

and the confronted constituent. As one of the congressmen he followed home and observed, I can testify to Professor Fenno's unobtrusiveness and relaxed manner. On a Saturday morning I took him to the local hardware store and introduced him to my "personal constituency," the inner ring of my "primary constituency," a group of personal friends who weekly kept me in touch with local developments so that I wouldn't become afflicted with rootlessness. My friends were surprised by his quietness—and later surprised to be memorialized in his book as an important element in my home contact.

Revisit the book: this is a time in our political history when Americans would be reassured to read it. The House of Representatives has not changed much since the midseventies, and doubtless Professor Fenno would come to many of the same conclusions now if he were to repeat his odyssey to the various home fronts of his congressmen. But today's congressmen are not happy, and neither are their constituents, thanks to the virtual collapse of public trust in representative government. Impasse, polarization, and cynicism have taken their toll, and term limitation threatens to make representative labor a fleeting rather than a protracted interface between the diversity of the geographic district and the personality projections of the congressman. Regardless of what happens constitutionally to term-limitation efforts, the House is being remade: more than half the members who will take the oath of office in January 1995 were first elected no earlier than 1990.

With the size of most congressional districts now approaching 600,000 people, representation will be that of strangers and novices. As in the past, new representatives will doubtless try hard: *Home Style* demonstrates clearly

that even the elderly, the senior, and the congressman from the remote state make much greater effort in representational work than the public generally gives them credit for doing. The processes Professor Fenno describes won't change, but rapid turnover of members will inject new uncertainties, new reasons to doubt that the folks back home, and not the special interests from outside the district, are the arbiters of representation. Long-timers are more comfortable or they don't become long-timers.

No matter how much the House of Representatives changes, the large degree of personal judgment used by the member will still have to be as Professor Fenno describes it. Legislation isn't getting any simpler, nor is the public's understanding of the issues growing with the increased traffic on the information highway. Perhaps the burden of explanation will continue to grow, but the ordering of issues, the balancing of interests, and the need to measure the long-term against the short-term consequence will still force the representative to exercise a defensible judgment rather than mindlessly respond to oversimplified polls.

Home Style, at least to one who spent 20 years in the House, is a description of the legitimacy of the representational process. As described, it is a tough job. The representative usually emerges, after Fenno's careful scrutiny, as a reasonably bright person, and as different from his colleagues as the congressional districts are from each other. Today's disillusioned American, pondering the system and its failings, would do well to ask himself or herself the question, "What would work better?"

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Nixon's Ghost

By Eugene J. McCarthy

Nixon Reconsidered

By Joan Hoff

(New York: BasicBooks) 475 pages, \$30.00

Richard Nixon, after his resignation from the presidency, would not let us forget him. He kept coming back quite regularly with a new book. He was unlike Enoch Arden, who after being lost at sea returned to his home, and then, after looking through a window and seeing the happy state of his former wife and children with her new husband, turned away and went back to the sea. Nixon, had he been in Enoch's place, would have tapped on the window until noticed, and then fled, only to return occasionally to tap on the window again, or scratch on the door, to remind those in the house that he was outside, lonely, misunderstood, and suffering.

Now that he is dead, his former supporters, and many of his critics, seem dedicated to presenting him as misunderstood and misrepresented, to the point that one observer of the eulogies at the time of the Nixon funeral suggested that perhaps there should be an investigation to determine whether there had been a case of mistaken identity.

Nixon Reconsidered is largely a running report on the Nixon years in the White House, supplemented by some information drawn from documents and reports released under the Freedom of Information Act, which added little to what was already known about the operations of the Nixon administration.

The tone of the book suggests that its author, Joan Hoff, is friendly to Nixon. Nonetheless, the reporting of facts is objective and unprejudiced. No "New Nixon" emerges from the text.

It is my opinion, after observing politicians in campaigns, and in office, that conduct in office, even in higher office, will not be much different from conduct in campaigns. I knew of Nixon's campaign against Jerry Voorhis, a communist-baiting venture. My first sight of Richard Nixon was in 1949 when he and I were members of the House of Representatives. He was running for the Senate against Helen Douglas, in a campaign in which

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she was labeled "The Pink Lady" and in which the number of times she had voted with radical Congressman Vito Marcantonio was emphasized. (Marcantonio regularly voted with the Democratic majority.)

Nixon on this day seemed euphoric as he entered the chamber. He began to make a kind of triumphal round among Republican members, smiling and shaking hands enthusiastically. Some Democrats crossed the aisle to greet him. He seemed ecstatic and was, as I discovered, since he was carrying word of the perjury conviction of Alger Hiss. The "soft on communism" issue that had served him well in the Voorhis campaign seemed to work again against Helen Douglas, and was to be his supplemental weapon as Eisenhower's anticommunist vice-presidential running mate.

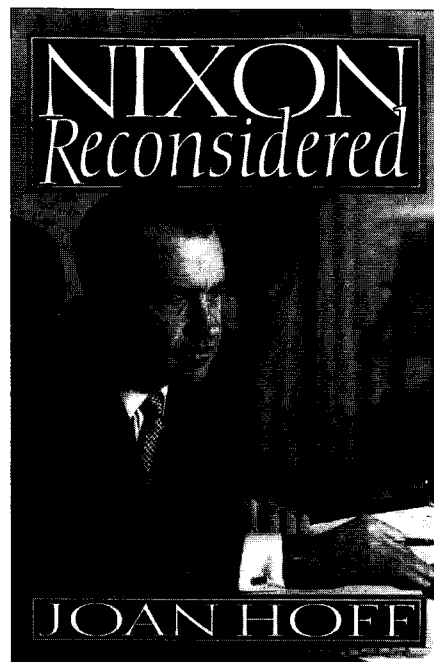
The Nixon of this book, if read with some care, is not very different from the Nixon of the Haldeman diaries, or the Nixon as known without the documentary support of either of these books. The book shows a president who was unsure, suspicious, self-pitying, and inclined to use—when under pressure or when he felt threatened—the methods that had served him well along his political trail, and which he had resorted to in his 1972 presidential campaign, even when he appeared to be in no danger of being defeated. Watergate was one demonstration of this habit of response. But a more serious application was that which was manifest in the "enemies list" and project.

As the latter William F. Buckley, Jr., wrote: "Dean's memorandum was an act of proto-fascism. It is altogether ruthless in its dismissal of human rights. It is fascist in its reliance on the state as the instrument of harassment. It is fascist in its automatic assumption that the state in all matters comes before the right of the individual." Buckley concluded, "It is far and away the most hideous document to have come out of the Watergate investigation."

There was in Watergate and the enemies list project strong evidence of the Thomas à Becket Syndrome, in which the knights, anticipating the wishes of the king, murder the archbishop. Nixon's role was comparable to that which the French philosopher Charles Péguy, who died in 1917, attributed to the Germans of his time, namely

"to reveal the mind of evil before it had the capacity to achieve its objectives."

Richard Nixon would have been, I believe, an acceptable, even a good, prime minister under a parliamentary system,



subject to continuing party discipline and to the restraining force of his cabinet—as well as the imminent possibility of being thrown out of office. The presidency asks for more, and also offers greater temptation to abuse power while seeking to achieve historical status. Nixon clearly sought power. As to the reason for his wanting power, the record is less clear, except in an abstract way: for instance in his disposition to use the adjective "greatest" frequently and indiscriminately.

The Nixon fiscal and economic record, if judged by broad standards, was not good. The national debt rose from approximately \$370 billion in 1969 to over \$700 billion in 1977. Unemployment in the same period rose from 3.6 percent to over 7 percent, and inflation from 5.4 percent in 1969 to 11 percent in 1974 and 9.1 percent in 1975.

In the years from 1969 to 1972, the years of Nixon-Kissinger foreign policy, over 20,000 Americans died in Southeastern Asia. The war was extended into Laos and Cambodia, and a new word—"incursion"—was introduced into the lexicon of the United States military. Incursion. Un-

til Nixon and Cambodia the United States had never conducted an "incursion," which is not something one does but rather something that happens to one or to a society. There is no verb form for "incursion." One cannot "incurse." An incursion is a kind of happening, an existential experience, without moral fault.

I think Nixon was right in saying that he was more deserving of the Nobel Peace Prize (as he is reported to have said) than was Henry Kissinger—at least in keeping with the current Nobel Peace Prize practices, which appear to award prizes to persons who watch or advance the end of wars which they have advocated, or even directed.

Nixon deserves some credit for accepting the admission of China to the United Nations, after years of opposing such admission, and advancing the SALT I and II proposals to end the production of nuclear arms, already in great excess.

Sir James Frazer, an anthropologist, reported that as late as 1884, in one of Central Africa's kingdoms, when the people had "conceived an opinion of the king's ill government, they sent a deputation to him with a present of parrot's eggs as a mark of its authenticity, to represent to him that the burden of government must [have] so far fatigued him that they considered it full time for him to repose from his cares and indulge himself with a little sleep."

We need a modern, comparable, and civilized ritual to deal with ex-presidents before and after their deaths.

Eugene J. McCarthy, former U.S. senator from Minnesota, is the author of many books, most recently USA: Colony of the World.

We're Off to Slay the Wizard

By John McClaughry

Arrogant Capital: Washington, Wall Street, and the Frustration of American Politics
By Kevin Phillips
(Boston: Little Brown & Co.) 213 pages,
\$22.95

The title of this latest book from political analyst Kevin Phillips has a rather obvious double meaning. One "arrogant capital" is Washington, D.C., the