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Richard Nixon's Campaign Rhetoric of Anti-Communism

Studies of Presidential Rhetoric

A review of literature bearing upon U.S. presidential studies revealed that at the end of the 1970s some scholars rejected mainstream approaches to the study of the presidency (institutional, legal, political power as well as psychological), and chose to analyze the executive office from a rhetorical perspective. To have a proper understanding of this way of approaching the presidency, it is necessary to understand the difference between the phenomena of the rhetorical presidency and presidential rhetoric. As Martin Medhurst observes, the rhetorical presidency is a construct that derives from the discipline of political science and is grounded in the U.S. Constitution, while presidential rhetoric is a construct rooted in speech communication and based on human persuasion. At the most fundamental level, the two constructs differ in their respective domains: the former focuses on the presidency, while the latter focuses on rhetoric. Medhurst observes that researchers who work on the rhetorical presidency focus on the office as an institution and turn to the U.S. Constitution to define its character, scope and role, while scholars concerned with presidential rhetoric investigate the principles and practice of rhetoric used by presidents in order to achieve their goals (Medhurst xi-xiii).

Much of the scholarly interest in presidential rhetoric commenced with the publication of "Presidential Rhetoric: Definition of a Field of Study" by Theodore Otto Windt, Jr. In this seminal essay, the author explains that rhetoric-oriented researchers examine the president's public statements, including speeches, press conferences, messages to Congress, and official remarks, to show how the president's utterances affect his ability to exercise the powers of the office. They focus on presidential discourse, conducting either a kind of linguistic analysis, which focuses on the surface language, or rhetorical analysis, which considers contexts, speakers, audiences, constraints and exigencies (Windt 103). A survey of research relevant to the study of presidential rhetoric showed that the essay encouraged rhetoricians, political scientists, historians, and journalists to both conduct new research in the field and offer a fresh perspectives on it. It revealed that some of the studies, for example Jeffrey K. Tulis' *The Rhetorical Presidency,* focus

on the impact of presidential rhetoric on the character of the presidency and the style of presidential leadership, while others, for example Mel Laracey's *Presidents and the People: The Partisan Story of Going Public,* concentrate on the origins and the techniques of the presidential practice of going public. Some, for instance Roderick Hart's *The Sound of Leadership: Presidential Communication in the Modern Age,* analyze the variables of presidential public statements and presidential speechmaking regularities and patterns, while others, for instance Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson's *Deeds Done in Words: Presidential Rhetoric and the Genres of Governance,* examine the content of presidential messages. Some, like Lester G. Seligman and Cary R. Covington's *The Coalitional Presidency,* explore the link between presidential rhetoric and the electoral, while others, like Theodore Otto Windt, Jr.'s *Presidents and Protesters: Political Rhetoric in the 1960s*, study the connection between the political stances which different presidents took and the rhetoric they adopted to express those stances.

The aim of this paper is to analyze President Richard Nixon's political campaign discourse to show that as a campaigner Nixon went through several distinct phases, which do not merely form a chronological sequence but show his evolution as a campaigner who consistently and consciously employed rhetorical tools to reach his goals. The paper contends that each phase can be identified with a few most representative choices of rhetorical forms. Tracing the rhetorical devices in his congressional and senatorial campaign discourses, one discovers that Nixon was unmatched in keeping his opponents on the defensive through the use of insinuations based on the principles of guilt by association, half-truths, and outright lies. He skillfully discredited his rivals through loose logic, confusing quotations, false interpretations, and obvious insults. While in the first campaign for the vice-presidency he still at times tended to get carried away by his old intense and rough rhetoric, commonly based on slurs, allegations, and lies, he used a more moderate discourse through most of the campaign, deliberatively and strategically replacing direct accusations and statements with indirect references and generalizations. He continued modifying his discourse in his second vice-presidential campaign relying on logical rather than emotional proofs and stressing the importance of issues rather than personalities. To substantiate his arguments, he used logical forms of support, such as information and example, and appeals to loyalty, reputation, will, and character. In confrontations with his rival in the first presidential campaign, Nixon was on the defensive for the most part, identifying with President Dwight Eisenhower and his policies. At the times when he attacked, he based his arguments on the opponent's political immaturity and personal vulnerabilities. In making his second bid for presidency, he continued to run an intellectual campaign fo-

cused on issues and policy proposals, conveyed through metaphors of bridge and bridge-building, coupled with references to peace. A comparative analysis of Nixon's utterances from his congressional, senatorial, vice-presidential and presidential contests will show how his thinking about the issue of Communism, his understanding of the ideology and how his goals and his means of reaching them changed, as he developed during his years on the stump.

The Congressional and Senatorial Campaigns

As Stephen E. Ambrose writes in *Nixon: The Education of a Politician 1913-1962,* in the way that Nixon ran his campaigns to Congress and the Senate, representing southern California's Twelfth Congressional District, he showed himself to be a fierce rival, capable of going to almost any extreme and employing any trick available so long as it proved helpful in achieving political success (139). Sensing correctly that the political atmosphere of fear of Communists at home, characteristic of the period of the late 1940s, was conducive to a campaign focused upon issues related to ideology, he used the banner of anti-Communism with skill and without scruples.

In the 1946 and the 1950 contests, he discredited his opponents, Jerry Voorhis and Helen Gahagan Douglas respectively, through innuendos based on the principle of guilt by association. He repeatedly tried to tie Voorhis' name to Communism by constantly referring to him as "the PAC (Political Action Committee) candidate" (qtd. in Costello 53). His goal was to plant doubts in voters' minds by reminding them that Voorhis may have allied himself with Communists and therefore could not be trusted with the position for which he campaigned. What is more, as William Costello notes, Nixon wanted to put Voorhis on the defensive for, as a skilful debater, he knew that it was politically more advantageous to attack the opponent's position than to defend one's own, especially if one were a challenger to the office (46).

Nixon also defeated his opponents by attacking them with loose logic, confusing quotations, half-truths, and outright lies. When Douglas accused him of voting against giving aid to Korea and limiting aid to Europe, he circulated a pink paper handout, known as "The Pink Sheet," in which he conveyed the charge that Douglas voted 354 times along the same lines as the only pro-Communist member of Congress, Vito Marcantonio, on issues of national importance, which meant that, in essence, she was a left-wing extremist secretly trying to socialize America. Employing arguments based on distorted information, he wanted to question her patriotism and leave the voter with the impression that she was, at the very least, "soft" on Communism. He seemed convinced,

as Judith S. Trent observes, that "facts" presented in a clear form, and backed by what seemed to be well prepared and carefully researched and referenced data, were strongly persuasive (29).

Nixon interpreted the facts in such a way that the public would see his opponents' strength as their disadvantage and his own weakness as his advantage. Reminding the public that "Voorhis [was] a former registered Socialist" (qtd. in Ambrose, *Education* 136-137), he did not want to help his opponent come clean of alleged accusations, but rather suggest that Voorhis' leaving the Communist party meant his staying loyal to the ideals and principles underlying the party's ideology. By contrast, recalling his experience in the bureaucracy in 1942, when he declared:

> I know what I am talking about. OPA (Office of Price Administration) is shot through with extreme left-wingers. They are boring from within, striving to force private enterprise into bankruptcy, and thus bring about the socialization of America's basic institutions and industries (qtd. in Ambrose, *Education* 136)

he tried to foresee the actions of his opponent and anticipate any moves that could hurt his political image. Instead of waiting for Voorhis to use the argument of his inexperience against him, Nixon turned the fact that he was a freshman in politics to his advantage by explaining that as an outsider he was free from any socialist or communist affiliation.

He also relied on personal attacks based on name-calling and catchy descriptions. He often repeated the line that Douglas was "pink right down to her underwear" (qtd. in Bochin 27) and called her the "Pink Lady." What is more, the Nixon headquarters popularized a memorable description, asking, "How [could] Helen Douglas, capable actress that she [was], [take] up so strange a role as a foe of communism? And why [did] she when she [had] so deservedly earned the title of 'the pink lady?" (qtd. in Ambrose, *Education* 216). He used the fact that Douglas was a woman and a former Hollywood actress to question her qualifications and competence for the office of senator. Moreover, he used irony to ridicule her candidacy to the point when the public would not even consider her to be a serious contestant in the race. Although he never ran an ostensibly anti-feminist campaign, he calculated that if he hoped to win the contest he had to expose all of his opponent's weakest points. The fact that Douglas was a woman politician in the male world of the mid-twentieth century American politics was an argument against her which appealed to both Republicans and Democrats, since both parties were dominated by men determined to keep politics as exclusively their domain.

The First Vice-Presidential Campaign

While in the 1952 vice-presidential race Nixon continued his anti-Communist crusade, he showed more restraint in his criticism of the opposition and reason in the accusations he leveled against his rivals. Acting as a member of soon-to-be President Eisenhower's team, he was expected to adjust his agenda and discourse to represent the views of, and follow the course set by, the presidential candidate and his advisers. He was supposed to show that he was able to work out a new manner of delivery concerning controversial issues, which manner would correspond to the traditional standards associated with the office for which he campaigned. Trying to adapt and modify some of his views and modes of communication, at times, he would prove once again to be a tough partisan who went after his enemies with a vengeance, and who used techniques reminiscent of those applied in his campaigns against Voorhis and Douglas.

As a Republican nominee for vice-president, he used a more restrained rhetoric to attack. He did not address his charges against any particular adversaries but made his arguments as general as possible. In an interview for *U.S. News & World Report* from August 29, 1952, when answering a question about Communism in the U.S., he explained:

> it is necessary to appraise the Communist threat and to determine what is the most effective action to deal with it. As I have suggested, there are those who always come up with a simple answer to the problem—like a law which would outlaw the Communist Party. Or some would say, 'Ship all the Communists back to Russia.' We all may have emotional feelings which might support such drastic action but, on the other hand, I think that, as we calmly and objectively analyze the Communist tactics and strategy, both in the United States and in other countries where they have developed the 'fifth column' to such a remarkable degree, we must conclude that the most effective weapon against so-called internal Communism—infiltration—is exposure. The Communists, the Communist-front organizations, the Communist Party, cant's stand the light of day. (48)

In accusing the Democrats of proposing ridiculous and extremist ways of dealing with the issue of the Communist threat at home, Nixon suggested that his plan for handling the problem was, in contrast, reasonable and balanced. He ridiculed the naïve solutions he ascribed to his political opponents to show that, unlike the Democrats, he was a man who refused to take any shortcuts and chose to earn his credit the hard way. He preferred to achieve his goals by struggling against all odds and proving himself in that way, instead of just reaching them effortlessly. What this statement shows is that Nixon did not

address his attack against any particular adversaries but used collective pronouns to make his attacks as general as possible to imply that "their" view of the subject matter was radical and that "they" were in the minority, while he represented the opinion of the majority of Americans and therefore he deserved the support of the voters. This is a clear instance of a cunning rhetorical device: on the one hand, the speaker suggested that emotions should be put aside when discussing the issue at hand to create the impression of being distanced and unbiased, while, at the same time, by calling the Communist Party the "fifth column" and associating it with an evil force, he evoked the fear of sabotage and the fear of godlessness.

Nixon used a more restrained rhetoric not only to attack but also to respond to attacks. Commenting upon the controversies surrounding the Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC), he stated in the interview that the HUAC

> has faults, but I submit that many of its faults have been exaggerated and many of its faults have been due to the difficulty of the problem which it dealt with…. But with all of its faults, the Committee on Un-American Activities has rendered a worth-while service in that it has awakened the American people to the danger of the Communist movement in the United States, how it operates, how effective it can be. (48)

Instead of rebutting criticism of the Committee's work and blasting the Democrats for attacks against the Committee's activities, he agreed succinctly that the Un-American Activities Committee had made mistakes. On the one hand, this admission is the evidence that he tried to be critical and impartial in his evaluation of the Committee's actions; but, on the other, it can also be argued that he made the statement simply to silence the opposition and draw the public's attention away from the Committee's weaknesses to its strengths and achievements.

While he modified his discourse through most of the campaign, Nixon at times went out on his own and returned to his old aggressive and uncompromising campaign style, replete with smears and allegations. In a February 26, 1952 address, delivered during the annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Manufacturers Association, he held the Truman administration responsible for the loss of 100 million people a year to Communism. "It [was] immaterial," he stated, "whether [those] losses [had] been sustained because of the questionable loyalty of some of those who [had] made our policy or because of their stupidity or honest mistakes of judgment" (qtd. in Ambrose, *Education* 251). During the Chicago convention, he restated the charge that Truman's Far Eastern policy was the cause for the loss of China, and he added that the administration's foreign policy in Korea might be the reason for the outbreak of World War III. "There [were] only two alter-

natives," he declared, "continuing the Korean war without any real hope of winning it, or ending it with a political settlement." The problem was that "[t]he only political settlement possible would amount to appeasement, because the price of settlement which the Communists insist upon is a seat in the United Nations and control of Formosa—laying the foundation for eventual Communist domination of all Asia and in the end an inevitable world war" (qtd. in Costello 80-81). Nixon made a sweeping charge that the Truman administration was responsible for nations falling under the Communist rule, not because he really believed that the president was capable of resisting the tide of the Reds or that he was secretly collaborating with the Soviets, but because such a charge, when supported with data, had proven to be a strong campaign weapon to wield. Although he did not call Truman a traitor or a fool, if one follows the logic of the sentence, Nixon had in fact accused the president of disloyalty and incompetence and did so in order to discredit him—and his party—in the public's eye. To that end, he also criticized Truman for the policy he pursued in Korea. Drawing on the fear of war, Nixon used a device identified by Robert E. Denton and Dan F. Hahn the "Straw Man" attack (216), limiting Truman's conflict solutions to two options only and predicting that terrible consequences would accrue from accepting any of the alternatives. By tying Truman's name to the notion of war, Nixon persuaded the public that a vote for Truman was a vote for another war.

The Second Vice-Presidential Campaign

In the 1956 campaign for re-election, Nixon also concentrated on the theme of domestic anti-Communism, except that he changed from a ruthless and irrational campaigner into a restrained and reasonable one. He tried to rehabilitate himself from the reputation of "Tricky Dick" and "hatchet man" and sought to promote an image of an attractive candidate whose mature character and mind predisposed him to the office for which he campaigned. Underlying the change of rhetoric seems to be also the reconsideration of his role on the national scene as a man who might well be the president and the desire to dispose the public well towards his candidacy.

Nixon marked a difference in the character of campaigning in the forms of support employed to substantiate the arguments. As Bernard Charles Kissel observes, among the most common were those classified by Donald Bryant and Karl Wallace in *Fundamentals of Public Speaking* as information and example (Kissel, manuscript). In an address delivered at the annual Alfred Smith dinner at the Waldorf Astoria in New York on October 19, 1956, one of his major campaign appearances, Nixon used facts when he stated that "[t]hirty-nine years [before the following] month a new state [had been] created in

Russia." He relied on an example when he observed that "it [was] not that [Americans were] without fault or that [Americans had] perfectly lived up to [their] ideals. [Americans had had] slavery during the first 76 years of [their] nation's history" ("Alfred E. Smith Memorial Dinner Address"). Nixon used these forms of support as evidence to accurately and fully substantiate his arguments and thus show that his anti-Communist rhetoric developed from a discourse full of unfounded allegations delivered by tricky and aggressive language into a logical and reasonable political oratory communicated in a manner which gave credence to the truthfulness of what was being said. It can also be speculated that he relied on such rhetorical devices to demonstrate to his opponents, in particular, that he would not be provoked and would not lose his temper, returning to his former campaign practices. Given the stakes of the campaign, he might have wanted to show that he would withstand the opposition's criticism and charges and thus prove that his new image as that of a patient and dignified politician was true and sincere.

The kinds of appeals that Nixon employed in the campaign speeches seem to confirm the fact that he rejected the old practices of instigating feelings of hatred for Communists and drawing on the fears of sabotage, instability, aggression, war, loss, or godlessness and called on the voters to take responsibility for struggling with the Communist threat through appeals categorized by Bryant and Wallace as appeals to loyalty and reputation. Representative examples of the appeals, as Kissel notes, can be found in an address to the national convention of the American Legion in Los Angeles, delivered on September 6, 1956 (Kissel, manuscript), during which Nixon evoked the sense of devotion and patriotism when he said that it was "the eternal credit of the American Legion that, years before the true nature of the Communist conspiracy [had generally been] recognized in [America]," the members of the Legion had seen "the threat and proceeded to educate and alert the American people to the danger." In the same address, he appealed to America's reputation, asserting that Americans respected "the right of any nation to differ with [them] on international problems and to choose political neutrality in the present world situation" ("Address to the National Convention of the American Legion"). The use of appeals to higher values clearly indicates that Nixon realized that the emotional references he had favored in earlier campaigns were no longer appropriate. The fact that he understood that a campaign for re-election required a replacement of his old simplistic way of winning public support with higher policy talk proves his elasticity and flexibility in finding methods that fit a given political situation. It demonstrates that he wanted to offer himself to the American electorate as a positive and vigorous politician, with strong moral values and beliefs and a character fit for a future president, in case of Eisenhower's incapacity or death.

Among the appeals that seem to be designed to carry a similar message, as Kissel suggests, were those described by Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird in *Speech Criticism: The Development of Standards for Rhetorical Appraisal* as referring to will and character (Kissel, manuscript). In his acceptance address delivered in San Francisco on August 23, 1956, Nixon communicated to the voters his determination when he stated that "[t]he true ideals of freedom and democracy [could] win out over the deceptive and false ideals of communism if people [had] a chance to compare them" and he urged to "give them [that] chance." He insisted that Americans "should not lose [that] war by default" and declared that "[they] would not." He established his strength when he assured that "There [was] no need on [Americans'] part… for cringing at every Soviet gesture, or for feeling that [Americans] always [had to] be on the defense" ("Republican Policies. Acceptance Address"). The examples just cited expose Nixon's strong will and probity, which he exercised to communicate to an electorate the virtues of his character he wished to convey to them. These virtues indicated that the vice-president was predisposed to hold the office he campaigned for not only by his qualifications and experience but his character as well. Extensive use of a variety of appeals may also indicate that Nixon realized that the reputation he had earned in his earlier campaigns could harm his chances for re-election, and he was determined to overcome the old impressions, prove to the public that he had a changed appearance and dispose them well towards him. He knew, however, that he was not going to do so without a basic change of attitude towards him in people's hearts. His emotional and ethical appeals seem to have been designed to accomplish that very purpose.

The First Presidential Campaign

Nixon's 1960 presidential campaign rhetoric was in keeping with the vice-president's image, which had emerged in the 1956 campaign, had focused on issues rather than personalities, and had used a defensive and reserved rhetoric instead of an aggressive and unreasonable one. Foregrounding issues and policy proposals, Nixon appears to have wanted to overcome the deep-rooted conviction that he had won political contests by concentrating on appearances only and show that he was capable of running a serious issue-oriented campaign. The projected new campaign style seems to be also an indication that the threat of Communism at home was a matter of the past, which meant that the Communist menace was now limited to the discussions of foreign affairs.

Nixon made his experience and his opponent's, Senator John F. Kennedy's, immaturity the themes of his campaign statements. When discussing American foreign policy

toward the Soviets for *New York Daily News* on November 4, 1960, he emphasized that in his "personal dealings with Communist leaders, [he had] seen demonstrated the truth that Communists [had] but one objective—a Communist world. Everything they [did was] designed to advance that objective. [That meant] that the free world [could] never relax its guard" and had to "continue a policy of steadfast resistance to Communist aggression." He then contrasted his measured maturity with his opponent's immaturity and irresponsibility, explaining that "Any unilateral concession [was] foolish when dealing with the Communists," which lesson Americans "should have learned… long ago," and remarking that "there [were] still some American political figures who [did] not understand [that] fact" ("You Asked Them" 36). Nixon used contrast and indirect reference to subtly point out the gap between the candidates' experience and understanding of American-Soviet affairs. Although both he and Kennedy were ardent Cold Warriors and both declared to counter Communist expansionist policies, Nixon tried to appear to be more qualified through his skills and experience to accomplish that goal. Underlying his move to expose his strengths and Kennedy's vulnerabilities was also the intention to establish himself as a mature and successful statesman. He seemed to know that in a discussion of foreign affairs voters tended to support more often a Republican candidate rather than his Democratic rival, and he tried to use this tendency to his advantage, offering proposals which made him look tougher and consequently more effective in handling the Soviet issues.

Nixon's decision to rest his campaign in large part on the issue of experience involved his assuming at times a defensive posture. As the incumbent vice-president, he was in a position where he had to respond to charges against Eisenhower's policies. For example, during the third Nixon vs. Kennedy presidential debate held on October 13, 1960, he defended the controversial U-2 flights over the Soviet Union, pointing out that "the President [had been] correct in ordering [those] flights" and that "the President [had been] correct, certainly, in his decision to continue the flights while the conference [had been] going on." The choice to protect the administration's record reflects Nixon's desire to claim his share in the successes of Eisenhower. While he had to explain some of the less popular of that president's decisions, he still benefited from his identification with him. The decision to make the rebuttal of allegations a part of the campaign also discloses his rhetorical and political adaptability. Although he had run most of his former campaigns on the offensive, Nixon may have wanted to prove that he was able to conduct a successful contest defending his position rather than challenging the position of the opponent. Given his debating past, he may have believed that he knew both postures well enough to be able to win on either of them. Whether the defensive approach stemmed from his incumbent vice-presidential position or was a demonstration of self-confidence, it

showed his good political sense in remaining loyal to the president and defending Eisenhower until the very end. Although adopting such a posture forced him to speak about the past policies rather than promote his own political agenda, Nixon risked doing so because he calculated that it helped more than hurt his chances for election.

The Second Presidential Campaign

In the 1968 presidential campaign, he continued to stay away from the practice of making Communism a key campaign theme. He rarely spoke about the Soviet Union and completely ignored the issue of domestic subversion. In his rare references to the American-Soviet relations, he talked about the need to improve mutual relations in a balanced and tempered manner, conveying an image of himself as a diplomat ready and willing to negotiate and to seek consensus. Nixon moved away from the practice of focusing on the issue in his public discourse, because he realized that his anti-Communism had lost its former appeal for and impact on the American public. He also entered the campaign with an attitude reverse of the one he had exhibited in the past, since he was trying to encourage voters to reevaluate him as a public figure and appreciate his potential as a national leader.

A content analysis of the campaign speeches indicates that Nixon discussed the Soviet issue in the context of negotiations. In an early campaign speech made for an elite audience of the biggest and most powerful American businessmen gathered at the Bohemian Grove in California in July 1967, Nixon stated that Americans "should have discussions with the Soviet leaders at all levels to reduce the possibility of miscalculation and to explore the areas where bilateral agreements would reduce tensions" (*Memoirs* 284). In his "Presidential Nomination Acceptance Speech," made in Miami Beach on August 8, 1968, he declared again that "[a]fter an era of confrontation, the time [had] come for an era of negotiation" ("Richard Nixon XXXVII President of the United States"). A day later, at an informal press conference at Key Biscayne, records of which conferences were published in *U.S. News and World Report* on September 16, he reasserted his commitment to negotiation when he said that "[t]he time [had] come when [Americans needed] a dialogue with the Russians primarily because [that was] the kind of world in which the nuclear powers [could not] afford not to have a dialogue, a time of negotiations" (48). The use of the words "discussions," "negotiation" and "dialogue" in the context of American-Soviet relations indicates a major shift in Nixon's Cold War rhetoric. Although the phrasing is rather generic, presumably to avoid specific questions on the issue, it suggests that he had revised his approach to dealing with Communism and

Communist leaders. If one remembers that for twenty-two years—ever since he had entered American politics—Nixon had been a staunch anti-Communist, treating Communists as enemies and rejecting accommodation and compromise with them, his sincerity might seem questionable, but it is worth noting, as Stephen E. Ambrose does, that with regard to Communism Nixon had always meant what he said and believed in it (*Triumph* 95). Since his decisions and actions concerning the Soviet issue had previously agreed with his declared anti-Communist view, it can be assumed that his statements calling for an end to the Cold War and offering friendship to the enemy indeed reflected his revised outlook.

Indicative of Nixon's new outlook was also the use of metaphors of bridge and bridge building, coupled with references to peace. Speaking at Bohemian Grove, he insisted that negotiations required a spirit of mutuality, though he stressed out that in building bridges Americans "should build only [their] end of the bridge." He stressed that in the negotiations with the Soviets Americans should remember "that [their] goal [was] different from [the Soviets']. [Americans sought] peace as an end in itself. [The Soviets sought] victory, with peace being at [that] time a means toward that end" (*Memoirs* 284). The character of Nixon's discussion of the Soviet issue reflects a change in his public image, showing him as a conciliator with a talent for overcoming splits and the ability to alleviate tensions and heal divisions. The choice of rhetorical devices suggests that Nixon wanted to present himself to the public as a candidate who reconciled people and thus brought them together. Yet, the uncompromised assertion that bridging differences needed reciprocity and the warning that the Soviet understanding of peace was different from the American perspective clearly indicate that in his attempt to seek a consensus with the Soviets he was not a wishful thinker who believed that one could make peace with Communists simply by being soft on them. Indeed, Nixon's hopeful but tempered rhetoric proves that although he had bold and innovative proposals, he still held to a conservative attitude and saw the need for a cautious and careful manner in dealing with the enemy.

Conclusion

The examination of Nixon's campaign rhetoric across his career exposes a development of the politician's choice of rhetorical devices, of his approach to the issues of Communism and the Soviet Union, and of his campaign personae. It illustrates that over his political life, Nixon was constantly working on his discourse and means of its realization, changing his thinking about and understanding of the Soviet ideology and ad-

vancing his public character. His interpretation of the politico-cultural landscapes, adaptation of new modes of communication and modification of some of his political views demonstrate Nixon's evolution from campaign warrior and crusader to campaign peacemaker and diplomat. They show the development of Nixon as a rhetor who carefully planned and constructed his campaign discourse, a statesman who persistently worked on his approach to the Soviet ideology and policies, and a campaigner who fought hard for his positions on the stump.

Nixon approached campaigns the way he approached challenges in school, college, sports, law practice and the navy—with extreme competitiveness and a dogged determination to win (Ambrose, *Education* 139). He brought into contests his habits of thorough preparation and hard work as well as his polished skills in public speaking and debate. Over the years on the campaign trail, he learnt that winning an election was predicated on skilful communication and public relations techniques, which involved conditioning and controlling public attitudes, and that any rhetorical device was a good political weapon to use so long as it brought the expected results (Costello 42). He rejected the idea of devising a patent blueprint for a victorious campaign and made a continual effort to look for techniques that best suited the circumstances and his goals. While excelling at the old practices, he adopted new ones to meet new challenges posed by new politico-economic landscape. Having achieved one goal, he aimed higher and worked harder to succeed in accomplishing another.

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