

# REPUBLICANS

## The Snoring Contest In Miami

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■ THE SAVANTS of the media fell all over themselves repeating in unctuous unison that this year's Republican National Convention was a dreadful bore and an exercise in the vacuous—the only contest being that between “Liberal” preference for homespun platitude versus conservative preference for militant cliché. Such a revelation was like divulging the news that Jimmy Durante has a big nose. Any American with a television set, who endured any part of that four-day snoring contest in Miami, can tell you the thing was dull. Americans hardly needed to hear it from Establishment pundits whose idea of style is a cute one-liner at the end of a Huntley-Brinkley report on casualties in Vietnam.

But, of course, the Establishment did need to have its infinite number of monkeys pecking at their infinite number of typewriters to keep the citizenry entranced while the big steal was accomplished and the loot was re-labeled.

What was stolen?

In case you hadn't noticed, the Republican Left grabbed conservative issues almost lock, stock, and law enforcement. Not conservative solutions, you understand, but they sure put the grab on conservative issues. What's more, conservative Republicans who should know better seemed to love it, and for all I know are still cheering the fact and floating around the ceiling of the Convention Hall like so many half-gassed balloons. It was possibly the greatest triumph of dialectics since 1932, when Franklin Roosevelt toured the country declaring that Herbert Hoover was a mad spender bankrupting the nation in a headlong rush toward socialism. F.D.R., you will recall, ran on the most conservative platform ever written by a major American Party. He talked like a man thirty degrees to the Right of George Wallace—until he was elected.

### I

WHAT HAPPENED in Miami was, of course, pure show business—well-timed, choreographed, orchestrated, professional show business. It was dull because it was supposed to be dull: Its authors realized what every playwright knows, that dramatic conflict requires dissension, and dissension breeds disunity unless carefully controlled. What agreements were made at the scenario conferences, and who was in on preparation of the boring script, we can only surmise. The object, however, was to propagandize the conservative wing of the Party, quietly pat its wounded ego, and sell it a gilded brick. That brick was labeled *Party Unity*.



The way the script was written, the disunity of 1964 was no longer the fault of those disloyal "Liberals" who betrayed and sabotaged Barry Goldwater, but of that weird cult of 27 million ideological dervishes who had run screaming onto the swords of Lyndon's legions, believing that their sacrifice would somehow help to re-establish our Constitution and the American system of free enterprise. Now, with a "Liberal" candidate in prospect, it was the turncoats of 1964 who were leading the cry for unity and pragmatism. With Wallace in the race, the "Liberals" realized that they must have conservative support to win. "Pragmatism!" they cried. And, conservative Republicans answered: "Pragmatism!"

It was all very cordial. "Liberals" even permitted the former conservative spokesman, a fellow named Goldwater, to support their plea for unity before the Convention. It was like the victim of a mugging being called as character witness for his assailants—not so much offering proof of the victim's compassion as providing evidence that when the muggers struck they hit the man in the head harder than anyone had realized at the time. Conservatives were now welcomed back into the Republican Party. It was like being met at the door of your own home by a hospitable burglar and being invited to come in for a drink. Curiously, Republican conservatives seemed elated at such elegant treatment from Party "Liberals," and graciously accepted the incredible invitation.

Thus the Republican Right was forgiven for the "crime of 1964" and its sins were washed away in the unitoxin of further sacrifice. Surely now the new pragmatic Republican Party would sweep to victory in November.

It was quite a trick to get the "Liberal" lions and the conservative lambs to lie down together for a few months while their cage is being constructed.

Nonetheless, that was precisely what happened. As the *Insiders* scripted a soothing of Party conservatives to keep them away from the amateurish Wallace campaign, they also moved to keep the Party's non-Establishment "Liberals" (who also take these Conventions seriously) from committing hari-kari at the thought that the Republican Party might campaign on conservative principles. Indeed, the scenario called for monumental staging.

The cast of this pragmatic extravaganza contained a protagonist on the Left (for the "Liberals" to cheer and the conservatives to hiss), a Rightist knight of the silver screen (to make conservative hearts go pitter-pat and to horrify unsophisticated "Liberals"), and a centrist (an experienced and highly competent professional, skilled at uniting the Party in a shotgun wedding to last until the second week in November). The centrist, as you know, got the girl in the end—while the Leftist kissed his secretary and the Rightist kissed his horse.\*

Now, of course, the Establishment authors of this script knew very well that there was always the chance that the supporting delegates might get carried away and deliver their favor to the wrong actor. But they knew also that even that could not turn this farce into a tragedy. After all, to switch metaphors, if you own all the horses in the race, you don't care who the jockeys are.

The Rockefeller campaign, for example, suggested from the beginning that the New York Governor was acting as a stalking horse for his ostensible opponent, Richard Nixon. First there was his reluctance to become a candidate at a date when he had time to forge a successful campaign. Then,

\*Among the more humorous ad-libs in the performance was the appearance of an exceedingly pregnant young lady parading around the Convention Hall with a sign reading: "Nixon's the One!"



when he did begin to flirt with the idea of getting in, he soon backed off, claiming that his old ardor for the Presidency was no longer there and that the rank and file wanted Nixon. He would not, he said, divide the Party. Only after the primaries had come and gone, and Nixon had the nomination sewed up, did Rocky enter the race, spending money like a Rockefeller and keeping the Republicans in the headlines.

It was an eloquent performance. Nixon had to have an enemy on the Left to make him a salable commodity to the conservatives. The *Insiders* knew very well that if Nelson Rockefeller came out against Hell, many conservatives would begin to find redeeming qualities in Satan. Thus, if Rocky didn't like Nixon's conservatism, it must be a very good brand of conservatism indeed. Republican conservatives began to salivate after Nixon as if he were to the Right of Barry Goldwater.

At Miami we were treated to a super-confident Richard Nixon who didn't seem to have a worry in the world. He didn't. And the biggest tip-off was the sight of Nixon's super-competent professional staff competing with Rocky's bumbling amateurs—a group crawling with just the sort of high-pressure New Left types guaranteed to offend the delegates. Some may believe that Nelson Rockefeller couldn't put together a team of first-rate professionals, but those who do are most likely locked up on funny-farms.

Following Nixon's first-ballot victory, the New York Governor conducted a final press conference at which he was suitably sour. Either it was an act or Nelson Rockefeller is a spoiled brat with no more polish than an egg crate. It is possible, of course, that delegate affection for Nixon at Miami was genuinely spontaneous and that, while Rocky is king of the Establishment, he is so despised within the rank and file of the Republican Party that no National Con-

vention could be forced to nominate him for dog catcher. That could sour a man—like owning the Green Bay Packers, but wanting to quarterback the team. Such speculation, however, gives little credit to the enormous sophistication of Nelson Rockefeller.

Just how phony the Rockefeller-Nixon contest really was is indicated in *Newsweek* of August nineteenth:

*As soon as Wisconsin put Nixon over the top, Rocky turned to a staffer and said: "Let's call Dick," . . . and the loser told the victor: "Well, your strategy really worked."*

It sure did. Rocky helped keep the spotlight on the Party, did his best to make Nixon look relatively conservative, and—as soon as the Convention was over—pledged to work as hard for Nixon as he would for himself. That pledge, incidentally, included similar promises which Rockefeller extracted from such Leftists as Senator Jacob Javits and Mayor John Lindsay. To suggest that any one of these gentlemen would work for a genuinely conservative candidate of any kind is the most absurd sort of naiveté.

## II

AH WELL, at Miami Mr. Nixon *was* the one. And, his acceptance speech proved a masterpiece of pragmatism—superbly eloquent and totally noncommittal. He sounded to the casual listener like a combination of Billy Graham calling for a crusade against sin, John Wayne delivering a Fourth of July speech to the American Legion, Pat O'Brien exhorting Notre Dame to “win one for the Gipper,” George Wallace at his ironic best, and Martin Luther King ascending the mountain. The speech was delivered in terms which drew positive reactions from both “Liberals” and conservatives without offending either. Such an accomplishment is more diffi-



cult than passing an elephant through the eye of a donkey, and one must admire Mr. Nixon's oratorical expertise if not his anti-ideology.

As the former Vice President delivered that speech, I imagined P. T. Barnum sitting in the hereafter, scratching his head, and noting what the population explosion has done to magnify his estimate of the birth rate of suckers. At his side, H. L. Mencken chewed on a soggy, unlit cigar and held his sides as he emitted giant guffaws, recalling his declaration that no one ever went broke overestimating the gullibility of the American people.

The speech was amazing. Mr. Nixon said that to the "new" Republican Party the enemy of liberty is not collectivism itself, but the mismanagement of collectivism. Generalities abounded. Whereas the address was far different in tone from Nixon's acceptance speech of 1960, in which he had attempted to outpromise the Democrats in detail, the theme was the same. The *Wall Street Journal* had dubbed the 1960 acceptance a wedding of the "Welfare State to fiscal responsibility." That theme was repeated in 1968—but this time Nixon hedged his bet by attacking the consequences of the very collectivism he proposed.

Richard Nixon knew that in 1968 the mood of the nation has become increasingly conservative; Americans are sick of court decisions handcuffing the police, of the scandal-ridden "War on Poverty," of jogging inflation, and of the looting and burning of our cities by psychotic Black Nationalists and revolutionary delinquents. As America's preeminent reader of trends, he devoted his 1968 acceptance speech to an attempt to steal a march on these issues—all raised by George Wallace—just as he had attempted in 1960 to steal a march on the issues raised by John Kennedy. The difference, as always with Mr. Nixon, was a matter of solutions: This time

Nixon was arguing that his alchemists could cook up a totally new brand of federal collectivism guaranteed to cure Welfare problems, racial hostility, violence in the streets, and probably warts.

Richard Nixon did say many of the right things in that speech—and he said them beautifully. He talked of the American Revolution being the only true and continuing revolution, and of what private initiative has done for our country. He spoke of law and order and America's declining world position. But, in reading the address, as opposed to merely listening to it, one discovers that he conveyed many illusory impressions. The speech implied that we would recapture the *Pueblo* and free its crew, but made no specific commitment. It sounded as if Nixon would stop the War in Vietnam, but said nothing about winning it. It dwelled on law and order, but promised only a war on "organized crime . . . loan sharks . . . numbers racketeers . . . filth peddlers and the narcotics peddlers. . . ." with no mention of the Communists and their Black Nationalist comrades who are making good their promises for guerrilla warfare. Nixon also seemed to say that he would cut federal spending and taxes; but again, this was only an impression implied by the tone of the rhetoric.

Here was a candidate who even seemed to be promising an end to foreign aid—the very man who said in his article of October, 1967, for the Council on Foreign Relations' magazine *Foreign Affairs*, that he sought a new Marshall Plan to dump even more vast sums of foreign aid into bottomless Asia.

In his acceptance speech Nixon called also for "a new internationalism" in which America would enlist its allies and friends to join with us in our mutual struggles. Did he mean we were at last going to require our allies to carry their share in efforts to stop the Communists? Hardly. He didn't explain,



because the "new internationalism" Nixon talked about has been in his bag of tricks for years. He meant driving us into a United States of N.A.T.O. as but one region of an internationalist supergovernment. And, this is certainly nothing "new" with him. As the magazine of the dangerous United World Federalists, *World Government News*, noted in its issue of October 1948: "[Congressman] Richard Nixon: Introduced world government resolu-



tion (HCR 68) 1947, and ABC (World Government) resolution 1948." In 1951 he sponsored an anti-sovereignty resolution which *World Government News* said "calls for U.S. initiative toward a federal union of democracies."

Maybe he's changed his mind? Maybe Mr. Nixon meant something else by "the new internationalism" to which he referred? Not so. The United World Federalist publication, *Freedom and Union*, for April-May 1968 quotes his testimony in favor of the Atlantic Union Resolution before the House Foreign Affairs Committee of the last Congress.

There Nixon declared: "The Atlantic Union Resolution is a forward-looking proposal which acknowledges the depth and breadth of incredible change going on in the world around us. *I urge its adoption.*" That kind of "new internationalism" would spell the end to U.S. sovereignty. The fact that Nixon backs it, as you can see from his own words, is beyond doubt.

In short, when read carefully and measured against his recorded commitments, Richard Nixon's acceptance speech was powerfully disturbing.

### III

IF YOU SUFFER from acute, chronic insomnia, you might try reading the G.O.P.'s enormous and deadly-dull platform of 1968. One wag has remarked that anyone from Mao Tse-tung to Attila the Hun could comfortably run on it. There are virtually no commitments. It does courageously declare the Party for good and against evil, but it is very hazy about how to tell which is which. Certainly the platform tends to be far more "Liberal" than even Nixon's acceptance speech, and the Party "moderates" called it highly "progressive." James Reston of the *New York Times*, gloating over the platform's abandonment of conservatism, wrote:

... [the Republicans] have learned from their disastrous campaign of 1964. Nobody is putting party ideology above party unity, not even Goldwater. In fact, Goldwater, Reagan, Nixon and Rockefeller have all accepted the objectives of a party platform that Humphrey or even McCarthy could accept.

Ah yes, and Mao and Attila too.

This year's Republican platform was, of course, prepared under the careful direction of Illinois Senator Everett Dirksen, whose cuphuistic wizardry with polysyllabic synonyms for collectiv-

ism fairly oozes from every slick paragraph. Commenting on this, Arthur Krock of the *New York Times* referred to the aging thespian as "the most devoted practitioner of 'loyal opposition' that any President of the majority could hope for," and noted that Dirksen assiduously avoided sticking Republican spears in the soft underbelly of L.B.J.'s collectivist Administration. After all, Mr. Johnson has highly praised the work of Dirksen, crediting him with engineering the passage of such key legislation as the "Civil Rights" bills of 1964 and 1965, the federal "open housing" legislation of 1968, the Consular Treaty with the Soviets, the \$100 million loan for the U.N., etc. As John Herbers explained in the *New York Times* of October 16, 1967:

*President Johnson and Senator Dirksen have been close for many years and everyone believes that the President confers with the Republican minority leader more often and more intimately than [with] anyone else in Congress.*

Yet, it was Everett Dirksen who supervised the writing of the Republican platform. When Republican conservatives in Congress objected that he was too close to L.B.J., and too far to the Left to honestly perform such a task with credit to the Party, Dirksen admitted: "I always liked the President so much, even when he was Senate Majority Leader, that I could eat him." (*New York Times*, December 6, 1967.)

Dirksen certainly did a job, handling the platform with considerable deference to his friend. Even so, L.B.J.'s minority floor manager received a vast ovation from the gullible delegates during his Convention speech as he hypocritically castigated the Great Society for its failures—failures resulting largely from legislation which he had himself helped to ram through the Senate,

and which he had sought to perpetuate in the Republicans' own platform. The senior Senator from Illinois is living, drinking proof that there is not a dime's worth of difference between Socialist Party A and Socialist Party B.

Everett Dirksen's Republican platform makes absolutely no attack upon the philosophy of the Democrat Party as being socialistic, nor does it propose the restoration of the Constitution. Its quarrel with the Democrats, alas, is over which Party can best provide "dynamic leadership" to efficiently run the Superstate. Naturally, such "Liberals" as columnist Sylvia Porter went positively gushy over the Republican platform when they found that it actually went so far as to abandon the traditional G.O.P. stand for a balanced Budget. As Sylvia noted:

*This . . . represents the first time in the history of our country that a political platform has failed to pay at least lip service to the virtues of balancing the budget, and the omission, mind you, has come first in the Republican platform! Informed economists . . . have long accepted . . . deficit spending. And in Miami this week, the Republican platform writers grabbed the lead and went beyond them to an extraordinary high level of economic statesmanship.*

While you're gasping over that one, we might just mention that the Republicans also pledged their devotion to ending inflation. Ending inflation without balancing the federal Budget is like trying to increase the birth rate while requiring contraception.

Of course, the slipperiest plank of the platform concerned the War in Vietnam—a plank so ambiguous that it can be interpreted to favor everything from dropping nuclear bombs on Hanoi to abandonment of Southeast Asia. Dr. R.T. Hood, a delegate from North Car-



olina, attempted to put some sense into this plank by offering an amendment from the floor of the Convention. His amendment had earlier been passed by North Carolina's Republican Convention and State Conventions of four other states. It read:

*We are at war in Vietnam and our enemy is the total Communist bloc of nations with at least 80% of the sinews of war being provided North Vietnam by Soviet Russia and its European satellites. This help to North Vietnam has been made possible almost entirely by the Administration's help to the Soviet Union and its satellites. Therefore, the Republican Party honorably pledges to exert full authority and influence to stop promptly aid in any form to our Communist enemies.*

Delegate Hood went to the rostrum and arranged with Convention Chairman Gerald Ford, through an assistant, to be allotted five minutes to offer his amendment. The physician then returned to the North Carolina delegation while George Romney spoke about amending the Vietnam plank. To Dr. Hood's astonishment, North Carolina's microphone was suddenly shut off backstage and, as he stood and yelled for Ford's attention, the Chairman looked in the other direction, quickly announced that the platform was adopted, and adjourned the Convention for the day.

Sadly, no Party leader, including Richard Nixon, was willing to make an issue of U.S. aid and trade with a Communist enemy killing American soldiers in Vietnam.

For years, the G.O.P. platform has called for opposition to Communism at home and abroad. This year, domestic Communism is *not even mentioned* in the platform. Law and order is stressed, but it is clear that law and order can-

not be restored until the Communist leaders of the urban guerrillas are dealt with. Nonetheless, there was no mention in the platform of S.N.C.C.'s paramilitary Black Panthers, Stokely Carmichael, Hubert "Rap" Brown, or other members of the Communists' constellation of Black Nationalist revolutionaries. Discussion of the real causes behind the organized and subsidized burning and looting of American cities was far too "controversial" for the Bland Old Party.

Also symptomatic of the erosion of the G.O.P. as a bastion of anti-Communism were statements made at Miami by nominee Richard Nixon. A mere two weeks before the rape of Czechoslovakia by the Soviets and their henchmen, *New York Times* headlines blared: "Nixon Says He Has Eased Views On Communist Bloc Since 1960." Mr. Nixon explained to a Miami news conference that the Communist Conspiracy was no longer an unyielding, monolithic force. In 1960, the candidate maintained, "the Communist world was a monolithic world. Today it is a split world, schizophrenic, with very great diversity." Maybe he should try to tell that to the families of the teenagers crushed under the treads of Soviet tanks in the streets of Prague, or to those of the American boys killed by Russian guns in Vietnam.

As Americans died in Vietnam, Nixon even said he believes that the "era of confrontation" with the Communist world has ended, ushering in a new "era of negotiations with the Soviet Union . . . and . . . the leaders of the next superpower, Communist China..."

In ascribing to the new myths and ignoring the old realities, Richard Nixon announced that the harsh words he had for the Communists in his 1960 acceptance speech are today "irrelevant." And, he added: "As the facts change, any intelligent man does change his approaches to the problems. It does not



mean that he is an opportunist. It means only that he is a pragmatist." Such a victory of pragmatism over principle, alas, is the story of the decay of Richard Nixon and of the Republican Party.

#### IV

THE SOLITARY surprise of the Miami Convention, of course, was Mr. Nixon's selection of one Spiro T. Agnew, Governor of Maryland, as his running mate. The announcement of this choice is said to have sent Americans scrambling for their medical dictionaries. Though it has now been established beyond reasonable doubt that Spiro Agnew is not some exotic disease, the Maryland Governor remains, for the general public, largely an unknown quantity. Researching him was like trying to accumulate a file on the Mayor of Calcutta.

Nevertheless, our researchers have pored through a decade of microfilm and bound newspaper volumes from his home state of Maryland and have found pretty much what we expected. Spiro Agnew, it turns out, is a sort of Border-state John Lindsay. Which, of course, explains why the Establishment myth-makers have done their best to weave about him the aura of a latterday Robert E. Lee, draping him in magnolia blossoms to try to convince potential defectors to Wallace that selection of Agnew means that the Republican Party has fallen into the clutches of erstwhile Dixiecrats. My friends in the South will, I hope, forgive my guffaw.

While Agnew is a certified, guaranteed, pedigreed, grade-A "Liberal," he appears to have one unseemly quirk which makes him anathema to many of his fellow "Liberals." We are told he has the strange notion that criminals and subversives should not be allowed to burn down America's cities under the guise of soliciting their "rights." Governor Agnew, a staunch proponent of almost everything labeled "Civil Rights," drew the line when the Reds

began to throw Molotov cocktails and loot for Black Power. That this should so infuriate Negro "moderates" and white "Liberals" actually tells us much more about them than about the Governor.

Spiro T. Agnew was apparently selected by Nixon because the Marylander is about as close as any "Liberal" Governor ever got to being a political unknown. Percy, Lindsay, or even the pathetic George Romney, would have added more glamour and pulling power to the ticket; but, they were known quantities and would have sent many Party conservatives, particularly Southerners, into the Wallace camp. The selection of California Governor Ronald Reagan or Senator John Tower would have caused the Party's manic progressives to encore their 1964 sit-out. Thus, the Bland Old Party reached for an ostensible nonentity.

Obviously Richard Nixon did not want to share the limelight with a potential scene stealer like a Lindsay or a Reagan. With Agnew he has no such worry. Spiro T. Agnew is every bit as exciting as a trip to the bakery to smell hot bread.

It is possible that Ted Agnew will go down in history as the Accidental Veep. He is on the ticket because of Richard Nixon's sudden and curious craving for vanilla, and his election as Governor of Maryland was just as strange. The Democrats own a three-to-one registration advantage in Maryland, resulting in Republicans there being elected to statewide office with all the frequency of a Protestant landslide in Spain. Ostensibly, Agnew owes his victory in 1966 to a garrulous character named George P. Mahoney.

Who is George P. Mahoney? Why, he was the Democrats' choice to oppose Spiro Agnew for Governor—and that was even more strange than the Republican victory. George P. Mahoney is Maryland's answer to Harold Stassen.



A millionaire Baltimore paving contractor, Mahoney's hobby is running for public office. He does this as other men play golf, go trout fishing, or hunt deer. Fall is always campaign season for George, and in 1966 he was unsuccessfully seeking public office for the sixth time.

In the primary, the "Liberal" Democrats split their vote between three high-powered Leftist candidates and George Mahoney emerged the victor. A typical "Liberal" politician, Mahoney nonetheless based his entire campaign on a carnival pitch aimed at Agnew's proposal of collectivist "open housing" legislation, adopting the slogan: "Your Home is Your Castle." Spiro Agnew, of course, maintained that your home is *not* your castle, and that intelligent bureaucrats should be allowed to implement "open housing" laws to force the sale of homes in white neighborhoods to Negroes. "Liberal" Democrats, including eighty percent of the state's Negro voters, abandoned the Democrat candidate and elected Agnew on a "Civil Rights" platform.

This fall, George P. Mahoney, the accidental maker of Mysterious Veeps, has for the eighth time heard the siren call of political office and is running as an Independent for the U.S. Senate. Maybe he will now seek to fare better with his fellow Democrats by adopting the slogan: "Your Home is Hubert's Castle." But, whatever else Mahoney does, he has *made* Spiro T. Agnew. And, Spiro T. Agnew is now the Republican candidate for the office of Vice President of the United States. Even George P. Mahoney would hardly have made a more unlikely choice.

Mr. Agnew's career has been singularly lackluster. A native of Baltimore, and the son of a Greek immigrant, he returned from the War to finish law school. Politically ambitious, the young lawyer switched his registration from Democrat to Republican when friends

advised him that there were already too many Democrat politicians in Maryland. He worked as a claims adjuster for an insurance company and as a personnel manager for a food chain. He was recalled for a year's service in the Korean War. After returning to Baltimore, young Agnew began practicing labor law and suddenly became active in Leftist causes, working to help break down local municipal control by bringing "Metro Government" to Baltimore.

By 1958, Spiro Agnew was appointed to the high position of minority member of the County Board of Appeals, which heard zoning cases. His ouster from that job by a Democrat-controlled County Council, despite his backing from civic groups, proved a lucky break for the apprentice politician. The bounce from the zoning board only gave him new prominence and favorable publicity which helped erase his 1960 failure in a bid for an elected seat on the Circuit Court. (Look, I'm not making this up. I'm simply detailing the man's meteoric rise.)

Agnew was able to take advantage of a Democratic split in 1962 and was elected to the post of County Executive — his first elective office — a position on the county level similar to that of city manager. During his four-year tenure, county spending escalated forty-four percent as Agnew successfully shoved through a series of near ruinous new taxes. He did fail in his attempt to pile a county income tax on top of the existing state and federal income taxes, but such became his reputation as a reckless spendthrift that when he ran for Governor he failed to carry his own county.

In addition to his wild spending, Agnew established a "Human Relations Commission," which was put into the hands of a "Civil Rights" militant; he shoved through the first "public accommodations" law (including swimming pools) adopted by any county govern-



ment in the United States; and, he advocated a county "fair housing" law, taking the choice of to whom a man's property may be sold away from the individual owner and vesting it in the government.

Spiro Agnew quickly became one of the nation's foremost advocates of the "Metro Government" schemes financed by the Rockefeller Foundation — schemes which seek to abolish city and county lines and turn urban areas into fiefdoms for bureaucratic "planners." He had been in office as Baltimore's County Executive for only a year when someone pulled some strings and he was named a director of the National Association of Counties, a nationwide organization of metrocrat planners. "I feel," he said, "that the biggest challenge for the county is to determine how far we're going to go in the concept of metropolitan government. . . ." He met that challenge by proposing that the people of the five counties surrounding the City of Baltimore be made to ante up tax funds to support the city on the basis, he said, of "from each according to his ability."

Continuing to undermine local responsibility for government, and seeking to bring more money under his own control, Agnew began a program to attract vast "federal aid" programs into Baltimore County. When his Urban Renewal scheme produced organized resistance from aroused citizens, he resorted to character assassination and referred to his conservative opponents as "fearmongers" and worse. Nonetheless, his Urban Renewal bond issue went down to a smashing defeat by a margin of three-to-one in a 1964 referendum.

Soon, our anti-conservative little County Executive was speaking out on Presidential politics, urging that the Republican Party unite around one of the most outspoken Leftists in the Senate. Here is how he put it:

*The man who could provide a rallying point to end this impasse is a man of broad bi-partisan appeal and a moderate Republican, U. S. Senator Thomas H. Kuchel . . . the courageous enemy of all political extremists.*

When the Kuchel bandwagon turned out to have square wheels, Agnew switched his troth to the even more anti-conservative Governor of Pennsylvania, William Scranton. As a Republican delegate to the Republican National Convention in 1964, the "moderate" Mr. Agnew supported William Scranton even more strongly after the Pennsylvanian accused Goldwater of advocating a "racial holocaust," and "nuclear war," and "a whole crazy-quilt collection of absurd and dangerous positions that would be soundly repudiated by the American people in November."

Returning from the Republicans' 1964 Convention, County Executive Agnew issued a statement which, point by point, *specifically repudiated Goldwater's conservative philosophy.* But, said Agnew, he would support the ticket out of Party loyalty so as to help see to it that no such disaster as conservatism ever overtook the Republican Party again. Agnew's statement made it clear that, while he was obligated to support Goldwater, he hoped nobody else would.

Following his curious election as Governor of Maryland two years ago, he continued his Leftist ways. He became, according to the *New York Times*, "a sort of bipartisan liberal hero in his state. . . ." He represented the new breed of professional public administrator." His Administration, the *Times* happily tells us, tilted decidedly to portside as the Governor and a coalition of "Liberal" Democrats legislated a miniature Great Society in the Old Line State.



"As his reputation as a low-key partisan and a problem solver advanced," the *New York Times* says, Agnew "sponsored the largest tax increase in Maryland's history," including institution of a "progressive" income tax to replace Maryland's previous flat rate. And, despite the enormous rise in taxes, Spiro Agnew's prolific spending has run up a \$50 million debt.

Far from being a vigorous enforcer of the law he has, according to the *Times*, been "restrained on crime." In fact, the *Times* cheers the fact that, with the power of commutation, Spiro Agnew "would not sanction capital punishment except in the most heinous crimes." In the Governor's book, it turns out, plain old murder is not a "heinous crime."

Agnew's passion for government by "planners" rather than by elected representatives has continued. Following the model set up by the Leftist American Assembly, Governor Agnew created a convention to rewrite Maryland's constitution along lines proposed by the "Metro Government" crowd. Again, as with Urban Renewal, organized conservative resistance led to its overwhelming defeat at the polls despite out-of-state financing and the full backing of Maryland's Leftist community.

As 1968 approached, Spiro Agnew once more began to toy with national Presidential politics. "Mr. Agnew's flirtation with Governor Rockefeller started during that first spring of his incumbency," we are told by the *Baltimore Sun*. The flirtation blossomed into romance on May 1, 1967, when Agnew made a well-publicized trip to New York to urge Mr. Rockefeller to run. He got enough private encouragement to continue beating the drums for the Rock of the Left.

Spiro Agnew made repeated entreating visits to the New York Governor and organized a national committee to support Rockefeller's candidacy.

Rockefeller even sent Agnew to the A.F.L.-C.I.O. Convention at Bal Harbour, Florida, to line up union support for his candidacy. In Maryland, Agnew recruited a long list of wealthy and prominent Republicans and Democrats to publicly endorse Rockefeller. Many of them, along with the Press, were present in Agnew's office on March twenty-first of this year to hear the televised press conference at which Rockefeller was expected to reveal that he would seek the Presidency.

When Rocky announced that he would *not* run, Agnew is said to have been humiliated in front of the Press and his closest political supporters. He claimed that no one from the Rockefeller organization had informed him that Nelson was temporarily bailing out of the campaign. This is the excuse cited by the Left for the end of the Rockefeller-Agnew romance. It is no doubt as phony as Spiro's rise from small-time county politician to Vice Presidential candidate in a mere two years.

Nelson's spot in Agnew's heart was quickly taken by Richard Nixon and, the publicity stories tell us, from that point on the "moderate" Mr. Nixon's powerful personality was so compelling that Agnew began making conservative noises in what the *Times* calls "angry, illiberal outbursts," about such things as the burning of Baltimore by Communist-led Black Nationalists.

Not that he wanted anyone to think him a real conservative, you understand. To make certain that didn't happen, the Governor announced that Stokely Carmichael and "Rap" Brown "are agents of destruction and they will surely destroy us if we do not repudiate them and their philosophies — along with . . . the American Nazi Party, the John Birchers and their fellow travelers." Such a lumping of the patriotic John Birch Society with revolutionaries and Nazis was a calumnious act right out



of a Moscow propaganda broadcast. Agnew knew better — but that was the Rockefeller line and, however the script called for his attachment to Nixon, he was clearly still Rocky's boy.

As the Republican Convention approached, Agnew cranked up his image still further by issuing harsh words against the "Poor People's March" and the Kerner Report, despite the fact that in August of 1967, with other "Liberal" Republican Governors, he had met in New York at a conference called by Governor Rockefeller to announce that Negro riots occur because the federal government is "not providing financial resources on a scale commensurate with the dimensions of the problem." In his new role, of course, Agnew has now found a different cause: "If one wants to pinpoint the cause of the riots, it would be this permissive climate and the misguided compassion of public opinion." Quite some change!

Clearly, all of this quickly manufactured toughness was part of the build-up for his nomination to the Republican ticket as a strong law-and-order man. He is in fact so uncomfortable in his new role that he is now even complaining that "it is being made to appear that I am a little to the right of King Lear." When the interviewer questioned whether Lear was a Rightist, Agnew replied dryly: "Well, he reserved the right to himself to behead people, and by my definition that is a rightist position."

At Miami, Spiro Agnew delivered only eighteen of Maryland's twenty-six nominating votes to Nixon. But we are asked to believe that he became so loyal a worker for the former Vice President that, as chance would have it, Nixon asked him to make his formal nominating address. The next day, light-

ning struck Maryland's Accidental Governor. Agnew was, it is claimed, suitably stunned. Certainly everyone else was. The impression has been generated that Governor Agnew was selected only after a "thrashing-out" session in which a powerful block of Southern Senators forced him upon Richard Nixon. Mr. Nixon made it look that way, all right. But, as it turned out, the Agnews had known that the selection of the Maryland Governor was in the wind for at least a month.

Walter Cronkite's C.B.S. News, on the Monday night following the Convention, carried a report from a correspondent who interviewed Governor Agnew's son, Randy, a Seabee in Vietnam. The reporter asked young Agnew when he first knew about the possibility of his father getting the Vice Presidential nomination. "About a month ago," Randy Agnew told the C.B.S. correspondent. He said his mother had written him that his father and Nixon had talked about the possibility of the Marylander being on the ticket.

Something is terribly phony about this whole business. Here is Spiro Agnew, described by David Broder, the *Washington Post's* super-sleuth in charge of watching conservatives, as a man "virtually devoid of philosophy," being parlayed by a chain of political "accidents" into candidacy for the nation's second-highest office. Having held elected office only since 1962, Agnew, who is described by his critics as cold, thin-skinned, and arrogant, was elected twice because his opposition was badly split, and was supposedly selected for the Vice Presidential nomination because he is a political neuter. What madness is this?

It is certainly madness enough to cause a lot of Republican conservatives to feel mighty uncomfortable. ■ ■

## CRACKER BARREL

■ EAGLE ROCK—Nobody in our family owns a Nehru jacket, but my six-months-old grandson wears Mahatma Gandhi pants.

—JACK MOFFITT

AMERICAN OPINION