

leges where Sir Harold sees his hope, the classless and cosmopolitan elite of Erasmus, was shown to be but one element in the wide American culture. It is not merely to a saving remnant that we must look now, but to a purification and elevation in the political sensibilities of a whole people.

SIR HAROLD, concluding his work, keeps a sense of mystery about the future and about America. He believes that decency will not pass. But how it will be preserved he does

not pretend to know. Democracy itself is at bottom a mystery, time and again rationally discredited and as often vindicated by the heart. It breeds excesses, but at its best it can also breed a kind of unforced gentility, an offhand courtesy nowhere expressed in rules. May it not in its own way produce those conditions which Sir Harold deems essential to civilization—not security and justice only, but also “enhancement of pleasure, the love of loveliness, the refinement of relationships, and the embellishment of life”?

Some Selected Footprints Of Richard M. Nixon

WILLIAM LEE MILLER

THIS IS NIXON, by James Keogh. Putnam. \$2.75.

NIXON, by Ralph de Toledano. Holt. \$3.

Mr. Keogh, who works for *Time*, has written a routine election-year glorification of his subject. There are the usual campaigner's childhood, full of standard family piety, standard small-town Americanism, standard devotional quotations (“and departing, leave behind us”), and standard hard work (“It wasn't easy”). There are the usual school days, showing the proper mixture of popularity, earnestness, football, success, and quiet reading of deep thinkers on the side (“mostly in the original French”). There is proper evidence of knowledge of his country (“His stay in Ottumwa gave him an opportunity to know the Middle West first hand, just as his years at Duke had taught him what life was like in the South”), and the proper evidence of virtue (“showed an increasing independence” . . . “widespread talk about Nixon's fairness”). There is the usual touching up, the usual selective forgetting, the usual adjectival summaries of the man (“intense, serious, earnest, industrious, ambitious, able”).

BUT THIS standard treatment does not tell much about Nixon, not even in that inverted and between-

the-lines way by which most campaign biographies unintentionally do reveal something about their subjects. It takes Mr. de Toledano's book to perform that inadvertent service. It is a different kind of book: worse, partly because, in some amoral technical sense, it's better. It is a bit more carefully written, a bit cleverer in its conception, a lot more strategic in trying to achieve its end. Mr. de Toledano laughs at the usual campaign biography and then writes one that glorifies its subject in a much more dubious and insidious way: one which makes Mr. Nixon the symbol and instrument of Mr. de Toledano's own fierce and cocky anti-liberalism, and which requires the systematic derogation of all who oppose his hero.

That 1946 Campaign

A reader can make his own test of the character of Mr. de Toledano's book. Take the chapter called “The Mythology of '46.” Compare it with the story of the same campaign in *Confessions of a Congressman*, the book by the man Nixon defeated for a House seat in that campaign, Jerry Voorhis. Mr. de Toledano tries to make the whole disapproval of Nixon's tactics in that campaign a retroactive invention of the left-wing intellectuals against whom he is writ-

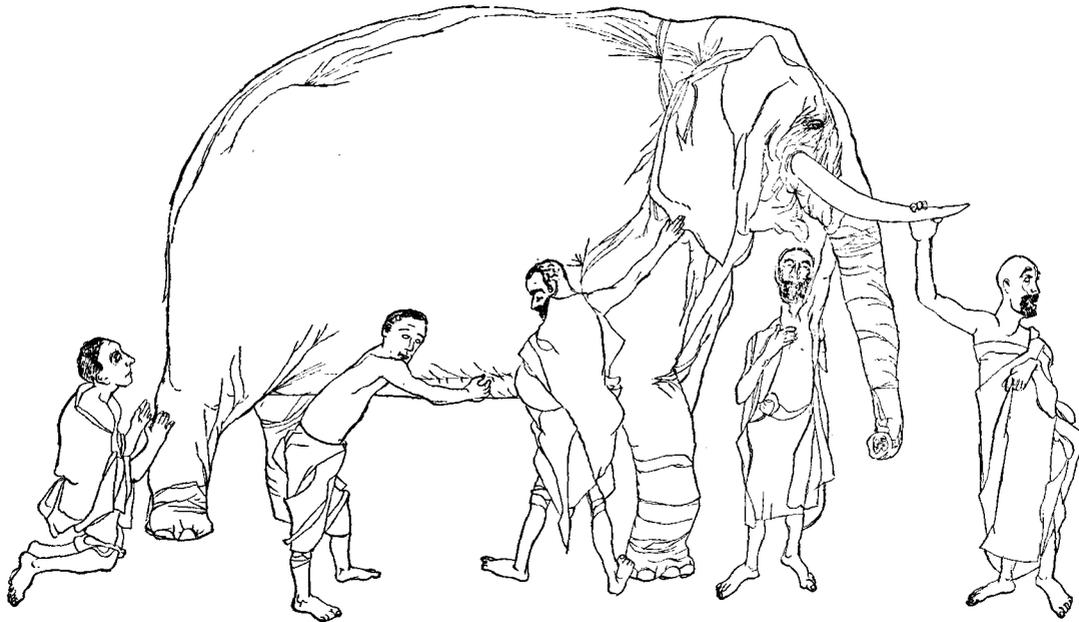
ing. (“The myth of the 1946 campaign began to develop only after Nixon had given impetus to the Hiss investigation . . .”) He says the whispering campaign that Voorhis was a Communist was a “fairly recent invention of the typewriter pundits,” that the Nixon campaign was run by volunteers and was pinched for funds (even Mr. Keogh doesn't try to hold to that one), and, quoting Nixon, that “communism was not the issue at any time in the '46 campaign.”

These claims are all denied by many who were close to that campaign and most of them by the chapter in Voorhis's book, written ten weeks after the campaign and in print a full year before the Hiss case was even heard of. But most interesting of all, notice Mr. de Toledano's misrepresentation of Voorhis's own attitude toward the campaign. One would think that this at least was something on which the man's own word is not subject to dispute.

Observe what Mr. de Toledano does: He takes the undisputable tone of Voorhis's approach and tries to make it seem that there was nothing in the campaign to dispute about; he takes Voorhis's willingness to forgive and forget and tries to use it to indicate that there was nothing to be forgiven or forgotten. He quotes most of the long and very gracious letter Voorhis wrote Nixon after the campaign, but he omits and then deals separately, in his own deft way, with this crucial paragraph: “I have refrained, for reasons which I am sure you will understand, from making any references in this letter to the circumstances of the campaign recently conducted in our District. It would only have spoiled the letter.”

Mr. de Toledano says the first sentence has been quoted out of context to prove what he calls the “myth” of the 1946 campaign. But it is he who quotes it out of context, for he conveniently forgets to tell his readers at all about the second sentence (“It would only have spoiled the letter”), which made Voorhis's meaning abundantly clear.

APPARENTLY some of Nixon's footprints on the sands of time need to be rubbed out, and for that purpose one of his biographers is willing even to distort the graciousness of a defeated opponent.



To get the whole truth you have to get the whole picture

THE BLIND MAN who touched the elephant's head said "An elephant is like a water pot." The one who felt his ears said "like a basket." Another fingered the tusks and said "An elephant is like a plow." Feeling the legs, a fourth said "like a post." And the blind man who touched the elephant's belly asserted "An elephant is like a granary."

It's the same way with the news. You touch a part and you think "This is how it is"—*but you may be wrong*. Even when you understand one or more parts of the news perfectly, you may still put the parts together incorrectly, you may still base an inexact over-all picture on them. To get the whole truth, you have to get the whole story.

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