

less—a man's character is his destiny, and the 37th President of the United States is sure to be an irresistible challenge to the psychohistorians. But Nixon has been a national figure in American politics for a quarter century, and his remarkable career surely provides some obvious clues.

In the first part of that career Nixon established himself nationally by his exploits as a knight errant against the "Communist conspiracy," a 1950's code word to those who saw a pattern of Communist subversion at home and Soviet and Chinese aggression abroad. Nixon's initiatives in the Alger Hiss case and his subsequent election to a Senate seat brought him national attention, and his abilities as a polemical speaker and a Republican party fundraiser put him in constant demand. Nixon never really adapted to the norms and forms of Congress, and his campaigning in the 1950's, even after he

won the Vice Presidency under Eisenhower, was viewed by his Democratic opponents as exceeding the normal limits of partisanship. They never forgave him. It was during this period that Nixon also alienated many academics and some members of the working press. The mistrust was reciprocal and has been lasting, despite a great moderation of tactics by Nixon in the 1960's. Nixon was a highly effective campaigner and seemed always to enjoy the contest; through his Presidency he gave the impression of a man still most comfortable in the role of the embattled but indomitable campaigner.

Nixon's credentials as an anti-Communist are usually thought to have made politically possible the accommodations with North Vietnam, the Soviet Union, and China that are generally acknowledged to be the most brilliant achievements of his Administration and which Nixon must count on to set in

the ledger of history over and against the debits of Watergate.

An achievement of a different kind has been the support that Nixon drew from the middle of the American social spectrum. He managed early to establish communion with the large and increasingly uneasy group rediscovered in the late 1960's as the Silent Majority or Middle America. To this group, which feels threatened by social and economic change, Nixon communicated, sometimes subliminally, an attitude toward such things as flag, family, and law and order that earned him a loyalty which seems to have persisted for many even after the revelations of the last, decisive tapes.

As for the tapes themselves, their importance may ultimately be seen to lie not in their being evidence compromising a President but in the glimpse they give of the governmental process.

Much has justifiably been made of

## Politicians of Government Tried to Include Science

Unpublished memoranda in the files of the Senate Watergate Committee show that even some science-based activities of government were not immune from Nixon's loyalists' itch to politicize the federal bureaucracy.

A series of such memoranda in the committee files shows that from 1971 onward, the White House personnel office tried to draw the Committee for the Re-Election of the President (CREEP) and other political groups into helping to appoint advisory committees and commissions, many of which generally include scientists and scholars. The White House chief personnel officer, Frederic V. Malek, and his staff tried to brief campaign officials regularly on the need for patronage appointments and they solicited names.

In a memo of 16 June 1972 he specifically cited vacancies on a number of committees including the President's Science Advisory Committee, the President's Committee on the National Medal of Science, the National Advisory Committee on Oceans and the Atmosphere, and the Board of Regents of the National Library of Medicine. There is also some reference in the files to successful appointments to the part-time, honorific jobs ("We placed the President of Sons of Italy of Queens on a Traffic Safety Board and he was ecstatic," wrote Malek at one point). There is also evidence of vindictiveness against those who held such posts and were deemed unworthy. One CREEP staffer, Al Kaupinen, wrote to a White House personnel staffer that Erich Segal—the author of *Love Story* who was also on the Peace Corps Advisory council—was reported to be planning to attend a McGovern rally, and added, "I trust that the attached bit of information will be considered when time for reappointment to the Peace Corps Advisory Board comes about."

Malek was deputy director of the Office of Management and Budget until his resignation from the government last week. As with another Malek initiative, the responsiveness program for sensitizing the federal bureaucracy (*Science*, 12 July), it is hard to know whether these suggestions ever bore fruit.

Another memorandum in the Watergate committee's files shows that in December 1971 Jeb Stuart Magruder drew up an elaborate proposal for increasing military strategic weapons R & D in order to offset "the erosion of conservative support for the President" among voters who had favored Nixon in 1968. Magruder, now in jail, was then director of CREEP. In the memo addressed to [then] Attorney General John Mitchell he urged that the proposal be taken up with National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger and General Alexander Haig. "Surely some of that heavy brainpower ought to be utilized to help reelect the President. . . ."

"The NSC (National Security Council) will undoubtedly want to have a voice in this matter, regarding the actual decisions," he thought it worth noting. The total military research budget did go up in the President's budget request for fiscal 1973, but there is no way of knowing whether the proposal was forwarded by Mitchell or taken into account.

The abuses contemplated in these latest memos probably lie at the more legitimate end of the spectrum of actions by Nixon loyalists. Certainly, they seem less serious than President Nixon's apparent attempts to cut off federal funds to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (*Science*, 20 July 1973). Nonetheless they do indicate something of the atmosphere of the Nixon White House and the attitudes which contributed to the former President's downfall.—D.S.