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BAKALÁŘSKÁ PRÁCE

**The Representation of Richard Nixon in Works of Hunter S.
Thompson and Norman Mailer**

**Zobrazení Richarda Nixona v díle Huntera S. Thompсона
a Normana Mailera**

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Abstract

The thesis aims to uncover a relationship between less-known books from Norman Mailer and Hunter S. Thompson, who belonged to a group of New Journalism, with the American history of the 1960s and 1970s. In first part of the thesis, both writers are introduced and the historical background is clarified. The second part illustrates the atmosphere of the 1972 presidential election in the USA and the personality of Richard M. Nixon which is based on the perception of Mailer and Thompson and supplemented with the information from books about American history. In the end, the student compares what the chosen works have in common and what differs. The concluding part summarizes how the books reflect the historical events and why it is still worthwhile reading them.

Anotace

Tato práce si klade za cíl ukázat souvislost mezi nepříliš známými knihami Normana Mailera a Huntera S. Thompsona, kteří oba patřili ke hnutí „the New Journalism“, a historickými událostmi z šedesátých a sedmdesátých let 20. století. V první polovině student představí oba spisovatele a objasní historické souvislosti. Druhá část nastiňuje atmosféru prezidentských voleb v USA z roku 1972 a osobnost Richarda M. Nixona, což je založeno na postřezích Mailera a Thompsona, a doplněno o informace z vědeckých historických pojednání. Na konec student srovná, v čem se vybrané knihy shodují, a v čem se liší. Závěrečná část shrnuje, jak knihy reflektovaly dějinné události, a proč má cenu o nich psát.

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1.0 Introduction

This thesis focuses on two different points of view about the same event. Two books by authors of the New Journalism movement have been analyzed, both of which cover the presidential election in 1972 and the campaign trails of the candidates. I aim to introduce an era when these books were written and, throughout the whole thesis, compare what they have in common and what the differences are. The special attention will be reserved to the personality of President Richard Nixon.

The first work I have chosen is called *Fear and Loathing: on the Campaign Trail '72* from Hunter Stockton Thompson. The phrase “Fear and Loathing” refers to the bestselling book *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* by the same author published just a year before the elections in 1971. This reportage expresses a complete disillusion with the American Dream¹, American politics and manifests the author’s grief about an ending era of the “free” 1960s in the USA: “*a requiem for the counterculture or as a harbinger of what lay ahead in the 1960s*”². *Fear and Loathing: on the Campaign Trail '72* successfully continues in expressing this disappointment.

The other book is entitled *St. George and The Godfather* written by Norman Mailer. The nicknames in the title refer to the two main candidates of the final election, to Senator George McGovern from South Dakota for the Democratic Party and the incumbent Richard Nixon for the Republicans.

¹ Wright, Luke, S. H.: “The Death of American Dream.” *Virginia Quarterly Review* (85:4) 2009, 166.

² Vredenburg, Jason: “What happens in Vegas: Hunter S. Thompson’s Political Philosophy.” *Journal of American Studies* (47:1) 2013, 150.

2.0 Biographies of the Authors

2.1 Drugs, Guns, Motorcycles and Rock and Roll – A story of Raoul Duke

Hunter S. Thompson, who sometimes named his own person also Raoul Duke, was born on 18 July 1937 in Kentucky. He was a bright student and an energetic sportsman. He studied at Louisville Male High School where he became a member of a literature club. Just before graduating he was sentenced to a juvenile center for delinquency for a while. After receiving his diploma by mail to the juvenile center and his release, he enlisted the army and planned to fly in the Air Force which did not happen. In the army, probably, Thompson fell in a life-long love with guns. Nevertheless, serving at the Eglin Air Force Base he started his journalistic career. When he was discharged from the duty with honor, he decided to write but classical journalism did not fulfill this complex personality which admired F. S. Fitzgerald, Hemingway and Henry Miller.

He began to write for the *Middletown Daily Record* but was sacked for violence he committed to a candy machine. Thompson spent first years of 1960s in Latin America reporting “*the less salubrious sides of the life*”³ there. His raw style of writing captivated Cary McWilliams from *The Nation* who procured journalistic covering of the demonstrations at Berkeley and then the story of Hell’s Angels to Thompson. The book *Hell’s Angels: A Strange and Terrible Saga* published in 1966 made Thompson a big name and by that time he had become a motorcycle lover. He partook in the story of Tom Wolfe’s *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* along with Ken Kesey and afterwards he created his masterpiece *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* written for *Rolling Stone* to tell the story of the hippie counterculture as “*the wave finally broke and rolled back*”.⁴ Thompson dedicated himself to a criticism of American vices. He commented on politics for the rest of his life.⁵

Looking closer on his work, Hunter was more a professional storyteller than a professional old-school objective journalist. The subjectivity of his books is a key factor, for, as one scholar puts it about Thompson, “*covering the story is less important than participating in it; the story is an objective thing compared to the subjective experience*

³ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), in the P.S. part on 3.

⁴ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* (New York: Random House, 1998), 68.

⁵ All the previous information I predicate on Thompson’s brief biography you can find in: Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), in the P.S. part on 2-6.

of being a working American writer on the road".⁶ Thompson tried to converge with the American literature tradition which gives the books "*the real goods*"⁷ if it is written by somebody with hard life experience. Therefore, he utilized "*the cultural material of self-made, frontier-laden, autobiographical narratives that have been central to American literature and its marketplace since its inception*".⁸

In February 2005, Thompson committed suicide by shooting himself in the head while having a phone conversation with his wife. Always in control of his life more than anybody else, he elected to leave this world by his own hand like Hemingway. Extreme life demanded not only extreme death but also a funeral typical for Thompson – when all his closest friends gathered at his Owl Farm in his beloved untouched Colorado nature near Aspen, his ashes were shot up in a firework rocket in the shape of double-thumbed fist, a symbol of Gonzo. There was no one like him.

2.2 Experiments of World War Two Veteran – Norman Mailer's life

Norman Mailer, born on January 31, 1923, came from a Jewish family. He spent his childhood in Brooklyn where he finished Boys High School at accelerated study. Then sixteen-year-old Mailer started his study at Harvard, where he was taken in an artistic club the Signet Society, and there he began his writing career. He graduated in 1943 with a degree on engineering. This part of his life Mailer could be considered "*a nice Jewish boy from Brooklyn*".⁹

In following year, he started the first of his six marriages and just after the wedding he was forced to enter the U.S. army and sent to the Pacific battlefield. During his service, he experienced many posts and also went through some real combat. However, he hated the war and was sending letters to his wife almost every day. Later, he used these epistolary and recollected memories for his first novel *The Naked and the Dead* (1948).

His career was half journalistic, half novelist. He received the two Pulitzer Prizes for nonfiction *Armies of the Night* (1968) covering protests against the war in Vietnam near the Pentagon in 1967 and for the novel *The Executioner's Song* (1979) which is

⁶ Forsberg, Jennifer H.: "Working Through Hunter S. Thompson's Strange and Terrible Saga." *Persona Studies* (1:2) 2015, 95.

⁷ Wolfe, Tom: "The Birth of 'the New Journalism'; Eyewitness report by Tom Wolfe." *New York Magazine* (February 14, 1972), 4-5.

⁸ Forsberg, Jennifer H.: "Working Through Hunter S. Thompson's Strange and Terrible Saga." *Persona Studies* (1:2) 2015, 95.

⁹ Merrill, Robert: *Norman Mailer* (USA: Twayne Publishers, 1978), 21.

based on a life of a real murderer who received the death penalty. Between his better-known works belong *Harlot's Ghost* (1991) about the CIA or *The Castle in the Forest* (2007) describing an imaginary childhood of Adolf Hitler. As a journalist he had a varied scale of themes. Besides biographies of many celebrities, he also published an essay "White Negro" (1957) criticizing the conformity of many Americans during Eisenhower Administration. His articles dealt with issues ranging from politics, science, sport or even racism and sexism. Often, his complex receptive mind invented a story so ramified that the themes interweaved each other.

Mailer had an undeniable talent for writing. However, deploring establishment and consume-based society did not suffice for Mailer and he became busy with an active political life, more than controversial. Like many others he organized many anti-war protests during the Vietnam War. He supported a murderer, appeared in relation to a pro-Cuban organization possibly connected with the assassination of JFK. In 1980 he joined the Democratic Party as a delegate in the party convention. As the peak of his political endeavor, he run for the office of New York City mayor as a Democrat in 1969. He was not afraid to experiment, not only in his main profession.

What startles the most about this novel writer is that Norman Mailer stabbed his second wife Adele Morales in 1960 under unclear circumstances. He regretted the crime and was sentenced to three years in jail. However, even his further relationships with women were not of the usual sort. If one knows Mailer's work and his personal life, one must ask if there is some connection between these two. Special attention should be paid to one of his greatest fictions – *An American Dream* (1965) and its story of Mr. Rojack and his life escapades full of sex and violence and finally even some kind of redemption.¹⁰

Mailer wrote not only biographies of other people but also composed a few works where he included some facts of his own personal life, especially in *Advertisement for Myself*. The picture of good aspiring Jewish boy is here challenged by Mailer's wild experiences after he returned from World War Two involving drugs and sex.¹¹ He admitted that these experiments in years on the break of the 1940s and the 1950s changed his mind for the rest of his life. Another surprising fact is a list of drugs this formal-looking journalist had tried.¹²

¹⁰ Mailer, Norman, *An American Dream* (New York, Dell Publishing, 1965).

¹¹ Merrill, Robert: *Norman Mailer* (USA: Twayne Publishers, 1978), 19.

¹² Mailer, Norman: *The Armies of the Night* (New York: Signet, 1968), 15.

For his journalistic writing, Mailer preferred a 3rd person narrator form which made his work more original. He named himself *Aquarius* even in *St. George and The Godfather*. This technique refreshes the text, but his longer sentences may be challenging for a non-native English speaker to follow.

Norman Mailer died in November 2007 of natural causes.

3.0 New Journalism

To draw a raw picture of the immediate atmosphere of the moment of the 1960s, we may compare Hunter S. Thompson to Tom Wolfe because of Wolfe's book *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (1968).¹³ As Thompson says: "What I would like to preserve here is a kind of high-speed cinematic reel-record of what the campaign was like at the time, not what the whole thing boiled down to or how it fits into history."¹⁴ He confessed and even highlighted that he did not even try to be an objective news reporter. That feature specifies a characteristic which both authors, Thompson and Mailer, adhered to.

Both Thompson and Mailer wrote in a very specific way, combining the facts with their personal opinions which were sometimes influenced by drugs in Thompson's case. They not only can be described as members of the New Journalism movement, but they can rather be regarded as its pioneers, along with Truman Capote, Joan Didion or the aforementioned Tom Wolfe.¹⁵ A combination of a usual "4 W"¹⁶ report and their own subjective inner personal experience and opinions became known as New Journalism. Thompson explains the absence of objectivity as absolutely natural except for handling of the sport score or development of stocks.¹⁷ This innovation of involving subjectivity into the writing brought "the 5th W" in the story and that "W" stands for "Why".¹⁸ A publicist approaching that question must use his logic connected with his wildest imagination.

Both Mailer and Thompson were not afraid to use rude words. Hunter did so because of his uncontrollable frankness while, of many examples, calling politicians or state officers an "asshole", "swine"¹⁹ or "bastard"²⁰. Mailer on the other hand used them when he needed to spice some paragraph up.²¹

¹³ Hinrichs, Danielle: "The New Journalism." *The Oxford Encyclopedia of American Literature, Volume 3* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 260.

¹⁴ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 17.

¹⁵ Hinrichs, Danielle: "The New Journalism." *The Oxford Encyclopedia of American Literature, Volume 3* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 259-264.

¹⁶ "4W" stand for: Who did What Where and When.

¹⁷ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 44.

¹⁸ Hinrichs, Danielle: "The New Journalism." *The Oxford Encyclopedia of American Literature, Volume 3* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 261.

¹⁹ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 43.

²⁰ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 45.

²¹ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 57.

These two personas differ in a few trifles. Thompson, some fifteen years younger, belonged to a more radical part of this style – Gonzo Journalism – and he became its most famous representative. This style is more open as it carries the radical spirit of 60s ideals. Drug use is also in question here because Thompson did not continue only in a theory of personal freedom but also personally in a very wild lifestyle. He loved to go to the edge and sometimes even went a few steps over it. This extreme way of life made Thompson feel alive. He got high not only on psychedelics but also on dangerous experiences while traveling with the Hell’s Angels MC or like the fury of a gambler while participating in politics.²² In his first famous work *Hell’s Angels: A Strange and Terrible Saga*, he infiltrated the notorious motorcycle gang and provided detailed evidence of months he had spent with them. A reader can enjoy another of his political experiences in books *Better than Sex: Trapped Like a Rat in Mr Bill’s Neighbourhood* observing Bill Clinton’s election campaign in 1992, *The Great Shark Hunt* or *The Generation of Swine*. Thompson himself stated: “I hate to advocate drugs, alcohol, violence, or insanity to anyone, but they’ve always worked for me.”²³ He ended up in a hospital a few times. To sum it up, Gonzo Journalism rebelled more, at least in the lifestyle of “Dr.” Thompson.

The image of the rebel penetrated the literature of the post-war period whereby outsiders and weirdos became heroes. The connection between Thompson and the Beat Generation is more than obvious. The story of two buddies travelling across the USA fueled with drugs as expressed in Jack Kerouac’s *On the Road* (1957) is where the parallels may be found. In my opinion, Thompson was much better and more powerful writer than Kerouac as Thompson’s stories graduate unpredictably. *On the Road* brings new areas and stories to hear but the form seems very long and tiresome. However, a strong similarity cannot be denied. Thompson dedicated his most famous work *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* to a Nobel Prize winner Bob Dylan for the song *Mr. Tambourine Man*. Furthermore, he personally knew people like Allen Ginsberg, Ken Kesey, or members of the band Jefferson Airplane.²⁴ New Journalism and the Beat culture influenced each other.

²² Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail ’72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 251 and 470-471.

²³ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail ’72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), in the P.S. part on 2.

²⁴ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail ’72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), in the P.S. part on 4.

Gonzo Journalism deserves more attention than it has received. One question is whether an equal sign can be put between Gonzo style and New Journalism. Nevertheless, I would say that New Journalism incorporates Gonzo which is its more radical and a wilder branch. The influence of drug abuse on Thompson's writing definitely served as a radicalizing influence.

Interested in psychotropic substances all his life, Thompson took over that habit from another hippie-spirit writer named Bill Cardoso "*for no particular reason*" but it seems that he wanted to open his mind to a wider reality.²⁵ Thompson's work references amphetamines, opiates, hallucinogens and at least about some alcohol. The books of Francis Scott Fitzgerald were also influenced by drinking and partying. They were also created in a spirit of a failure of the American Dream. On the one hand Thompson could afford this risk because of his strong personality, will and powerful liver. As a columnist, he sent articles to prestigious magazines such as *Rolling Stone*, *The New York Times*, *Time*, *The San Francisco Examiner*, *Playboy* and so on. He traveled a lot and therefore he did not spend enough time sleeping. To get his brain working faster he used a lot of amphetamine derivatives, so his job was one of factors of what was about to blame in connection with his speed abuse.²⁶ Despite all the speed, LSD, cannabis and other drugs, not to mention alcohol he drank, his mind remained surprisingly very clear and sensitive. He would probably have been that strange even without all the drugs.²⁷

Hunter S. Thompson may be introduced as some high political-writing hippie. He enlisted into the Air Force and unsuccessfully applied to become a pilot. This was the time when he took his journalist career up while writing for his Air Force base's newspaper and covering the games of the Eglin Eagles football team. Enthusiasm for sport lasted all his life.²⁸ He definitely did not fit the stereotype of some hairy college junkie.

Norman Mailer was the more serious, or maybe old-fashioned may be better describe when compared to Thompson, as he was born in the 1920s and grew up in the Great Depression. His range includes more issues if we compare it to Thompson. The

²⁵ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), in the P.S. part on 15-16.

²⁶ He talks about it at the end of the Author's Note at the very beginning of the book. Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 17.

²⁷ To back my opinion, I would like to recommend any of his interviews.

²⁸ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), in the P.S. part on 2-3.

wide range makes of covered issues make them “*cultural omnivore(s)*”.²⁹ Mailer wrote not only about politics even though his themes were often closely connected with it. He covered the stories concerning many American celebrities ranging from Marilyn Monroe to Muhammad Ali. We can read about a life of every president after Eisenhower as well as the biography of a man suspected of the murder of John F. Kennedy, Harvey Lee Oswald.³⁰

Mailer stood strictly and constantly against war, as expressed in his most famous first novel *The Naked and the Dead*, which he created based on his letters from the Pacific battlefield. He fought against war not only in his books, but he appeared on TV or at college campuses which gave police many opportunities to arrest him.³¹

Both writers were active participants in mass protests against the Vietnam War. Mailer worked with people he ordinarily would never associate with such as the poet Robert Lowell³² a pacifist who was otherwise conservative. Thompson witnessed police violence at Berkeley. Mailer caught these protests in his book of non-fiction *Armies of the Night* (1968).

The experience from World War Two in which he took part initiated his fiction writing. It could remind us of the Lost Generation and Ernest Hemingway’s novels. He served in the Pacific during the battles in the Philippines and his first novella *A Calculus at Heaven* (1944) describes what he had to go through.³³ Mailer recalled Hemingway while he was watching Hippie protests in Miami in 1972 where they were demonstrating against Richard Nixon. While he was standing on the roof, he observed the demonstration deteriorate into riot and police had to use violence. He said he understood Hemingway’s passion for covering war conflicts at this moment.³⁴ This feeling links Mailer also with Thompson. They both enjoyed blood pulsing in their heads boosted with adrenaline.

Norman Mailer concentrated on a failure of the American Dream in the 1960s, similarly as Thompson did on decade later. First, he criticized American culture and

²⁹ Peterson, Richard A. and Kern, Roger M.: „Changing Highbrow Taste: From Snob to Omnivore.“ *American Sociological Review* (61.5) 1996, 904.

³⁰ Lennon, Michael J.: “Norman Mailer.” *The Oxford Encyclopedia of American Literature, Volume 3* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 1.

³¹ Lennon, Michael J.: “Norman Mailer.” *The Oxford Encyclopedia of American Literature, Volume 3* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 4.

³² Details about this cooperation can be found in: Mailer, Norman: *The Armies of the Night* (New York: Signet, 1968). Despite a noble appearance of Robert Lowell which Mailer hated, they shared some opinions about the anti-war protests.

³³ Lennon, Michael J.: “Norman Mailer.” *The Oxford Encyclopedia of American Literature, Volume 3* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 2.

³⁴ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 225.

described it as “*the history of politics which is concrete, factual, practical and unbelievably dull*” and like “*a subterranean river of untapped, ferocious, lonely and romantic desires, that concentration of ecstasy and violence which is the dream life of the nation*” in a book named *The Presidential Papers* in 1963.³⁵ Another novel from this era is actually called *An American Dream* but here the idea of The Dream is much more complicated. Mailer’s concept is caught in *The Armies of the Night* where he drew how important but also simple is the right to express your protest against decision of instance even that high as U.S. government and the President.

³⁵ Both from Lennon, Michael J.: “Norman Mailer.” *The Oxford Encyclopedia of American Literature, Volume 3* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 4.

4.0 The American Dream

What are we supposed to imagine under the term *American Dream*? The most superficial idea we can get is probably “*simply having a house in suburbia, two cars, two children in private colleges, and a healthy job for life with a corporation*”³⁶ which basically means “*the ability to acquire material comfort*”³⁷. Both Thompson and Mailer reject this vision of the phrase. The Dream seems to be one of unifying topics of Thompson and Mailer, but not only theirs if we recall Theodore Dreiser or F. S. Fitzgerald.

Mailer and Thompson worried about the meaning of the phrase because they witnessed a degradation of this interpretation and even observed as The Dream was disappearing from the American psyche. One of Thompson’s letter to his editor described his idea to personify The Dream and create a grotesque murder report of it.³⁸

One can contemplate how fundamental the idea of The Dream was to American citizenry. Was it only an intellectual fable from the elite class? I have already suggested that the term may be comprehended as the ability to obtain a good living standard for ordinary people. However, that does not suffice. It stands only for the latest and poorest interpretation. A good living does not represent the typical American virtue. If there had not been the world wars, the European standard would likely reach a comparable level. I consider freedom of will and independence distinctively American, freedom to choose one’s own way of living and a right to free speech. Many Americans exchanged the liberty for only reaching and accumulating material wealth or simply “*keeping up with the Joneses*”.³⁹

However, not only the freedom of input to acquire a large asset but also the liberty of an individual was involved in The Dream. It also means the freedom of a spirit, mind and outward realization of thoughts – free speech, which is exactly the point where we get to the problem. U.S. constitution contains the right to say and share whatever you want which could sometime endanger even the country itself. Thanks to this liberty, The Dream gives a hope that even a common, or in Hunter’s case very special, man can show that he must be considered and even he can influence the going. The Dream means a chance to do what one regard as the right to do which in the context of this thesis means

³⁶ Wright, Luke, S. H.: “The Death of American Dream.” *Virginia Quarterly Review* (85:4) 2009, 198.

³⁷ Wright, Luke, S. H.: “The Death of American Dream.” *Virginia Quarterly Review* (85:4) 2009, 197.

³⁸ Wright, Luke, S. H.: “The Death of American Dream.” *Virginia Quarterly Review* (85:4) 2009, 196.

³⁹ Wright, Luke, S. H.: “The Death of American Dream.” *Virginia Quarterly Review* (85:4) 2009, 197.

to stay clean of the bad things surrounding you and try to fight them because one has a right to do so.⁴⁰ In this sense, The American Dream urges one to speak against everybody, even against his government, when necessary in a way which one sees appropriate.⁴¹ This version of The Dream was being suppressed under the presidency of Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon.

⁴⁰ As Hunter Thompson managed to save his beloved Woody Creek from being changed into a regular center of tourism industry with his Freak Power movement: Wright, Luke, S. H.: "The Death of American Dream." *Virginia Quarterly Review* (85:4) 2009, 198-199.

⁴¹ During the demonstrations in Washington D. C., Robert Lowell and Norman Mailer with other speakers showed how different could these moralizing speeches be. See: Mailer, Norman: *The Armies of the Night* (New York: Signet, 1968), 55-66.

5.0 Historical Background

To understand the atmosphere preceding the origin of these books, both authors experienced the 1960s and even tried to take part in politics. Thompson ran for the office of Sheriff of Aspen, Colorado and Mailer had some public speeches at the anti-war protests. Around them, to apprehend the spirit of these decades after the World War Two must be highlighted.

5.1 The Cold War

The war against Nazi Germany brought the USA and Imperialist Japan a triumph but another conflict rose against a former ally – the Soviet Union, a conflict which was to last much longer. Antipathy to Nazis was transformed into a hatred against Communists on the end of 1940 when China and several states including Czechoslovakia became communist countries. These strong emotions fed the era of “McCarthyism” in the 1950s, when the American government executed or jailed people for a crime of spreading this extreme left-wing ideology. Joseph McCarthy, Republican Senator from Wisconsin, convinced many American people that they are surrounded by Soviet spies. He was not afraid to search for the state’s enemies even in the government and he combined the fear of Communism with an abhorrence against homosexuals. The steps are reminiscent of Gottwald’s show trials at the same time in Czechoslovakia, or what novelist Philip Roth later called “*the persecuting spirit*” and what playwright Arthur Miller termed “*a witch-hunt*”.

At that point Americans might have felt proud about their military victory in Europe. They defeated the Devil and paid the price with many lives of American young men. The enthusiasm for fighting for the right thing was based on well-founded numbers. This strong belief for crusades in distant parts of the world became a precedent for the ongoing military struggles against a different form of totalitarianism in Asia.

The official reason for war in Korea in the first half of the 1950s and then in Vietnam was said to save these countries from communist dictatorship and totalitarianism, in other words to stop Evil once again. However, sometimes, when one fights against the Devil, one is signing a deal with him at the same time. Killing was consecrated in order to protect free lives.

Socialism did not threaten USA only from Asia but also from Cuba and South America which were going through their own form of long lasting inner political crises.

During the presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy, Americans experienced hot moments, starting with when Castro took over power in 1959, then the unsuccessful Bay of Pigs Invasion in 1961 and nearly unleashing a nuclear war in 1962. However, the Cold War contained to the level of negotiations and the Cuban Missile Crisis led “only” in trying to outarm the other with nuclear weapons.

In this context I would interpret the situation as the American Dream changed into a defense of itself, something just simplified to a witch-hunt against hatemongers or possibly warmongers, a war on everybody who tried to disrupt the democratic, “free” way of human society. In this case the enemy was represented by socialists. The right American citizen was supposed to honor the right wing. Many people accepted that, which served as a pretext for a rebellion against the dull and blind American nationalism in the 1960s, and their children or grandchildren turned against these patriots.

Young people smelled the rotten corpse of the original Dream and were supported by some of the returning Vietnam veterans. They began to alert Americans that something was going very wrong. Where had that liberal, morally based notion of individuality gone? Was it really necessary to shoot and throw napalm on hungry people whose only sin was that they believed in or were forced to follow communist ideology and, what seems even more strange, on the other side of the planet? Was that nasty warfare committed in the name of The Dream? If so, it had gone a long way from declaring independence from Great Britain and the free will of individuals. I would rather consider it a masterfully-handed propaganda based on natural need for an enemy to fight against.

Doubts were taking root among the younger members of the American citizenry. Artists created a new unchained culture, which expressed the idea that the meaning of life could be somewhere else than in fighting for twisted ideas. Thompson’s friends from Jefferson Airplane called for a revolution in their songs. The Woodstock Festival in August 1969 drew nearly half a million young people. The Beat Generation ideas, carried by rock bands at that time, were applauded by crowds. Enthusiasm for the country where even a factory worker could afford a nice living was believed by the majority. However, now it changed to nearly anarchist ideas and a strong distrust in the government. A change was hanging in the air but could also be blown away.

5.1.1 Nixon's participation

President Richard Milhous Nixon was participating in high politics long enough to understand the details of foreign policy. As president, he had a professional to help him –National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger. These two had different opinions about war in Vietnam but they both agreed on the way to defeat the coalition of communist-controlled countries. They planned to further split communists by improving relations with one of them as the potential business partner if possible.

China seemed acceptable for it had the same enemy in the not-so-distant past. The Japanese did terrible atrocities on the Chinese because Chinese were worth less in Japanese eyes and therefore Japanese tried their bayonets and biological weapons on the Chinese. Hence, Chinese helped American pilots. There were also educated people among the communist elites such as Deng Xiaoping who knew that policy of communist China must be subordinated to a functioning economy which could not work well without foreign trade.

Relations began to warm in the first years of 1970s. The first step was made by inviting the American table-tennis teams to challenge the Chinese: this was called Ping-pong Diplomacy. Then Richard Nixon visited China in February 1972, as one of first foreign leaders. He met Mao Zedong and Premier Zhou Enlai. The mission succeeded at least in a sense that USSR felt endangered by the possible cooperation between China and USA after Sino-Soviet Split, so China slowly opened itself to the world.

A result of this effort was not unambiguous because Mao hated rightists as enemies of the happiness of his people. Fortunately for Americans, China was going through a crisis that followed their nationalizing reforms. China needed foreign support and USA offered a hand. Nixon's policy deserves appreciation for this foresight.

Three months after visiting China, Nixon with his wife flew to Moscow where Nixon negotiated with Brezhnev which resulted in treaties about the limitation in nuclear build-up in the second half of May 1972 which neither side followed.

5.1.2 The Vietnam War

The conflict started as an endorsement of France which had colonized Vietnam and wished to recolonize it after the defeat of Japan. After France capitulated, the United States went on in supporting South Vietnam in the civil war against the communist North Vietnam. During the presidential term of John F. Kennedy in the first years of 1960s,

USA sent thousands of military “advisors” to Vietnam due to the MAAG (Military Assistance Advisory Group) to help the South Vietnamese Army fight against the Viet Cong troops who were red partisans from the North. The North was supported by USSR and China. It was the classical style of challenging during the Cold War – on a territory of neither of the two empires but involving both the Soviet Union and USA. Mailer described that policy like:

“[...] an activity as rational as the act of a man who walks across his own home town to defecate each night on the lawn of a stranger – it is the same stranger each night – such a man would not last long even if he had the most powerful body in the town. “Stop,” he would scream as they dragged him away, “I need to shit on that lawn. It’s the only way to keep my body in shape, you fools.”⁴²

On November 22, 1963 President Kennedy was assassinated, and the office was assumed by his Vice President, Lyndon B. Johnson. In 1964 after the Gulf of Tonkin Incident, Johnson’s government responded with the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution and the real combat was about to begin. American forces in Vietnam increased nearly to 200 thousand soldiers. Robert McNamara, the Secretary of Defense at the time, became head of operations.

The fight was confined by offensives of North Vietnam’s “People’s Army of Vietnam”. The famous Tet Offensive in 1968 resulted in the subsequent U. S. revenge realized in “seek & destroy” tactics. The most important advantage of Americans was domination in the air, so the Air Force dropped tons of bombs on the jungles – U. S. Air Force and its B-52s committed terrible war crimes as did the Viet Cong.

The conflict expanded to the border lands because North Vietnamese were supplied through Ho Chi Minh’s route in Cambodia. The communists called Khmer Rouge invited the North Vietnam warriors to help them to take over power in Cambodia. Laos also suffered an invasion of the “Red Army”. Unfortunately, the U. S. bombing of the route negatively affected these neighboring countries too. It also resulted in the Kent State University massacre on May 4, 1970 in which few students were killed and nine others injured, most of them protesting the expansion of the war into neighboring countries.⁴³

Richard M. Nixon was first elected to the Presidency in 1968. His announced policy during the election campaign in the case of the war was to withdraw American

⁴² Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 155.

⁴³ Johnson, Paul: *Dějiny amerického národa* (Praha; Academia, 2000), 713.

troops back home gradually. This process of “Vietnamization” of the war, leaving it to Vietnamese themselves, ran slowly and in fact Nixon increased the number of troops in combat. Yet, after expanding the war to the aforementioned neighboring countries of Vietnam, Nixon came to see the war as unwinnable. It was Richard Nixon who ended the war in 1973. Henry Kissinger, U. S. National Security Advisor and later Secretary of State, and Tho met and signed the Paris Peace Accord on 27th January 1973, and on April 1975 North Vietnam took over the entire country and USA totally lost the war.⁴⁴

Indeed, Nixon had promised in 1968 to end the war as soon as possible. No more sons of America needed to be sacrificed. Instead of sending another young men to die in a forest, Nixon decided to deploy Air Craft and “*dropped some 3.6 millions tons of bombs in Indochina – the equivalent of some 200 pounds for every man, woman and child in both North and South Vietnam.*”⁴⁵ During Nixon’s presidency, when the war should have been in the process of pacification, bombing became even harder than in the era of Lyndon B. Johnson. Not only that Vietnam suffered much more because of the bombarding but also more American soldiers died in the war than under President Johnson.⁴⁶ Nixon did not keep the word he had given to Americans that he will stop the war. He did the exact opposite.

The Vietnam War left a bitter aftertaste behind. The conflict developed from backing French and non-communist Vietnamese to a napalm hell which sent more than 59,000 American men home in a coffin. The main aim to save South-East Asia from communism ended unsuccessfully. The U. S. tried to destroy the Viet Cong using an unbelievable mass of bombs on the jungle. Vietnam landscape also suffered a blight and has remained destroyed.⁴⁷ Not only Americans are to blame; the Vietnamese were digging mines into the soil of their motherland. However, television broadcast and the photos of burning villages, dead civilians and naked children burned by napalm hurt American public belief in these different kinds of weapons. This terrible war brought severe criticism of the legitimacy of American behavior in foreign issues although it did not keep USA away from pursuing conflicts in other parts of Asia. Nevertheless, the Vietnam War loss reduced direct American involvement.

⁴⁴ Johnson, Paul: *Dějiny amerického národa* (Praha; Academia, 2000), 700 and 723.

⁴⁵ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 128. On this page, Mailer criticized the war as much as he could.

⁴⁶ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 195.

⁴⁷ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 128.

Mailer commented on the situation: “*Yes, it is a fair exchange. We are bombing Vietnam, and the drugs of Indochina are bombing our young.*”⁴⁸

The rising number of victims disgusted ordinary Americans, but we must add that rather dead citizens of USA were counted. Dead fellow-citizens convinced most of the people to change their opinion about participation in the Vietnam conflict, not so much the deaths of the enemy side, although Martin Luther King’s nonviolent approach to Civil Rights positively influenced the Hippies to care about peace generally.⁴⁹

5.1.3 The Weight of Media – The Difference between Korea and Vietnam

If we compare the situation of the Korean and the Vietnam War, USA fought for the same aim. The American approach to Korea was harder than to Vietnam in a sense that general MacArthur even considered even deployment of nuclear weapons again but fortunately civilians in power refused that option. Why were there not been crowds protesting in front of Pentagon when thousands of American soldiers were dying in Korea? The Beat Generation was already being born during these years but not calling for a withdrawal from Korea. The reason was presumably hidden in that the atmosphere had still not become so loose as a decade later. As the aforementioned essay by Mailer entitled “White Negro” emphasized Americans were too conformist in the 1950s.

The military service was still compulsory in 1950s whereas ten years later this duty dropped out but because the government needed more men to fight to Vietnam a draft started once again. American men did strange things just to avoid the death in the wet jungle in South-East Asia. The atmosphere changed and people felt free to scream their opinions in the streets in the 1960s. However, the main difference about public opinion about these wars lay in the picture people got about them.

The media played the key role in the perception of the events. American could have only read or heard about the situation in Korea but they could see the horror of Vietnam everyday on TV. The form of journalism developed from the press to the television and periodicals were supplemented with photography at the time between the two conflicts. Numbers or names of the dead make one feel calmer than when he sees

⁴⁸ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 224.

⁴⁹ Johnson, Paul: *Dějiny amerického národa* (Praha; Academia, 2000), 711.

photos or video tapes of people bleeding, screaming and dying in a box in his living room.⁵⁰

Reporters and journalists had become very influential personas. The media gained a lot of power and helped the young generation of the 1960s to create a new rebellious mood in the people. It was partly because they supported exclusively the liberal politicians which sometimes meant to gloss over some immoralities of for example President Kennedy. The reporters believed they did the right thing but now we must add that a lot of media were publishing one-sidedly.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Johnson, Paul: *Dějiny amerického národa* (Praha; Academia, 2000), 677-679.

⁵¹ Johnson, Paul: *Dějiny amerického národa* (Praha; Academia, 2000), 716.

6.0 The Presidential Election of 1972

America stood before a decision between letting Nixon serve for the second term or voting for a new face. From psychological point of view, it is easier to continue doing what one is used to than to take up an entirely new way. Americans chose this option.

The frustration about the situation had come before the elections even started. In Thompson's words: "[...] *how many of these stinking, double-downer side-shows will we have to go through before we can get ourselves straight enough to put together some kind of national election that will give me at least 20 million people I tend to agree with a chance to vote for something instead of always being faced with that old familiar choice between the lesser of two evils?*"⁵². He also summed the expectation of the specialists from the *New York Times* and *The Washington Post* in short as: "*we're all fucked*"⁵³ because opposition against Nixon lacked qualities.⁵⁴

Mailer introduced his book using a conversation with his fellow-traveler Mr. Bernhard. They talked about the possible clash between McGovern and Nixon. Mr. Bernhard would have never voted for Nixon but was not going to vote for George McGovern either. Even a reasonable man, as Mr. Bernhard looked, was not willing to accept this game.⁵⁵

6.1 The Youth Vote

Both authors pondered about the categories of possible voters. The term the Black Vote appeared in the books also but was almost exclusively connected with Shirley Chisholm. However, it was Thompson who highlighted the weight of new young voters who could not have voted in 1968. This group could not influence the election drastically, but this group represented about 25 million potential votes to obtain. Thompson called attention to the elections of 1968 when just half a million votes could have swung the result. The problem of not only these new voters but people with the right to vote was how many of them would really come to the polls in the end. Thompson got himself a survey of voter participation in the election which "*shows a conscious decision on the*

⁵² Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 51.

⁵³ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 50.

⁵⁴ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 51.

⁵⁵ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 5.

part of incredibly large number of people not to vote for President, but go in and vote for state-level offices".⁵⁶ Only 55 percent of eligible voters went to the polls. The broad public just did not care about politics, at least not on the level that high.⁵⁷

It was already pointed out that young people formed the fieriest movement to stop American involvement in the war. These hopes were connected with George McGovern and helped him to reach many votes thanks to young volunteers helping him in the campaign.⁵⁸

That the youth inclined to McGovern's leftist ideas was only one side of the coin. Richard Nixon had his youth club too. The difference is that support to McGovern arose from discontent about the moral position of American politics and originated from self-imposed decision of its own members. In contrast, Nixon's YVP⁵⁹ group was organized by the President himself in order to create an image of a politician loved even by small children. The youngsters of YVP were given special opportunities to participate in the Republican Convention and to appear on television. This side of the youth involved in the elections of 1972 was covered by Norman Mailer.

Children who were supposed to complement the TV scene of Nixon appearance sometimes overdid their role. This happened after a short Nixon campaign movie about his wife Pat. She just came to take a bow and greet people in front of cheering audience full of YVP children. They knew what to do but unfortunately for Pat they did not recognize when to stop.⁶⁰ On this example, YVP showed how easily a successful presentation can turn into a trumpery.

Most of them were probably not geniuses and they lacked taste. The only thing they managed was to scream as much as possible to show how pleased they were to stand near the President shrieking "*Four more years!*"⁶¹. For the stupidity of this show Mailer called them "*young pigs for the President*"⁶² and noted that "*Perhaps America has been*

⁵⁶ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 455.

⁵⁷ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 36-37, 45 and 454-455.

⁵⁸ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 163-169.

⁵⁹ YVP is an abbreviation meaning Young Voters for the President. Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 158.

⁶⁰ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 191.

⁶¹ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 210.

⁶² Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 200.

worrying about the wrong kids.”⁶³ in a sense that these crazed children could be a bigger threat to America, or to American Dream, than the stoned hippies protesting the war.

6.2 The Democratic Candidate – Rise and Fall of George McGovern

If there was something unpredictable, it must have been the first part of the election. Choosing a runner for the final election could not be foreseeable rather in the Democratic Party because the fame of Richard Nixon had been stabilized or even had grown, even within his Party. George McGovern, Edmund Muskie, George Wallace and Hubert Humphrey looked like the biggest favorites. Every one of these had some voters to rely on.

Edmund Muskie was claimed as the most possible man to face Nixon. In contrast, McGovern was not a horse to bet on. Even Thompson talked about McGovern as a “*far left radical bastard*”⁶⁴ in January 1972 but we cannot be sure if he really meant it. Only a really big name like Ted Kennedy could threaten a sovereign like Nixon. However, Kennedy, the only person whose authority could unite a bulk of Democrats, refused the offer.⁶⁵

Democrats faced a big disadvantage – disunity. Their candidates were parted and stood for different concerns of voters, aiming on diverse group of voters. Muskie represented the Centre, Humphrey and Wallace relying on industry and labor unions impersonated the right wing of the Party.⁶⁶ George McGovern constituted the most liberal program, known as The Three “A”s in the public, for which he could be considered a Democratic left.⁶⁷ Mailer named it not in abbreviation but in rhymed words: “*ass, grass, amnesty and abortion*”.⁶⁸

These Three “A”s brought McGovern popularity among young and free-minded people on the one hand. On the other hand, the fables disseminated propaganda

⁶³ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 200.

⁶⁴ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 45.

⁶⁵ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 31-32.

⁶⁶ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 149.

⁶⁷ This abbreviation means Amnesty, Abortion and Acid. The Amnesty should release young men who denied enlisting the Army and fly to Vietnam. Acid is usually a nickname for LSD but here it should have marked McGovern’s possible tolerance for marihuana. However, these slogans were tattled mainly by Humphrey’s staff to denigrate McGovern rather than real McGovern’s purpose. To see more: Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 233.

⁶⁸ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 52.

McGovern was hiding some extreme, almost anarchist, intention under his calm smiling decent face. These suspicions were based right on the Three “A”s program and cost McGovern votes in conservative religious regions.⁶⁹ For example, in Nebraska McGovern spent long hours denying that he would legalize marijuana and while defending himself one reporter reminded the public that McGovern was a friend of Thompson, in other words with a famous drug freak.⁷⁰

One of these Three “A”s represented Abortion, a very controversial theme. It could damage the picture of McGovern in conservative areas as same as that marijuana rumor. Mailer went to see the Women’s Caucus which carried a strong whiff of the Women’s Liberation Movement – Women Power where the Abortion belonged to the main topics. He was not a big fan of this movement, but Mailer agreed with these women that the right of an abortion is a right to control your own body which he could understand similarly to euthanasia. Democrats let this issue be arbitrated by delegates, but it did not pass by only a few hundred votes. Therefore, abortion became another of Three “A”s which challenged McGovern’s aims.⁷¹

A surprise came when one name was added to more than ten others on the ballot – Shirley Chisholm. As Thompson said: “*There was no mention in the press or anywhere else that some unknown black woman from Brooklyn might seriously challenge these famous liberal heavies on their own turf.*”⁷² It was the first time that any black person and furthermore a woman tried to reach something that crucial. When Mailer visited the Black Caucus to see Chisholm’s speech, he heard her saying: “*I’m the only one who has the balls to run for President.*”⁷³ Despite all her courage, it remained only an experiment.

Edmund Muskie, known also under the nickname *the Man from Maine* or as Thompson addressed him *Big Ed*, started the primaries successfully by winning primaries in New Hampshire but lost his margin soon. Tricks of his opponents caused a serious harm to his image. Rumors about Muskie’s approach to French-Canadian minority and about Mrs. Muskie using bad language was published and no matter how true or false they were, the damage had been done. Despite that such a liberal mind as Thompson

⁶⁹ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 232.

⁷⁰ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 192.

⁷¹ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 56-61.

⁷² Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 64.

⁷³ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 62.

hating Nixon as the impersonation of the Evil, when Thompson had spent some time with Muskie he described it “*even duller and more depressing than travelling with Evil Dick himself*”.⁷⁴ Muskie stood in the political Center which was too neutral in the time when people wanted clear and vigorous actions.⁷⁵ Many people could not forgive Muskie’s inactivity when the war in Vietnam was getting tougher.⁷⁶ Nevertheless, his employees still believed that Muskie was “*the only Democrat who can beat Nixon*”⁷⁷. Their hope ended most likely in March in Florida where Muskie got beaten by George Wallace.⁷⁸ “*The last spike that sealed the coffin*” came after his defeat in Wisconsin at the end of April.⁷⁹

It worth to note a crazy story Thompson caused on Muskie’s private train where he had entrained with other journalists. Thompson, as an expert on drugs, discovered that that is something wrong about Muskie in that time. Muskie was shaking all the time and Thompson found out that the candidate is high on Ibogaine.⁸⁰ Then Thompson confirmed his reputation when he sneaked Peter Sheridan, both completely drunk, on the train with Thompson’s permit card hanging on Sheridan’s neck. Sheridan was terrorizing other travelers and even made aa outrageous verbal attack on Muskie during his speech while everybody thought it was drug-filled Thompson. Thompson later stated that he “*wouldn’t change a note*”⁸¹ despite “*putting the Demo front-runner on a collision course*”⁸².

Wisconsin was a huge triumph for George McGovern. He managed to gain the bulk of the citizens by engaging his young volunteers. The youth led by Gene Pokorny convinced many people to vote for McGovern by visiting their fellow citizens at home

⁷⁴ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail ’72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 110.

⁷⁵ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail ’72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 123-124.

⁷⁶ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail ’72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 84 and 196.

⁷⁷ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail ’72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 122.

⁷⁸ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail ’72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 123.

⁷⁹ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail ’72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 156.

⁸⁰ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail ’72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 143-145.

⁸¹ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail ’72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 243.

⁸² Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail ’72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 243.

where they discussed politics. The keen youth movement proved how significant role they played.⁸³

Another of McGovern's opponents within the Party was George Wallace, the Governor of Alabama. He espoused the voice of the South within the Party therefore his support came from white conservatives. For his protest against desegregation he was obnoxious to Afro-Americans. He paid the highest price in May 1972, getting shot by Arthur Bremer. He ended up in a wheelchair pushed by his wife. That was the end of his real chances for becoming President because nobody knew if he was about to return to politics even though he still had his speeches and endeavored. He did not give up before McGovern was officially nominated at the Democratic Convention in Miami.⁸⁴ However, McGovern had already drawn his main rivals far away and therefore the only chance to gain leverage was to unite power with Hubert Humphrey.⁸⁵

Both Thompson and Mailer perceived Wallace as the most conservative candidate of the Democratic right, in other words as a racist. Even his fellow-right-wing Democrat Hubert Humphrey considered him "*as a racist demagogue*"⁸⁶ but it was motivated rather by practical political tactic than by a moral movement. Despite Wallace's policy there were a few black people who sympathized with Wallace, but we can guess it was not much.⁸⁷ Right after the shooting in Laurel Shopping Center, a nature of the Wallace-voter crowd came to light when the first who was suspected of the assassination attempt were "*four young blacks who had been heckling Wallace from the rear. One of them sported an Afro and a dashiki. The crowd rounded on them, ready to beat them to shit. They started shouting. 'No, no, no, no, it wasn't us, we didn't shoot him!'*"⁸⁸ Due to Thompson, "*The Wallace crowd was ready for a reflexive lynching.*"⁸⁹

⁸³ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 162. For more information about the whole story of the McGovern's movement in Wisconsin see pages 160-169.

⁸⁴ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 71.

⁸⁵ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 206.

⁸⁶ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 199.

⁸⁷ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 201-202.

⁸⁸ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 202.

⁸⁹ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 202.

The status of the chosen one to challenge Richard Nixon was brought to McGovern or Hubert Humphrey at this moment. McGovern had an advantage not only in active support by young Americans but also Ted Kennedy stood on his side. A word of such an influential personality hidden in all members of Kennedy family was worth much in this campaign. If not in the primaries, then during the convention in Miami where Democratic delegates had their final word. Thompson felt that *“it’s worth noting that the only one of the candidates who has presumably given any thought to running second on a Kennedy ticket is George McGovern , and McGovern is the only candidate whom Ted Kennedy would be likely to help over the hump prior to Miami Beach ”*⁹⁰. Furthermore, the assassinated Senator Robert Kennedy marked Humphrey as his main enemy inside the Democratic Party in 1960.⁹¹ Even though Humphrey managed to obtain a lot of votes and delegates in the Democratic Convention in Miami, he had to struggle to beat McGovern who was endorsed by the mightiest family of the party.

Hubert Humphrey started his political career in a similar time like Richard Nixon and he based it on the same problem – American fear of communism. Nixon was financed *“by Big Business”* and Humphrey *“by Big Labor”*⁹² where both found their supporter for the future. Even though Humphrey deprecated communists as enemies he decided to criticize the war in Vietnam because he knew *“what fate awaits any Democrat who tries to agree with Nixon on The War”*⁹³ which he could see from the on example of Senator Henry Jackson or George Meany.

Whereas Muskie used Ibogaine to endure tiring traveling and psychological burden, Humphrey helped himself, due to Thompson, with *“an exotic brand of speed known as Wallot”*.⁹⁴ Drug using was probably usual revitalization in such high game as running for the President.

⁹⁰ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 160-161.

⁹¹ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 179.

⁹² Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 195.

⁹³ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 195.

⁹⁴ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 144.

Strange connections with circles of labor mafia⁹⁵, where even a murder was not unusual, and even the questionable financing of Humphrey's campaign from Las Vegas⁹⁶ must have eroded his trustworthiness, not to mention his defeat by Nixon in Presidential election in 1968 and vice-presidency under Lyndon B. Johnson who was connected with growth of American participation in the Vietnam War.

When it became clear that Democrats had to choose between George McGovern and Hubert Humphrey the Party divided. On one side, McGovern stood with his vision of a new America but also a new Democratic Party. A new party meant also a redistribution of power "*according to his own blueprint*"⁹⁷ which antagonize "*the Old Guard, Boss-style hacks like George Meany and Mayor Daley*"⁹⁸, which means the old conservative Party members, against McGovern. The antipathy against McGovern developed into an unofficial coalition of the "*ABM Movement*"⁹⁹ led by "*the Good Ole Boys*"¹⁰⁰. The abbreviation "ABM" means Anybody but McGovern. Mailer used a term "*Stop-McGovern coalition*"¹⁰¹ for the same group of people.

The tension between fractions got so terrible that some Democratic leaders were considering support for Nixon, their main opponent, rather than their fellow-member McGovern. Nevertheless, they still had a chance to beat McGovern even within the Party and therefore they bet on Humphrey who "*wasn't much ; they all agreed on that – but by May he was all they had left.*"¹⁰² In Thompson's eyes "ABM" Movement "*was a coalition of desperate losers, thrown together at the last moment by Big Labor chief George Meany and his axe-man, Al Barkan. Hubert Humphrey was pressed into service as the front man for ABM, and he quickly signed up the others: Big Ed, Scoop Jackson, Terry Sandford, Shirley Chisholm – all the heavies*"¹⁰³

⁹⁵ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 196.

⁹⁶ Thompson named this affair "U-13" story. Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 220-225.

⁹⁷ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 245.

⁹⁸ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 245.

⁹⁹ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 245.

¹⁰⁰ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 244.

¹⁰¹ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 35.

¹⁰² Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 244.

¹⁰³ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 265.

Hunter Thompson did not represent an average Democratic voter, nevertheless, he perceived Democratic with all its imperfections far more acceptable than the Republican. But in a case of McGovern was defeated and Humphrey was nominated to run for Democrats, even a staunch enemy of Nixon like Thompson would have voted for reelection of “*Evil Dick*”¹⁰⁴: “*I voted for Dick Gregory in '68 and if somehow Humphrey manages to slither onto the ticket again this year I will vote for Richard Nixon.*”¹⁰⁵

The “ABM” team did not manage to defeat McGovern in the end. It did not happen so thanks to McGovern’s top staff and strategists like Gary Hart, Larry O’Brian, Rick Stearns, and Frank Mankiewicz.¹⁰⁶ On June 1 in Miami, they managed to obtain more delegates for the ballot in Miami to outnumber the anti-McGovern league. However, the difference was close, and the unanimous result certified the fragmentation of the party.¹⁰⁷ This inner crisis of the party is caught in one of Ralph Steadman’s, Thompson’s long-standing co-worker, illustrations where, in comparison with another picture catching Republican convention, delegates are like alligators trying to devour each other.¹⁰⁸

The nomination of George McGovern could be ascribed to a new composition of the Democratic Party and therefore even new delegates at the Convention. Mailer noticed that Democratic Party contained on one hand much more young people and Blacks, on the other hand in comparison to the Republicans only a few Democrats “*had ever held an elective office*”.¹⁰⁹ These people still might have believed in an incorrupt politics and clear ideals.

After his nomination, McGovern had a speech where he named America’s illnesses and that was one of moments which both Thompson and Mailer felt obligated to relay in their respective books. In one of the Steadman’s illustrations, McGovern is having one of his famous speeches, but he is talking to a bunch of crocodiles. This appearance of McGovern summarizes his effort and among others he still propagated Tom Eagleton

¹⁰⁴ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 110.

¹⁰⁵ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 244-245.

¹⁰⁶ Mailer highlighted the credit of O’Brien. See: Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 41-45.

¹⁰⁷ They succeeded because of speculations with persuading delegates to move on McGovern’s side. The final difference between numbers was about to be very small, so every man counted. To see details, read the interviews with McGovern’s top staff: Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 271-296. For the exact numbers see: Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 65.

¹⁰⁸ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 266-267.

¹⁰⁹ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 206.

as a good choice for America's Vice-President.¹¹⁰ Mailer recorded its renowned part known as "*come home, America*".¹¹¹ In the speech McGovern hit some aspects of vices that dragged the American people far from the liberal purpose of the American Dream.

McGovern did not enjoy his success for much long. In Thompson's words: "*the McGovern campaign seemed to peak and start losing its energy*" and even though "*George has actually won the nomination – his act started falling apart.*"¹¹² The point which broke his even before unstable popularity came when he had to choose the second name on the ticket – the name of his potential vice-president. The nominee could choose from several possible names.

One of the most likely runners for Vice-President was Mike Gravel, Senator from Alaska, but because of his vision that Vice-President "*could back up the President much better as an independent agent than as a vassal*"¹¹³ and the fact that he was implicated in leaking of secret information from Pentagon. Gravel did not lack popularity and his participation in releasing the *Pentagon Papers*¹¹⁴ made him a man who wanted politics without fogging. It must have taken a man with responsibility to do such things. However, McGovern did not need a man to argue with. Gravel did not get on the ticket in the end.¹¹⁵ Nor did Sargent Shriver, Leonard Woodcock, Wisconsin Governor Pat Lucey, Boston Mayor Kevin White and others.¹¹⁶

The name of Tom Eagleton appeared on the ticket as the Vice-candidate. When speculations about this man's past and rumors of heavy drinking occurred and George McGovern was asked if he trusted his deputy, McGovern replied that "*he was behind Eagleton "1000 percent"*".¹¹⁷ That "1000 percent" cost McGovern probably the Oval Office. In a while, it came clear that Eagleton was suffering from serious mental problems and had been even threatened with electric shocks therapy. He had been asked about "*skeletons in Daddy-O's closet*" but he denied all accusations. After doubts turned into facts even McGovern supporting his co-runner for "*1000 percent*" must have understood

¹¹⁰ The main part of the speech is available on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BSNSVtFC-ZA>.

¹¹¹ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 88.

¹¹² Both citations from: Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 351.

¹¹³ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 80.

¹¹⁴ The Pentagon Papers was "*a classified 7,000-page document commissioned by former Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara*". Taken from: Kutler, Stanley I.: *Abuse of Power: New Nixon Tapes* (New York: The Free Press, 1997), 1-2.

¹¹⁵ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 75-84.

¹¹⁶ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 349 and 357.

¹¹⁷ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 96.

that if he wanted to win, he had to get rid of this liar. Eagleton himself refused to withdraw because he found himself on the top of his career, everybody knew his name. Therefore, McGovern had the only chance to continue – to dump Eagleton. But at that moment it was too late for choosing somebody else.¹¹⁸ However, in time when McGovern was supposed to take action, he showed his indecisiveness and that destroyed his fragile position which he had been building for two years.

The chances of Democrats' ended after months during which Democrats were showing their inability to unite and produce a strong candidate for White House. McGovern and his advisors demonstrated that they did not know who they had placed on the ticket with the nominee. In September 1972, Thompson wrote: "*Of George gets stomped in November, it will be not because of anything Richard Nixon did to him. The blame will trace straight back to his brain-trust*".¹¹⁹ Indeed, it surprises how it is possible that the same people, who managed to push their boss through the primaries and the Miami convention as a winner, failed ascertaining if Tom Eagleton is clear enough not to have dragged McGovern down. Mailer saw McGovern success as "*election special which was perhaps doomed never to ride and hardly to fly*".¹²⁰ However, that is exactly what happened, and George McGovern could not beat Nixon, if he had had a chance before.

6.3 The Republican Candidate – Who else than “successful” Nixon?

Richard Nixon knew how important it was to hear the voice of the people. The main power he could rely on came from, in bad word, the mediocre. A common man, not much considerable but in appropriate number, can give or take power, especially when Nixon's position depended on them. They created an "*indigestible political mass*"¹²¹ which could not be marginalized.

However, Nixon targeted more groups than just average Americans. At the Republican Convention in Miami, just a few weeks after Democrats Convention had ended, Nixon employed so called "*Jean Weiss Principle*" which was a campaign strategy reaching out all kinds of Americans by using "*a black lady with a German Jewish name*

¹¹⁸ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 348.

¹¹⁹ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 382. Thompson was by September quite sure that Nixon was about to win heavily because of McGovern's mistakes and indecisiveness. To see details, read the chapter September: Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 371-390.

¹²⁰ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 61.

¹²¹ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 138.

doing a patriotic bit".¹²² Nixon planned to acquire every voter and because only he knew how to do so, he could organize this show as the only director. He "*had succeeded in composing an artwork with highly skilled actors who would not have to concern themselves with the perils of improvisation*".¹²³

Whereas McGovern was losing his supporters Nixon did not have to do a thing. Arranging speeches of Republicans who almost unanimously stood behind the President would suffice. It is worth noting that some of the Republicans dared to criticize American steps made under the presidency of Richard Nixon. Again, the arguments focused on American course in Vietnam but even a kind of defending homosexual relationship appeared. Nevertheless, most of the topics discussed there carried a conservative spirit like for example bringing religion classes back to the schools.¹²⁴

It would be wrong to image that Nixon's nomination went smooth. The President had to face several critics such as Paul McCloskey and Daniel Ellsberg who was partly responsible for the Pentagon Papers leak of information which revealed participation of Henry Kissinger in proceeding of Vietnam War.¹²⁵ However, thanks to prevailing sympathy of the delegates that were being showed to people in television which was in a fact the masterpiece of Nixon as his own propaganda director. He managed to direct the process of the convention and the role of Media¹²⁶ so good that even Mailer admitted that "*Nixon had demonstrated that a politician who was fundamentally unpopular even in his own party could nonetheless win the largest free election in the world*".¹²⁷

Nixon wanted to know every step of Democrats so he could use the information to discredit Democrats even more than they did to themselves. To assure himself, he ordered several men including former FBI agent Alfred Baldwin to break into Democrats' headquarter resort and to bug the phones of the top member of the Democratic Party. This operation was planned on June 17, 1972. By coincidence, the group of five men was caught in the act by police. This issue became later known as the famous Watergate Affair.

¹²² Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 180.

¹²³ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 178.

¹²⁴ To see more about the discussed topics of the Republican convention read the first chapter of the third part (called Program) in: Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 125-136.

¹²⁵ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 193-195.

¹²⁶ The record of Nixon ordering a manipulation of Media can be found in: Kutler, Stanley I.: *Abuse of Power: New Nixon Tapes* (New York; The Free Press, 1997), 135.

¹²⁷ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 137.

Despite its magnitude, the Watergate did not influence the election much because of Nixon's natural talent to deal with attacks of liberal media, very powerful at that time. He had Ron Ziegler to handle the Press.¹²⁸ During the Republican convention, when Clark MacGregor was giving a press conference, he was asked about the Watergate break-in but he answered that he knew too little to make any conclusion.¹²⁹ The White House managed the situation, at least for the time until October election, because "*Harris Poll (...) showed that only 3 percent of the electorate considered the Watergate thing important*".¹³⁰

6.4 The Hippie Occupation of the Flamingo Park and Protests at the Doral

Both Republican and Democratic conventions, but especially the Republican one, were accompanied by protests that both Mailer and Thompson registered and paid attention to in their books – the demonstration of anti-war activists against Richard Nixon. The protesters were camping in the Flamingo Park. The atmosphere of the days of Miami carried a very contradictory spirit. On one hand, there were upholders of the Republicans cheering for the reelection of Nixon. On the other hand, the "*Vietnamese Veterans Against the War*" along with "*the Yippies and the Zippies*"¹³¹ who were sometimes sitting around their tents in the Park yet sometimes also went to the street, did not hesitate to use violence to exhibit their anger. When the Flamingo Park volcano was only smoking, other people could walk around and read all the signs with anti-government slogans. In the moments of the violent action, it was dangerous to walk in the streets full of yelling hippies, police cordons and tear gas.¹³² The picture of these two antagonist groups of American citizens is caught in one of Steadman's illustrations.¹³³

Most of the demonstrations taken by these activists "*were hopelessly disorganized, they had no real purpose in being there, and about half of them were so wasted on grass, wine, and downers that they couldn't say for sure whether they were*

¹²⁸ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 96, 170-171 and 218-219. And Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 376-380.

¹²⁹ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 145-149.

¹³⁰ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 447.

¹³¹ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 218-219.

¹³² Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 203 and 211-228.

¹³³ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 369.

raising hell in Miami or San Diego.”¹³⁴ The only “lone exception”¹³⁵ were the VVAW who managed to hold a silent march called “*Last Patrol*”. The passer-by could see crippled fellow-citizens moping across the Miami streets. Again, drug-specialist Thompson, noticed that the Veterans were probably heavily under the influence of “downers”.¹³⁶ However, these demonstrations, even though they had been designed as a protest against President Nixon and his continuation of the Vietnam War, actually served Nixon and the Republicans. A lot of drugs, violence and strange demands of protesting groups, that all helped Nixon to create a portrait of a group which fought against him – drugged, violent weirdos with nearly communist demands. For Americans who believed that, Nixon must have looked even more as “*the white knight of Christendom*”.¹³⁷

6.5 Nixon’s Reelection

An overwhelming victory reached by Richard Nixon in October exposed that Americans did not want change or continuation of 1960s liberalism. They were tired of years of demonstrations of the revolutionary youth. Many of Americans wanted rather a kind of return to the before-1960s America.¹³⁸ The only option for liberal minds was George McGovern who unfortunately did too many mistakes to stay the trustworthy and confident candidate.

Nixon won with the biggest difference of votes in the American history – 49 million to McGovern’s 29 million.¹³⁹ As Thompson thought that the reasons of the defeat in the ratio that unbelievable lied in the wrong moves of McGovern’s team. In one of the last chapters of his book he made “*An Analysis on Why McGovern Got Stomped*”¹⁴⁰ where he interviewed McGovern trying to find out what went so terribly bad that the numbers were so frightening.

¹³⁴ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 361.

¹³⁵ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 361.

¹³⁶ Thompson even guessed the concrete type of the sleeping pills – „*Quaalude*“. Therefore, he named the march „*Quaalude Alley*“. See: Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 362.

¹³⁷ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 218.

¹³⁸ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 452.

¹³⁹ Johnson, Paul: *Dějiny amerického národa* (Praha: Academia, 2000), 678.

¹⁴⁰ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 433

Thompson did vote for McGovern even after all the merits McGovern had done. He did not believe in the victors of Democrats but his hatred against Richard Nixon was stronger, so anybody who would have challenged

7.0 Comparison of the Books

The most visible difference between *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* and *St. George and the Godfather* is their length. It might seem superficial to talk about it at all, but I have mentioned that fact to distinct the way of expression of each author.

Mailer's experience reaches something over two hundred pages, approximately a half shorter than Thompson's. A lower number of pages does not reduce the message of the book. It reflects Mailer's sense for a journalism that was somewhat more traditional than Thompson's conception. Mailer focused on the finale of the primaries – the conventions in Miami. He covered a shorter period than Thompson. The picture of America of 1972 is projected in a concise manner from the events which happened in Miami whereas Thompson's book is made by articles he sent to *The Rolling Stone* magazine and he was primary monitoring the campaign process for a whole year and flying from state to state talking with many people in his amphetamine madness style. One cannot be surprised that the book *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* has nearly five hundred pages.

What makes Thompson's works so original are their illustrations. The black and white grotesque pictures are drawn by Ralph Steadman, a British artist with a completely different lifestyle than Thompson who nevertheless held great empathy for his crazy instant way of expression.¹⁴¹ The paintings supplement the story, giving it its own life. Despite their simplicity they display the wild stream of consciousness of the duo. A reader can guess the author's opinion about Richard Nixon just from the caricature on the book jacket where the President is standing on a platform and holding a speech farting into the microphones.

Ralph Steadman made grotesque pictures of all politicians Thompson wrote about in the book. Not even Democrats were spared, and Steadman mocked the maneuvers of the primaries in the pictures of the first half of the book. In the second part, he paid attention to the Republicans and Nixon became a nun, a dark shadow or a suicidal with a bomb with a sign "Cambodia" on it. Henry Kissinger appeared in one of Steadman's pictures as a malicious spider knitting his web.

¹⁴¹ For more information see a document called *For No Good Reason* (2012) where Steadman gives details about the relationship with Thompson and explains his painting style.

For Steadman's work mocking politicians, and especially Richard Nixon, Hunter S. Thompson had difficulties to get press credentials to cover Nixon's campaign and travel with the President. Nevertheless, even in this trouble, Thompson did not lose his typical sense of humor when defending himself to reach the credentials:

*"Jesus, what can you do, eh? These goddamn vicious limeys will do anything for money. He was paid well for these rotten drawings. My protests were totally ignored. It's a fucking shame, I say. What the hell is this world coming to when the goddamn British can get away with stuff like that?"*¹⁴²

Thompson did not mean any of these words. Once again, he showed his specific sense for sarcasm.

To sum up *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* in few words, I would use terms "anti-political" and "pessimistic about the soul of America". Despite the fact that Thompson was dealing with one of the most important issues of politics at the time, he did not lack humor. To illustrate what makes his work so "Thompsonian" I should cite more than a few sentences to support the information about the elections and the Vietnam War. The following lines expresses firstly his basic feelings about the election, and secondly Thompson's vision of Nixon and distinctive tendency to hyperbole:

"There is almost a Yin/Yang clarity in the difference between the two men, a contrast so stark it would be hard to find any two better models in the national politics arena for the legendary duality – the congenital Split Personality and polarized instincts – that almost everybody except Americans has long since taken for granted as the key to our National Character. This was not what Richard Nixon had in mind when he said, last August, that the 1972 presidential election would offer voters 'the clearest choice of this century' but on a level he will never understand he was probably right ... and it is Nixon himself who represents that dark, venal and incurably violent side of the American character almost every other country in the world has learned to fear and despise. Our Barbie doll President, with his Barbie doll wife and his box-full of Barbie doll children is also America's answer to the monstrous Mr. Hyde. He speaks for the Werewolf in us; the bully, the predatory shyster who turns into something unspeakable, full of claws and bleeding string-warts, on nights when the moon comes too close...

¹⁴² Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 376.

At the stroke of midnight in Washington, a drooling red-eyed beast with legs of a man and a head of a giant hyena crawls out of its bedroom window in the South Wing of the White House and leaps fifty feet down the lawn ... pauses briefly to strangle the Chow watchdog , then races off into the darkness ... towards the Watergate, snarling with lust, loping through the alleys behind Pennsylvania Avenue, and trying desperately to remember which one of those four hundred identical balconies is the one outside Martha Mitchell's apartment... ”

It could remind one of the phrasing Mailer employed, “shitting on somebody’s else lawn every night” foreign policy of the USA and the USSR during the Cold War in a sense of using funny metaphors which describe really important and terrible true of politics. The part describing Nixon as the “*Barbie doll President*” must catch one’s attention today if one has seen the current American President Donald Trump.

Thompson compared Richard Nixon to a werewolf, but his favorite parable was comparing Nixon to Adolph Hitler.¹⁴³ He regarded Nixon as a politician without any moral qualities and with an endless hunger for power using a strategy of “*nazi-style gigs that would have embarrassed Martin Bormann*”.¹⁴⁴

What also distinguishes *St. George and the Godfather* from Thompson’s book is Mailer’s tendency to involve even some sexual aspects of what he was writing about. He paid attention not only to politicians, events and context so wide as Thompson did but also to women standing beside husbands – the very top politicians. He regarded politicians’ wives as part of politicians’ image. Furthermore, Mailer commented Women’s Caucus in his specific way while pondering the Abortion question.¹⁴⁵

The biggest attention was given to Nixon’s wife Thelma Catherine Nixon commonly known as Pat Nixon. She helped her husband much during the campaign appearing often on TV. It was her job. Mailer noted: “*She no longer saw faces, no, she was a heavy worker on an assembly line*”¹⁴⁶ when he saw her going through the crowd shaking hands, which had some hidden magic in itself, and giving autographs.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 357 and 477.

¹⁴⁴ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 392.

¹⁴⁵ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 56-61.

¹⁴⁶ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 162.

¹⁴⁷ Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 158-162.

Mailer made an interview with the Democratic candidate as Thompson did.¹⁴⁸ Nevertheless, if we compare a number of conversations written down in the books, Thompson was ahead. However, his talks were not always related exclusively to politics so a reader can find a decadent story of, for example, a desperate flight after McGovern's defeat on "*Zoo Plane*", again full of drugs.¹⁴⁹

The stream of consciousness style of writing was applied by both Mailer and Thompson. Mailer let his mind flow but also controlled it and manage to give it much more conservative form than Thompson. Again, I believe that drugs are very likely to blame for Thompson got sometimes aside of the main line.

Both Mailer and Thompson sympathized with the Democrats, but both admitted that Democrats with their querulousness had just made it easier for Nixon to win. They felt sorry about the defeat of their favorite party and expressed worries about the oncoming. But they accepted that Democrats made terrible mistakes they deserved to lose. Unfortunately, the winner "*represents the dark side of the American spirit*".¹⁵⁰

The message of both chosen works express a clear message a dark and corrupt epoch was about to continue.

¹⁴⁸ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 442-454 and Mailer, Norman.: *St. George and the Godfather* (New York: Signet, 1972), 109-112.

¹⁴⁹ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 397-419.

¹⁵⁰ Thompson, Hunter S.: *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 374.

8.0 The Personality of Richard Nixon

8.1 The Life of “Tricky Dick”

The 37th President of the USA definitely does not look like a good guy as for example John F. Kennedy. Why is that? Kennedy and even Nixon were thrown into a very dangerous foreign policy of the Cold War, but both managed to get through regardless if it cost millions of lives in Vietnam. Nevertheless, only the name Richard Nixon symbolizes corruption nowadays.

Richard Milhous Nixon was born on January 9, 1913 in California into a farming Quaker family. After graduating Duke University Law School, he worked as a lawyer for a short time. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War Two in the years 1942-1944. Returning home, he joined the Republican Party in 1946. Already in 1946, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.

Nixon built his career as uncompromising anti-communist. He attacked Roosevelt’s co-worker Alger Hiss who had been spying in the USA for USSR¹⁵¹ which brought Nixon great publicity. Even John F. Kennedy voiced gratitude to Nixon for defending the country against Soviet spies. In 1950, Nixon reached the office of a Senator. He criticized Truman’s policy and the progress in the Korean War, he supported general MacArthur who wanted to deploy nuclear weapons there, as too soft in relation to the communist threat.

The first of Nixon’s controversies came during his run for the Vice-Presidency with Eisenhower in 1952. He was accused of accepting a bribe, but Nixon showed his rhetorical art and turned it into the profit. In 1954, he propagated the idea that America enter the Vietnam conflict. After his failure in the 1960 presidential and state-level 1962 governor elections, Nixon announced the end of his political effort, which he of course did not follow. Thompson recalled Nixon snarling: “*This is my last press conference! You won’t have Richard Nixon to kick around anymore!*”. I cannot avoid mentioning a blatant similarity with the contemporary President of Czech Republic Miloš Zeman or the current prime minister Andrej Babiš.

After endorsing Republican Barry Garry Goldwater in 1964, he ran for the Presidential Office with Spiro T. Agnew, a corrupted Governor of Maryland, on the ticket

¹⁵¹ Johnson, Paul: *Dějiny amerického národa* (Praha; Academia, 2000), 679.

in the election of 1968. One of his main promises was to withdraw American forces from Vietnam which he did not keep and instead spread into two more countries the war horrors. His conservatism was reflected in refusing “busing”, a key issue of desegregation of Blacks and Whites attending separate schools. In exchange for the integration of black Americans into the society, he approved self-determination for native Americans. Nixon beat the Democratic candidate Hubert Humphrey in 1968 by only half a million votes.

Then, Nixon collaborated with big concerns and placed their former leaders to the influential offices. To keep the balance of power with the Congress controlled by Democrats, Nixon concentrated the power in Council led by his own people. For dealing with crime but also the political opposition, the President hired John N. Mitchell, an ex-lawyer from the Wall Street, as his Secretary of Defense. He also reorganized the staffing of the top judges of the Supreme Court in favor of conservatives.

The American course in Vietnam worsened but in addition to “Vietnamization” the war, Nixon issued Guam Doctrine in July 1969 which laid the foundation of the USA as the world peace controller. One year before the Presidential election of 1972, Nixon insured his picture as the world peace maker by visiting China and then Moscow where he negotiated with Brezhnev about ending the nuclear arms race. The SALT treaties were signed but were not complied. His foreign policy was schizoid because on the one hand he tried to break the wall built after the WWII between communist-led countries and capitalistic U.S. On the other hand, Vietnam and its neighboring states’ border areas lied in ruins despite the fact that they were merely indirect participants of the Cold War.

At variance of many crimes of abuse of power and earlier warmongery, Gerald R. Ford, the new President of the USA in August 1974 and former Nixon’s Vice-President after Agnew’s resignation in October 1973¹⁵², claimed after entering the office that even though Nixon had broken the law he also made a progress in calming the tense between the East and the West and therefore all investigations and Nixon’s criminal trial will be stopped.

After leaving the official political ground, Nixon appeared after a decade still as a respectable person. Later presidents as Ronald Reagan and George Bush, Sn., visited him asking for advice. However, Nixon became one of the presidents who failed in his duties due to the research made in 1982 and since that period.

¹⁵² Kutler, Stanley I.: *Abuse of Power: New Nixon Tapes* (New York; The Free Press, 1997), 638.

Richard Nixon died on April 23, 1994 and had a burial with many honorable guests such as the President at the time Bill Clinton.¹⁵³

8.2 Watergate Scandal

Even from the result of 1972 election, it is obvious that a prevailing majority of Americans trusted Richard Nixon, at least more than they trusted the internally-conflicted Democrats. The crucial break point came with the Watergate Affair whereby the Nixon's Campaign, the Committee to Reelect the President (CREEP) sent a few professional spies to break into the Democrats' headquarters to steal documents and install wires to the phones. It means that Nixon did not see Democrats as an opponent but as enemy against whom Nixon was not afraid to break the law.

Until June 17, 1972, the only people who were interested in politics and who did not care much about situation in Vietnam could recognize a liar and demagogue, a professional actor without moral values in their President. However, "*almost instantly the President and his top aides, H. R. Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman, instituted a cover-up, and installed the young White House counsel? John Dean, as its ringmaster*".¹⁵⁴ They managed to cover the break-in so well at first that it did not influence the final election and "*Nixon celebrated his magnificent re-election in November*".¹⁵⁵ After the summer of 1972, an investigation of the Watergate break-in began suspicion among ordinary people that Nixon had become a gangster. It took some time because of the professional and aggressive effort to keep the suspicion away from the White House. Even when Nixon entered his second term, it did not seem that Watergate would have any bigger sequel.¹⁵⁶

The credit for drawing public attention to this crime belongs to the strengthened media, concretely *The Washington Post* and its reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein. It did not have to destroy him, but he had antagonized the media before. However, Woodward and Bernstein would not have succeeded without help from "Deep Throat".¹⁵⁷ The corrupt system fell apart because one of its members betrayed it. *The*

¹⁵³ All the informations about life of the President Richard Nixon I have taken from: Schäfer, Peter: *Prezidenti USA* (Praha; Mladá Fronta, 1995), 404-419 and Johnson, Paul: *Dějiny amerického národa* (Praha; Academia, 2000), 677-722.

¹⁵⁴ Kutler, Stanley I.: *Abuse of Power: New Nixon Tapes* (New York; The Free Press, 1997), 44.

¹⁵⁵ Kutler, Stanley I.: *Abuse of Power: New Nixon Tapes* (New York; The Free Press, 1997), 45.

¹⁵⁶ Kutler, Stanley I.: *Abuse of Power: New Nixon Tapes* (New York; The Free Press, 1997), 45.

¹⁵⁷ To see details, read *All the President's Men* (1974) or watch its cinematized version *All the President's Men* (1976).

Washington Post informed the wide public about the dirty tricks at the highest national political level.

The year 1973 represented an all-in fight for saving the career of the President. In the first third of 1973 the cover-up team started to fall apart. One of the strongest men of the team, John Dean, began saving himself and cooperating with the investigators. As a lawyer, he knew that they could not lie and corrupt forever.¹⁵⁸ Until August 1973, Nixon stopped believing his closest advisors who he forced to resign to ensure the American public that Justice still existed. The cover-up operation “*keeping the cap on the bottle*”¹⁵⁹ was extremely intricate. It peaked on October 20, 1973 with the “Saturday Night Massacre” when Nixon fired three Justice Department officials because they refused to fire Archibald Cox, the main investigator of the Watergate case. In the end, Cox was suspended and succeeded by Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski who managed to finish the case.¹⁶⁰

However, only vague testimonies of few who were trying to pull through were not enough to corroborate the leading role of Nixon ordering crimes. With Haldeman, Nixon even contemplated about involving the CIA to fix the Watergate problem. What could convict Nixon were the recordings of his voice from the tapping system which had been installed in the White House. In October 1973, even Nixon’s attorney “*agreed to surrender the tapes to Judge Sirica*”¹⁶¹.

After accumulating enough convicting material, “*On July 24, the Supreme Court ruled in U.S. v. Nixon*” which “*resulted in three articles of impeachment ... on July 26*”.¹⁶² In a situation choosing between impeachment or his own resignation, Nixon picked the second one. He abdicated on August 9, 1974.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁸ Kutler, Stanley I.: *Abuse of Power: New Nixon Tapes* (New York; The Free Press, 1997), 187-189.

¹⁵⁹ Woodward, Bob; Bernstein, Carl; Johnson, Haynes; Meyer, Lawrence: *The Presidential Transcripts with Commentary by the Staff of The Washington Post* (New York; Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1974), XI in the introduction.

¹⁶⁰ Woodward, Bob; Bernstein, Carl; Johnson, Haynes; Meyer, Lawrence: *The Presidential Transcripts with Commentary by the Staff of The Washington Post* (New York; Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1974), IX-X of the introduction.

¹⁶¹ Kutler, Stanley I.: *Abuse of Power: New Nixon Tapes* (New York; The Free Press, 1997), 638.

¹⁶² Both from: Kutler, Stanley I.: *Abuse of Power: New Nixon Tapes* (New York; The Free Press, 1997), 639.

¹⁶³ The information about the Watergate Affair were taken from the same books as I used for the description of the life of Richard Nixon: Schäfer, Peter: *Prezidenti USA* (Praha; Mladá Fronta, 1995), 404-419 and Johnson, Paul: *Dějiny amerického národa* (Praha; Academia, 2000), 677-722.

9.0 Conclusion

This thesis reflects historical events of the Nixon era in New Journalism. I have managed to analyze the atmosphere of the political campaigns and elections of the Presidential election of 1972 which were intimately related with the earlier events of the Cold War and American politics.

Both books concur in the main ideas. Both Norman Mailer and Hunter S. Thompson perceived Richard Nixon as a dark part of American history and both saw that his reelection was caused by the failure of George McGovern, the man who was originally trusted by both as the man who could change the going in America, in several unlucky steps McGovern had made.

Until the critical point of the Eagleton Affair, the liberals in the USA might have still believed in the success of their candidate so the smell of 1960s freedom was hanging in the air until that affair. However, Richard Nixon disabused them of that belief even though the biggest crisis of his political career began in July 1972, several months before the election. He managed not only to win but also to completely crush McGovern and the Democrats to pieces with a ratio of approximately two to one for the President.

The examples of activists helping McGovern during the primaries and protests during the conventions in Miami proved that calling for more honest American policy had not yet faded. Despite a kind of empathy for those fighters for justice, Mailer and Thompson recognized their journalistic inefficiency.

Nobody knew at that time that Nixon will give up his office within two years. Obviously, he did not plan such a thing, but media in the persons of *The Washington Post* writers Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein did excellent investigative journalism work so well that the crimes of the President were revealed. However, even after proof found in the Watergate Tapes from the White House and after the Nixon's resignation, he was not punished except for being expelled from official political life, while many others who worked for him and followed his criminal orders went to prison, including the head of the Justice Department.

The Devil impersonated in President Nixon has won once again because he was smart. Richard Nixon was a genius but a genius with a passion for power without moral limits. Gaining power, he had no obstacles to do what he wanted to. In the end, a stupid mistake of his team of "Plumbers" and his cover-up of their crime caused his fall. *The Washington Post* and detectives with the Judge Sirica sealed Nixon's fate.

Both titles of the chosen books fit perfectly for describing the time of their origin. Mailer's book named the Democratic candidate George McGovern as *St. George* who could never have beaten *The Godfather* and one could not find a better expression for the atmosphere than *Fear and Loathing*.

I chose this topic because the basics of politics are still the same, only Nixon had guts to behave so unhindered. He played the game cockily, but only a few people could recognize the hidden evil. Thompson and Mailer did and wrote their despair down in the books I have analyzed. I know I do not live in the times that strange, but I feel empathy for the authors. I feel that "Fear and Loathing" has never disappeared. The game is still the same, only the players have changed.

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Resumé

Práce se zaměřuje na dva vzájemně propojené obory – na nové dějiny Spojených států amerických a experimentální proud americké literatury nazvaný „the New Journalism“. Cílem je popsat události související s volbou amerického prezidenta z roku 1972 tak, jak je zaznamenal Normal Mailer v knize *St. George and the Godfather* a, v České republice stále nepříliš známý, Hunter S. Thompson v práci *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72*. Speciální pozornost je věnována politice tehdejšího prezidenta USA Richarda M. Nixona a její reflexi ve zmíněných knihách.

Student nejprve stručně popisuje životy obou žurnalistů a specifické rysy hnutí „the New Journalism“. O necelou generaci starší Mailer psal sice již dost volným stylem typickým pro nové pojetí žurnalistu, ale oproti divokému Thompsonovi, jemuž se ve spotřebě drog může rovnat snad jen Keith Richards, se Mailerovy články nesou stále ještě v tradičnějším duchu. Thompsonovy práce, plné nadsázky a sarkasmu, ale i mnoha historických a kulturních faktů, jsou velice čtivé, ovšem oproštěné od téměř všeho, co činí žurnalistus objektivním.

Další část vysvětluje významy a vývoj výrazu Americký sen. Nejedná se totiž o velice rozšířený výklad o bohatství, kterého může dosáhnout každý, i když termín popisuje skutečně jakousi rovnost. Americký sen v originálním slova smyslu představuje spíše svobodu ducha, myšlení a vyjadřování. V tomto významu americká vláda tento Sen, který mají mimochodem zakotvený v ústavě, významně napadla v desetiletích po druhé světové válce.

Právě této době se věnují další odstavce pojednávající o událostech Studené války, do které aktivně zasahoval i Richard Nixon. Nejprve došlo k nerozhodné válce v Koreji. Již zde zemřelo mnoho amerických vojáků, když chránili svět před šířením komunismu. V tom pak Spojené státy pokračovaly prvně nepřímým a od roku 1964 přímým zapojením se do konfliktu ve Vietnamu. Tato válka trvala příliš dlouho. Naneštěstí pro americkou vládu se během této doby, během 60. let, zásadně změnila forma a význam médií, které ukázaly hrůzy války na televizních obrazovkách a na fotkách v novinách. Americká veřejnost byla pohoršená a volala po ukončení účasti Států ve Vietnamské válce.

Tyto procesy velice ovlivnily dění během volby prezidenta USA v roce 1972. Liberálové, a zejména protiválečně smýšlející američtí občané, mohli zprvu doufat v překvapivý úspěch George McGoverna, jemuž se podařilo získat nominaci za Demokratickou stranu. I přes všechny lži a jiné machinace ve prospěch velkých podniků,

se tehdy úřadujícímu prezidentovi Nixonovi dařilo získat si velkou část obyvatelstva. McGovern nakonec udělal několik zásadních přešlapů. Nejvíc si ublížil právě sám, když si za viceprezidenta vedle svého jména vybral nevýrazného Toma Eagletona, ze kterého se později vyklubal duševně nemocný alkoholik. Navíc nerozhodnost, a snad až přílišná slušnost, kterou se McGovern vyznačoval, se pro tuto dobu nehodila. Nixon v říjnu 1972 vyhrál v poměru 2:1, což jak Mailer, tak Thompson nesl těžce, ale oba dva uznali, že chyby demokratické opozice byly příliš závažné.

Po rozboru dějinných událostí se student přesune k porovnání dvou primárních knih. Ty se liší vzhledem, rozsahem i obsahem. Thompson opět ukazuje nespoutanost, čtenář vedle informací o politice a kandidátech na prezidenta najde Thompsonovy drogové eskapády nebo myšlenkové odbočky, ze kterých i sám autor těžce hledá cestu zpět. Jeho knihu doplňují ilustrace Ralpha Steadmana, britského umělce se zcela odlišnou životosprávou než Thompson. Ve své podstatě Steadman útočí na politiky stejně ostře jako Thompson, který se nebojí přirovnat Richarda Nixona k nejvyšším nacistickým pohlavárům. *Fear and Loathing: On the Campaign Trail '72* silně odsuzuje vlastně všechny politiky, o kterých se zmiňuje, a nese jasné poselství: temné časy pokračují. Podobné pocity budí i *St. George and the Godfather*, který se ovšem soustředil pouze na události shromáždění demokratů a republikánů v Miami. Přístup Mailera se současnému čtenáři může zdát sušší a těžkopádnější, neubírá ale na významu jeho pracím.

Předposlední část se soustřeďuje na osobnost a zobrazení Richarda M. Nixona. Shrnuje jeho studia, budování kariéry na pronásledování politiků sympatizujících s levicí během „mccarthismu“, jeho první stáhnutí se z politického života, pozdější návrat ve velkém roku 1968, kdy těsně zvítězil proti Hubertovi Humphreymu. Po tomto úspěchu nastala éra plná korupce a zneužívání moci. Jedním ze slibů jeho předvolební kampaně bylo ukončit americkou účast ve válce ve Vietnamu, ve skutečnosti ale udělal pravý opak. V úřadu prezidenta se ukázal jako muž činu, často ve špatném slova smyslu, ale vedle zločinů dokázal vyjednávat s Chruščovem, Brežněvem, Maem a Teng Siao-Pchingem. Nutno dodat, že všemožné podvody jsou dlouhodobým problémem, nejenom, americké politiky, jak informuje historik Paul Johnson. Žádná aféra se ovšem nemůže měřit s případem vloupání do ústředí demokratů – Watergate. Po dvou letech lhaní, zastírání, podplácení, vydírání a zneužívání tajných služeb, shromáždili vyšetřovatelé Archibald Cox a Leon Jaworski ve spolupráci se soudcem Siricou dostatečné množství důkazů. Když Nixon pochopil vážnost situace, raději sám jako jediný prezident v dějinách USA

rezignoval, než aby se nechal ponížit impeachmentem. I po tomto druhém odchodu do politického ústraní ale byl dalšími prezidenty Spojených států Reaganem a Bushem seniorem žádán o radu. Účast mnoha státníků na jeho pohřbu v roce 1994 dokazuje, že přes jeho zločiny nebyl nikdy zcela zavržen.

V poslední části student zrekapituluje výsledky své práce. Jak Mailer, tak Thompson spatřovali v Nixonovi naprosto nemorálního politika a zločince, ale zároveň uznávali jeho schopnosti. Jeho výhra v období, na které se tato práce zaměřuje, způsobily spíše chyby jeho protihráče než jeho vlastní popularita, i když ani ta nebyla nezanedbatelná. Již samotné názvy knih dokonale vyjadřují atmosféru a názory obou autorů. Student si téma vybral díky zálibě v práci Huntera S. Thompsona a přesvědčení, že zneužívání moci v politice nikdy nezmizelo a měli bychom se mít stále na pozoru. Zlo se totiž často skrývá v milých větech, jakou například pronesl Richard Nixon, když se stal podezřelým v aféře Watergate. Zaručil se za spravedlivý průběh vyšetřování a proslov zakončil: „Bůh žehnej Americe a každému z vás.“