quite intelligent enough to see that the use of specious debating tricks is very bad politics indeed in a potential Presidential candidate.

Does the change go deeper than that? Nixon's recent record, as cited earlier in this report, is clear evidence that it does. Nor is this at all surprising either. For his whole history suggests that an ability to absorb and understand hard facts, and then to face them squarely, is one of Nixon's most conspicuous qualities. Nixon has had his ski-jump nose rubbed in a lot of hard facts, in the years in high office that have passed since he regarded Alger Hiss as the chief threat to the security of this republic. And although the old lady

**E**fficiency expert: A man who kills two birds with one stone and gets the stone back.

FRANCES RODMAN

in Whittier will never believe it, the evidence is clear that Nixon has become, rather gradually, a different sort of politician—the sort of politician who regards effective government, capable of facing up to the facts of the national situation and dealing with those facts, as the best kind of politics in the long run.

Three questions remain to be asked about Nixon, each progressively more difficult to answer. What are his chances of being the 1960 Republican candidate for President? If nominated, what are his chances of being elected? And if elected, what kind of President would he be?

Among political writers, it is currently fashionable to assume that Nixon is already as good as nominated. Unquestionably, he has a better chance for his party's nomination than any other Vice President since Van Buren. The reasons are obvious. Nixon is a better politician, and an abler and more experienced man, than any other now visible on the Republican horizon. But circumstances change, as Nixon himself is very well aware. The President, who could have, if he wished, a lot to say about the identity of the 1960 candidate, has described himself as Nixon's "warm friend," and he unquestionably admires the guts Nixon has displayed both on the domestic political scene and in such episodes as the South American riots. But they are two very different men and, especially in view of certain episodes described in this report, one wonders just how warm the friendship really is.

The President has angrily said that under no circumstances will he step aside to make Nixon the incumbent—which would of course copper-rivet Nixon's claim to the nomination and greatly increase his chances of election. The President has also made it clear that he will not actively support Nixon for the nomination. If the public-opinion polls, which most

(Continued on Page 72)



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(Continued from Page 70) politicians take too seriously, continue to show Nixon trailing the leading Democratic candidates, it is not impossible that some yet unnamed but glamorous nonpolitical figure, like Wendell Willkie in 1940, will emerge to challenge Nixon for the nomination. But it is hard to see who this faceless man might be, and the odds are certainly very heavy that Nixon will be the candidate.

As for the election, there are of course too many imponderables, from the state of the economy to the identity of the Democratic candidate, to justify even a wild guess. Most Democrats agree with Senator Jack Kennedy, currently the Democratic front runner, that Nixon will be a very formidable candidate indeed. But Nixon does have two visible political weaknesses. There are still a good many people who share the violent prejudices of the old lady in Whittier, and many more who still have at least a small pea of doubt about Nixon buried in their minds. On this point, Nixon himself believes, probably quite rightly, that time and his own course of action will change the minds of those whose minds are subject to change.

Nixon's second weakness as a Presidential candidate is something intangible, but something of which he himself is very well aware, as the interview accompanying this article suggests. It is that lack of easy human warmth, that withdrawn quality which his contemporaries felt in his college days, and which led many of them to put him down as "the man least likely to succeed in politics." That same quality makes Nixon today a remote and impersonal figure, even to many of his admirers.

But the fact remains that Nixon did succeed in politics, back in his college days, and he has been succeeding ever since. And in times like these the lack of easy bonhomie may not be such a political weakness after all. "You've got to be what you are; you can't pretend to be something different" is a good rule in politics as in life. And if 1960 is anything like the present, that inner toughness which Nixon has so conspicuously displayed, coupled with a first-rate intelligence and an instinct for seizing the initiative, may prove greater assets than backslapping geniality.

Those are certainly qualities which Nixon would take to the Presidency. There are also attitudes of mind of which one can be reasonably certain. Since his college days, Nixon has been an instinctive conservative, with a conservative's respect for things as they are. In his first term in the House, Nixon was a rather

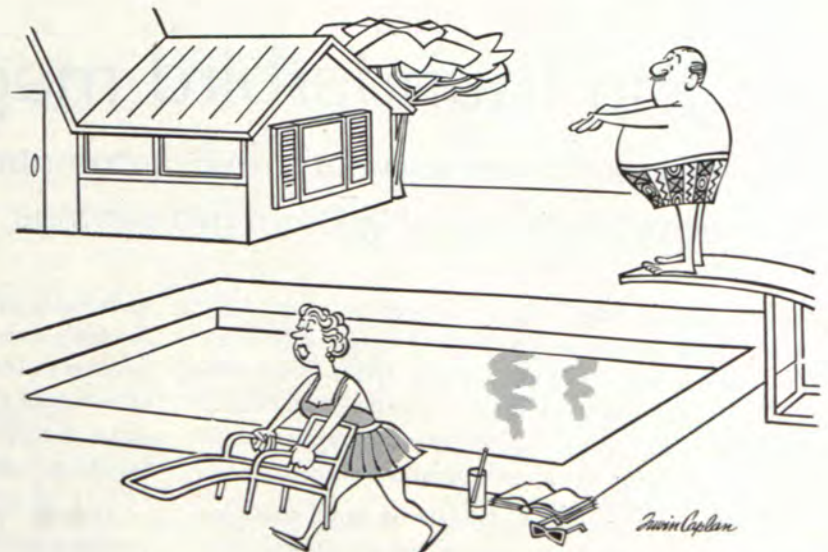
doctrinaire right-wing Republican in domestic matters, but he was increasingly flexible in his second term, and in the Senate. There is nothing doctrinaire about his conservatism now.

It is a safe guess that, if he became President, Nixon would be a conservative only within the limits permitted by the existing economic and political situation, for, besides being a conservative by instinct, Nixon is above all an intensely practical man. On the issue of national defense, Nixon's record has been wholly consistent, from his first year in the House to last year's hidden debate within the Administration on defense policy. And one can be absolutely certain that in a Nixon Presidency American foreign policy would be bold, perhaps even adventurous; above all, active rather than passive.

For the rest, it is not possible to predict what effect the enormous office of the Presidency would have on Nixon, or what effect Nixon would have on that office. There are those—Nixon's old adversary, Dean Acheson, is one of them—who firmly believe that Nixon, in his ambition, would pervert the great powers of the office to his own political ends. But those who hold to this extreme view are a dwindling minority. It is true that Nixon, as he himself has said, is a "political animal." It is true that, like Caesar in Mark Antony's speech, he is ambitious, and always will be. But there is a difference between a President's ambition and that of a lesser politician. For the Presidency is the pinnacle of any man's political ambition, and in that office a man's thoughts tend to turn more to the history books than to the next election. And certain qualities Nixon has displayed as a politician—the boldness and decisiveness, the sure instinct for the realities of power, the strong intelligence, the cool toughness in a time of crisis—would also be markedly useful in a Presidency.

An English statesman was once asked by an American lady for his definition of a great man. "A man to be reckoned with," he replied without hesitation. In this respect at least, Richard Milhous Nixon qualifies for greatness even today. It remains to be seen whether this complex and interesting man, this coolly brilliant practitioner of the ancient and necessary political arts, will qualify in time in other ways as well. It would certainly be interesting to see how a man so bold and able, with his instinct for the realities of power and his cool decisiveness in a time of crisis, would conduct the unending contest with those "very, very able men" in the Kremlin.

THE END



"Hold it a minute."

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST