

sination theory and practice. Usually, heads of state are killed by rifle or revolver; or, sometimes by a bomb placed in a plane. But to assassinate by rocket! Wow! Looking at the recent exploits of our trillion-dollar Pentagon: dropping dud bombs on a Serbian truck, and shooting down our own helicopters over northern Iraq, maybe we should cut the military budget a lot more, and import some Tutsi engineers! ■

The Apotheosis of Tricky Dick

by M.N.R.

It is another fiendish turn of the screw, the latest acceleration of rampant statolatry in our culture. Every eighth-rate Supreme Court Justice who retires now gets elevated to the pantheon: First it was the nitwit "Thoroughgood" Marshall, keened over as a giant among men; and now it is the little creep Blackmun, hailed as a "spokesman for the oppressed," as if *that* is supposed to be a proper function for a high level jurist. (How about "upholding the Constitution," for starters?)

But Supreme Court judges, while close to divine status, sit only at the right hand of the godhead Himself, El Presidente. It is the President, *any* President, who now embodies the Supreme Power, and must be invested with divine attributes to match the scope

of his powers. And so in death, every ex-President, regardless of party, of his status or reputation in life, must become clothed in the robes of magnificence, wisdom, and glory.

It keeps getting worse. For now the very man driven out of office in disgrace, returns, first as Wise Elder Statesman, and now, in death, cloaked in the robes of splendor. His nominal political enemy, Slick Willie, whose wife once helped Bring the Monster Milhous Down, now declares a "day of national homage" to none other than Tricky Dick, and we are even to be deprived of a day of postal delivery in Devious Dick's honor—as if these intrepid couriers needed any encouragement to deprive us of our mail!

And so the State, both parts of our sacred Two-Party System, bands together, swiftly and easily, to pay tribute to one of Their Own, and the rest of us are sucked into Playing the State's Game. And now it turns out that Willie has been receiving Wise Counsel from the Tricky One ever since his accession to the Throne. Would that Tricky had advised Clinton to concoct some potion that would make Willie disappear, once and for all!

And so History is revised and twisted out of all substance. All Presidents, and especially ex-Presidents, are noble and good, and they all get trotted out, like vultures perched on a wire, every time the current President wants to put across another "bipar-

tisan" scam on the American people, such as NAFTA, or GATT. How long has it been since an ex-President roundly denounced the current occupier of the office? Has *anyone* done so since Hoover went after FDR?

In this entire scam, the Respectable Media, of course, participate enthusiastically in the anointment. If a man is perceived as an eighth-rater before taking office (such as Truman), then he, inevitably, is hailed for "growing in stature" in office, so that he leaves, four or eight years later, close to the gods. And if his term of office is brief or shameful, as in the case of Jimmy Carter or the Tricky One, then the man Grows as ex-President. So that Carter's disastrous term is overlarded by his dotty Good Works ever since—maybe we can send Jimmy to supervise closely, the next "free elections" in, say, Rwanda? And Devious Dick's shattered term is buried in the encomiums for his buttinski role as Elder Foreign Policy Statesman. Even more irritating, if possible, than Nixon's Foreign Policy status as a Kissinger-and-a-half, was his obvious delight in posing as yet another of the host of "Value-Free" Political Pundits that already infest the airwaves. Given a few more years, he might even have surpassed the likes of Wolf Blitzer and Bill Schneider.

But regardless how it's done, the key point is to make sure that by the time the ex-President shuffles off this

mortal coil, the bad is swiftly interred with his bones, and the Good, real or fabricated, lives after him, in a blare of trumpets.

It is fitting, I suppose, that Tricky Dick should go down in life and in History as a "conservative." If any one man may be picked to sum up the victory of statist substance over tinpot rhetoric, of the triumph of Big Government Conservatism, Richard Nixon is that man.

Let us consider the Nixonian record—in office, that is, and not as the prosecutor of Alger Hiss or the Invisible Man on post-Nixon National Security Councils. What essentially did the Tricky One do? He succeeded in propelling the United States more vigorously toward Socialism than even his power-mad, brutish, and blackguardly predecessor, Lyndon Baines Johnson. The Tricky One, despite or perhaps because of his "conservative" billing, managed to:

- give an enormous and significant push to the march of socialized medicine—it is a straight and short line from the Tricky One to Hillary;

- accelerate the welfare state;

- give an enormous boost to "civil rights" and affirmative action;

- propose a monstrous plan to replace welfare by a guaranteed annual income for all—a far worse scheme even than Slick Willie's proposal to "end welfare as we know it";

- go totally off the gold standard, and thereby usher in a quarter-century of acceler-

ated inflation and volatile economies;

- impose a disastrous system of price and wage freezes and controls, a scheme which he cynically imposed even though he realized before, during, and afterwards that it could never work;

- fastening the horrors of OSHA regulation on industry in the name of "safety";

- giving a crucial impetus to environmentalism by pushing through the horrible Environmental Protection Agency.

We are told that Nixon was willing to turn over the entire vital realm of domestic policy to the liberals so that he could concentrate on his real love: foreign policy. But what precisely did he accomplish in foreign affairs?

Allegedly trying to end the Vietnam War, he lengthened and greatly widened it, stepping up the mass murder.

But what about *detente*? Well, yes, he eased tensions a bit in the Cold War, but all that really amounted to is that he didn't go to war against the Russians. But, after all, none of the other Presidents, for all their bluster, did either.

But what of Nixon's allegedly supreme triumph, his Opening to China? But, after all, so what? It was nice to ease tensions with China, but, after the Chinese kicked the American rear in the Korean War, there was never a chance that the U.S. would go to war against the ChiComs either.

I submit that Richard Nixon's record was as empty and as bleak in foreign affairs

as in domestic. Any achievements *at all* in the midst of the Nixonian miasma? Well, he *did* get rid of the draft. And he was personally a bright man, if that's any consolation.

And what of Watergate? What are Its Lessons? The most fascinating lesson is that the very Liberals who Brought Him Down with such glee are the ones busily rehabilitating his image from the grave, and burying Watergate in all the hoopla about Nixon's alleged wisdom.

But did Nixon deserve to be brought down? And wasn't Nixon's third-rate burglary no worse than the dark deeds committed by his predecessors? Yes, and yes. What Nixon did was no worse than FDR before him, or of course, Slick Willie did after him. The point is that they all, all, deserved to be Brought Down, and the sooner the better. The great thing about Watergate is that it made the unthinkable thinkable at long last, that it established the precedent for impeaching the Monster in the White House. And while they can bury Watergate, and they can rehabilitate the Tricky One's image all they want, they can install him in the Valhalla reserved for all ex-Presidents, but they can't take away from us the lovely knowledge that he—and Agnew just before him—was Brought Down, and if it can happen to him, it can happen to any one, even to whoever the current occupant may be. To throw one of the Liberal's favorite words in their face,

what I loved most about Watergate was "the process"—the process of impeachment, of Bringing the Man Down.

For a heady year or two, I actually believed that Watergate had permanently discredited the Office of the President, and not just the man Nixon, that never again would the American public trust any politician, especially any occupant of the Oval Office. I was of course wrong—especially after Ronald Reagan restored The Trust that the Establishment yearns to inspire in every American sucker. But still he was tossed out; they can never take that knowledge away from us. And for that, in an ironic sense, we are forever indebted to the Man Milhous. ■

Howard Stern for Governor?

by M.N.R.

It is said that the happiest day of a man's life is the day he acquires his sailboat; the second happiest is the day he gets rid of it. Well, I wouldn't say that the day I first joined the Libertarian Party was the happiest day of my life; but the day I left—about five years ago—was surely my second happiest. After being a Big Honcho in the LP for many years, it feels great to get up in the morning and know that I *don't* have to attend the next National

Committee meeting in some grungy hotel, or the next state or national convention. Above all, I don't have to worry about what crazy thing—platform, candidate, or official—the LP is going to fall into next, or worry about trying to head off this nutty deed at the pass.

So when the august *New York Times* erupted recently with a *front page* article (!) (April 3) on Howard Stern running for governor of New York on the Libertarian Party ticket, I didn't have to worry about whether or not such a race would be good or bad for the Party or its image, and if bad, to try to do something about it. *I didn't have to care at all.* I could just sit back and enjoy the spectacle. What a lark!

It was also fun to find out that this rather lengthy article, by-lined by Todd S. Purdum, featured two old friends of mine. (No, NOT Howard Stern!) One is Bob Goodman, a long-time Bronx activist, science writer, and earnest young man seeking ways of "outreach" for the LP. It seems that Goodman had been corresponding with Stern for years, possibly converting him to libertarianism, and of course has been listening regularly to Stern, notorious in the New York area as a very popular radio porno "shock jock" (to say "talk show host" doesn't quite give the flavor). When Stern announced on his program that he intended to challenge Mario Cuomo for the governor's spot, Goodman wrote suggesting

he run on the Libertarian ticket. Stern agreed.

The Libertarian Party, which has only 600 members in New York State, no money, and no prospects for getting on the ballot, was of course enchanted, for Stern urged his listeners to pay the LP dues and sign up, so they can vote for delegates to the April 23 state convention at Albany to select the nominee. Suddenly, Money, signatures, and even votes will be flowing in! Visions of sugar plums began to race through Libertarian noggins, and national LP marketing director Tamara Clark of the Nevada LP was rushed out to head up the Stern-oriented signature drive to get the LP on the ballot in New York.

The other friend highlighted in the *New York Times* article is Jim Ostrowski, a young serious-minded Buffalo attorney, who is truly a great guy, and one of the finest people in the libertarian movement. Jim is the only one I feel sorry for in this whole affair, because he was the one slated to run for the gubernatorial nomination before this whole circus began. Ostrowski very honorably, if unusually, decided not to insist on the legal technicality that these new members are really ineligible to vote. Instead, Jim wants to battle Stern "on the merits of who's a better candidate." Well, there's no question of who's a better candidate, a more articulate spokesman, etc., but *that's* not going to be the deciding