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A Retrospective on Richard M. Nixon's Domestic Policies

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For twenty years I have wanted to write the lead to this article: *President Richard M. Nixon was a liberal on domestic affairs, even though he tried to make us forget that.* John Ehrlichman did a good job managing the domestic policy process. In the litmus-test area of welfare reform, with Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Robert Finch in the lead, the country came close to enacting historic reform. The same point applies to health reform; Nixon's proposed health reforms would have been good preventive medicine to stave off problems we are now facing. Taken as a whole, I find that when people make a careful, substantive evaluation of Nixon's record on domestic issues (including welfare programs, health, the environment, housing assistance, and fiscal federalism pertaining to revenue sharing and block grants), they are very surprised by what they find.

Nixon in the '68 Campaign

In his 1968 campaign for the presidency, Nixon was a vocal and strident critic of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society and the community-action approach. Nevertheless, after he was elected, Nixon presided over a period of impressive growth in federal domestic spending. Much of it was aimed at social problems and reflected the same basic purposes as Johnson's programs. True, some of the increased federal domestic spending in the Nixon years was due to the time lag in setting up Johnson's Great Society programs, but much of it was due to Nixon's own initiatives. His New Federalism agenda, in effect, said: "I don't like the way the other guys tried to solve social and urban problems. I can do it better."

Nixon's New Federalism provided incentives for the poor to work (for example, his welfare and food stamp reforms) and flexibility to states and localities setting their own priorities (for example, his revenue sharing and block grant initiatives). Total domestic spending by the federal government under Nixon rose from 10.3 percent of the gross national product at the outset of his presidency to 13.7 percent six years later when he resigned the office. Social Security, which ballooned under Nixon, accounted for half of this increase. But there was also a big bulge in federal grants-in-aid to states and localities reflecting Nixon's revenue sharing, block grant, and other social policy initiatives. Ironically for a Republican, the bulk of the funds under Nixon's New Federalism grant-in-aid initiatives bypassed the states and were paid directly to local governments. Cities did very well under Nixon, although local officials credit him grudgingly for his beneficence.

Comments on Nixon's Domestic Record

Recent books on the Nixon years confirm the position just stated. For example, Joan Hoff in *Nixon Reconsidered* said: "his proposals on national health insurance and welfare reform were so far in advance of his time that congressional liberals preferred to oppose them than to allow Nixon to take credit for upstaging them."¹

Quoting a White House aide, Hoff noted that "history should say . . . about Richard Nixon that his domestic programs extended opportunities of America to . . . Americans who live outside the mainstream of America's life."²

On domestic spending, according to Hoff:

From the first to the last of Nixon's budget—1970 through 1975—spending on human resource programs exceeded spending for defense for the first time since World War II.³

Funding for social welfare services under Nixon grew from \$55 billion in 1970 to almost \$132 billion in 1975, making him (not President Johnson) the "last of the big spenders" on domestic programs.⁴

Nixon's emphasis was on building better mousetraps. On health policy, for example, Hoff said "represent Nixon at his pragmatic, liberal best—again, much to the consternation of conservatives in both parties."⁵ On economics, according to Hoff, "Nixon [was] more liberal than conservative . . . confounding both his friends and enemies," and declaring himself a "Keynesian now."⁶

In a similar vein to Hoff, Tom Wicker, in *One of Us: Richard Nixon and The American Dream*, said Nixon "received little credit then, and probably gets less today, for having overseen—indeed, planned and carried out—more school desegregation than any other president, and for putting an end, at last, to dual school systems in the south."⁷ Wicker credits Daniel Patrick Moynihan for Nixon's domestic strategy. "Intelligent conservatives like Disraeli and Nixon, Moynihan argued, were in the strongest position to carry out the best liberal ideas—ideas for which liberals themselves would be unable to muster the support necessary to overcome orthodox conservative opposition."⁸ Continuing, Wicker quotes Moynihan's description of Nixon's initiatives on social issues.

Daniel Patrick Moynihan, nearly two decades later and approaching his third election as a Democratic senator from New York, still was proud to have served in a Republican administration he considered "the most progressive" of any administration of the postwar era. In support of that extravagant judgment, Moynihan ticked off on his fingers the Family Assistance Plan, school desegregation, Nixon's environmental record and his improvements in, and expansion of, efforts to feed the hungry—the uniform application, for example, of the food stamp program in all fifty states and the expansion of the program from \$340 million in 1969 to \$610 million in 1970.⁹

Moynihan might have added subsidized housing programs to his list. Although Nixon had no discernible personal interest in housing for low and moderate income families, his administration embraced without ambivalence (unlike the Model Cities and Office of Economic Opportunity programs) LBJ's landmark 1968 housing act which fell to Nixon to implement. Nixon's budgets in his first term supported construction of 1.4 million units of subsidized housing, about *double* the number of units built in the entire history of subsidized programs since the 1930s, and a level of production never approached by subsequent presidents. Still, Nixon seems better remembered among many housing experts for his moratorium on housing approvals shortly after his re-election, largely at the urging of Office of Management and Budget officials, who correctly feared the long-term subsidy obligation the federal

government was incurring. Nixon's experimental Housing Allowance Program paved the way for today's vouchers. Also Romney's venture into social engineering—deconcentrating the slums by dispersing subsidized housing to the suburbs—while it horrified the White House staff, they never stopped him from going a long way down this road.

The bottom line in Wicker's analysis, with which I agree, is that Nixon's domestic strategy reflected his times. *Even if this is not what the inner man may have wanted, it is what he felt he had to do.*

This strange and reclusive figure, cynical as he certainly was, darkened by ancient hurts and corrosive ambition, forever on guard against a threatening world, was not personally an activist or progressive man; but—vastly more significant—in his first term he was both an activist and a progressive president, mostly because he had to be.¹⁰

The New Federalism Emerges

Nixon moved quickly after the 1968 election to set up machinery in the White House for domestic policy making. As one of his first acts, he established an Urban Affairs Council headed by Moynihan. At the first meeting of the council on January 23, 1969, Nixon called on the group to work out new approaches. He said the first few months of a new administration are the time for change and warned the group against acquiring a vested interest in program failures. Nixon charged his advisers to develop a bold program so that in later years people could not accuse them of being too cautious.

The New Federalism program eventually adopted by the Nixon administration involved restructuring the two dominant types of federal domestic programs: grants-in-aid, under which assistance is provided to state and local governments, and income-transfer programs, through which assistance is provided to needy individuals. Together, these two types of programs accounted for most nondefense federal expenditures.

The first major statement of Nixon's plans came August 8, 1969, in a televised address to the nation in which he first used the phrase "New Federalism."¹¹ The origins of this address are interesting.

During the period from Nixon's inauguration until August 8, 1969, the business of domestic policy making had dragged out longer than the president wanted. Many protracted meetings had been held on program details and techniques. This was especially true of welfare reform, which at every turn became more difficult and complex than had been originally anticipated, making the president impatient. Early in July he instructed press secretary Ronald Ziegler to state publicly that his domestic program would be announced in the first week of August right after the president returned from an overseas trip. The die was cast, and in this case the deadline was met. (On other occasions Nixon was less successful in using this technique of publicly setting a deadline for a particular action to try to force his advisers to have it ready by that time.)

Nixon's August 8 address on domestic policy, aired in prime time, laid out the philosophy of his program and presented four specific proposals—welfare reform, revenue sharing,¹² a new manpower training act, and the reorganization of the Office of Economic Opportunity, which operated the "war on poverty" program initiated under President Johnson. It was well received. An article in *The Economist*, August 16, 1969, stated that "It is no exaggeration to say that President Nixon's television message on welfare reform and revenue sharing may rank in importance with President Roosevelt's first proposal for a social security system in the mid-1930s." The article concluded that "the chances are that most men, and most members of Congress, will in the end see that these major reforms are right for this time

in this country.” Other press accounts were also enthusiastic. The *San Francisco Chronicle* said “the Nixon measure has the great advantages of being not only ‘noble in purpose’ but also suited to the needs of the day and the will of the people.”

The Theory of the New Federalism

The most dramatic component of Nixon’s New Federalism was his family assistance plan for welfare reform. Although revenue sharing and two of the major block grants proposed by Nixon (for community development and employment and training) were enacted, the family assistance plan was not.

Intellectually, a key concept of the Nixon domestic program was the need to sort out and rearrange responsibilities among the federal, state, and local governments and between the public and private sectors. Nixon’s program called for decentralizing some governmental programs and at the same time centralizing others where it was felt to be appropriate for the national government to have principal responsibility. Although the criteria were not systematic as in an academic treatise, for a political program Nixon’s brand of New Federalism was quite coherent.

Functions to be decentralized were primarily those involving services provided in the community. Typically, these are services for which conditions and needs vary among communities and where local decision making was felt to be especially important. Examples are education, social services for the poor, manpower training, urban and rural community development, and law enforcement. The people who provide these services are organized differently from one community to another.

However, the functions of government for which greater national responsibility was advocated by the Nixon administration include three main types:

1. Those for which the benefits of government action *spill over* from one area to another. An example is protection of the environment.
2. Those that involve *transfers* (both of cash and of in-kind services) to individuals. In this area, national action ensures that benefits are uniform throughout the country. Examples are social security, welfare, health insurance, and housing subsidies.
3. Those for which a stimulus or *demonstration effect* is desirable. Drug abuse prevention is an example of a new program established for this purpose in the Nixon period.

All of these areas were identified by the Nixon administration as candidates for federal governmental action. (*Note that all three points above, particularly the second, are contrary to the current Republican theory of federalism embodied in the ideas of House Speaker Newt Gingrich and in the new political vanguard elected in November 1994.*)

As Nixon and his aides became more familiar with domestic programs, the administration’s statements contained increasingly more specific ideas on the distinction between federal and state–local responsibilities. Speaking extemporaneously about the environment in a February 1970 address at the National Governors’ Conference in Washington, Nixon explained his ideas on the relationship between revenue sharing and national initiatives for environmental protection in the following terms:

When we look at the problem of the environment and where we go, there are these thoughts I would like to leave with you: first the necessity that the approach be national. I believe in States’ responsibilities. This is why revenue sharing to me is a concept that should be adopted. On the other hand, when we consider the problem of the environment it is very clear that clean air and clean water doesn’t stop at a

State line. And it is also very clear that if one State adopts very stringent regulations, it has the effect of penalizing itself as against another State which has regulations which are not as stringent insofar as attracting the private enterprise that might operate in one State or another or that might make that choice. That is why we have suggested national standards.¹³

Similarly, the administration developed an increasingly more specific position on the appropriateness of national responsibility for income-transfer programs. In a message to Congress on welfare in March 1972, the president said that the welfare-payment function is appropriately a national responsibility, arguing: "While decentralized management is highly desirable in many fields and is indeed central to my philosophy of government, I believe that many of these problems in welfare administration can best be solved by using a national automated payments system, which would produce economies and considerably increase both equity of treatment and tighten administration."¹⁴

The instruments for decentralization under Nixon were of two types—what Nixon called "*general* revenue sharing" and "*special* revenue sharing." General revenue sharing refers to money provided to state and local governments on an essentially unconditional basis. In his first year in office, Nixon proposed \$500 million per year for this purpose. Congress responded, tepidly. Two years later, with this legislation languishing, Nixon upped the ante tenfold, recommending \$5 billion per year for general revenue sharing.¹⁵ The new bill, as expected, activated the lobbying groups for state and local governments, and the legislation began to move. It was enacted in the fall of 1972. Nixon signed the revenue sharing act in a ceremony in Independence Hall in Philadelphia on October 20, 1972, in the presence of a large group of state and local officials. He expressed his hope that revenue sharing would "renew the American federal system created in Philadelphia two centuries earlier." Perhaps it did, at least for awhile. But neither Presidents Carter nor Reagan liked the idea and the program and it became extinct in 1987.

Special revenue sharing, the other main instrument for decentralization under Nixon, refers to grants to state and local governments provided in broad functional areas—community development, education, employment and training, law enforcement, and social services—with relatively few conditions attached. The term "special revenue sharing" never caught on, and was eventually dropped. The earlier designation of "block grants" was reinstated and continues to be used. The basic idea is that "block" grants are more flexible than "categorical" grants, which had been a major instrument of Johnson's Great Society.

Of the six special revenue sharing proposals advanced by Nixon, two were for human resource services and the other four were for community development. Thus, the organization of the New Federalism can be summarized according to four functional areas. Human resource services and community development programs were designated as appropriate areas for decentralization initiatives, whereas in the fields of income security and natural resources (which include environmental programs such as air and water pollution control) advanced by the Nixon administration involved increased central governmental responsibility.

Welfare Reform

Welfare reform was the biggest surprise of Nixon's domestic program. In his 1967 campaign Nixon talked in conventional terms about the need to overhaul welfare and "build bridges to human dignity." Yet he had never in his previous career evidenced a strong or specific interest in this area.

Nixon's advocacy of welfare reform—notably his Family Assistance Plan (FAP) proposed in August 1969—can be viewed on three levels. On the first level, the president had

pledged himself to improve other governments' performance in areas where it was falling down. Welfare was an obvious candidate. Public discontent was widespread with the major federally assisted welfare categories.¹⁶

On the second level, Nixon's Family Assistance Plan can be considered part of the administration's larger effort to sort out governmental functions in domestic affairs and assign to the federal level those responsibilities best suited for central action on a basis that assures that the federal government will do the job properly. A major argument was made for Nixon's FAP initiative that the administration of automated payment systems for assisting individuals based on need uniformly throughout the nation is appropriately a federal government responsibility. The obvious precedent was Social Security.

The third level of analysis contains a note of irony. Philosophically, welfare reform is an extension of decentralization. Nixon's plan for welfare reform involved reducing the government's efforts to solve the problems of the poor through social services in favor of having the poor, who receive cash assistance, solve their own problems. Nixon emphasized this point in an address to the White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, and Health on December 1, 1969. He said that the administration's policies for improving the living conditions of the poor are based on a simple proposition: "that the best judge of each family's priorities is that family itself; that the best way to ameliorate the hardships of poverty is to provide the family with additional income—to be spent as that family sees fit."¹⁷ This is called "the income strategy."

The task for Government is not to make decisions for you or for anyone. The task of Government is to enable you to make decisions for yourselves. Not to see the truth of that statement is fundamentally to mistake the genius of democracy. We have made too many mistakes of this type—but no more. Our job is to get resources to people in need and then to let them run their own lives.¹⁸

A close reading of Nixon's 1969 message to Congress on welfare, written by William Safire, showed that actually he was ambivalent on this key point. Pushed by Martin Anderson, a White House aide working with then-Counselor Arthur Burns, the president's message to Congress said Nixon's Family Assistance Plan was not a guaranteed income, that people had to work. Nixon's work requirement, however, tended not to get as much emphasis as the basic idea of the income approach to relieving poverty. The irony is that later under Ronald Reagan as president (and in fact Reagan as governor of California fought the Nixon plan), the federal government shifted decisively to the work approach to welfare reform. Reagan's ideas, embodied in legislation in 1981 and again in 1988, emphasized work and work facilitation—job training, child care when a parent is working or in training, and other work-supportive services, like transportation and transitional medical care. But, even Reagan looks like a liberal today with the ratcheting up of hard-line rhetoric on welfare, first by President Clinton ("to end welfare as we know it" and limit it to two years) and later by House Speaker Newt Gingrich. Gingrich's "cold turkey" approach (just cut people off—that'll teach 'em) is a far cry from Richard Nixon's much more liberal and compassionate attitude on social issues.

The history of welfare reform under Nixon reflects some of this ambivalence. White House strategists blew hot and cold on welfare. In 1972, when, during his California primary campaign, Democratic presidential candidate George McGovern offered a controversial national proposal for a guaranteed income, Nixon pulled back from supporting his own Family Assistance Plan in order not to deflect criticism from McGovern. Later, in his State of the Union Address of 1973, Nixon appeared to come back to the fold, promising what sounded

like an even broader version of his original plan. Other events, Watergate in particular, interceded. Welfare reform legislation was never reintroduced under Nixon, although his income-security legacy included creating the supplemental security program, universalizing food stamps, and more than doubling social security retirement benefits.

FHIP and FAP

In a special message to Congress on health, the president said: “Good health care should be readily available to all of our citizens.” He added that what we need is a “National Health Strategy,” saying: “That is why I am calling today not only for new programs and not merely for more money but for something more—for a *new approach* which is equal to the complexity of our challenges. I am calling today for a new National Health Strategy that will marshal a variety of forces in a coordinated assault on a variety of problems.”¹⁹

This is *not* Bill or Hillary Clinton in 1993. It is President Richard Nixon in a special message to Congress on February 18, 1971. And not unlike the Clintons’ plan, the core of the financing of the Nixon plan was a requirement that employers provide health insurance coverage for their employees. As he described it: “In the past, we have taken similar actions to assure workers a *minimum wage*, to provide them with disability and retirement benefits, and to set occupational health and safety standards. Now we should go one step further and guarantee that all workers will receive adequate health insurance protection.”²⁰ To meet the special needs of the poor (that is, low-income people not covered by their employers), Nixon proposed “a new Family Health Insurance Plan,” called FHIP. It was to replace Medicaid and to be “fully financed and administered by the federal government.”²¹

Pundits had a field day with Nixon’s FHIP and FAP plans. Designed as a counter to Senator Ted Kennedy’s more liberal national health insurance plan, Nixon’s Family Health Insurance Plan was greeted by the press as a bold initiative. Writing in reaction to Nixon’s health plan, then-reigning columnist James Reston pointed to Nixon’s 1969 promise to initiate “a decade of government reform in half a century.” He said Nixon had kept his word because:

For more than a year now he has sent to Capitol Hill one innovative policy after another: on welfare reform, revenue-sharing reform, government reform, postal reform, manpower reform, Social Security reform, reform of the grant-in-aid system, and many others.

It is not necessary to agree with his proposals in order to concede that, taken together, they add up to a serious and impressive effort to transform the domestic laws of the nation.²²

Nixon’s health plan, like Clinton’s, included provisions to control costs and enhance quality by developing health maintenance organizations (HMOs). Even the *Wall Street Journal* was impressed, calling Nixon’s plan a good strategy. The *Journal* said it was “far better” than Senator Edward M. Kennedy’s competing plan introduced just before Nixon’s.

But Republicans in Congress were not so pleased. Difficulties were encountered in obtaining congressional sponsors for the Nixon plan. Two months after it was sent to Congress, John Osborne wrote:

the President and his staff lobbyists have been unable to persuade a single Republican representative or senator to sponsor and introduce the legislation. John Byrnes of Wisconsin and his junior colleagues on the House Ways and Means Committee, where

the fate of the program will be decided, have refused to touch it in its present form because of an outcry from business constituents to the effect the costs will ruin them, force them to fire marginal employees, and have all the dire consequences that the federal minimum wage was once said to threaten.²³

Sound familiar? Nixon's health plan did not get nearly as far in Congress as his welfare reform plan, which twice passed the House, but died in the Senate in 1972.

Ironically, the lead paragraph of Nixon's 1971 health message lamented the rise in health spending to seven percent of the gross national product. Two decades later in 1994, the proportion is twice that level. A number of observers during the 103rd Congress in 1993–94 expressed the wish that Nixon's plan had been taken more seriously, in many cases blaming Senator Kennedy for its demise. Kennedy fell on his sword in the 103rd Congress backing the Clinton health care reform plan. Ironically, its philosophy and essentials was closer to Nixon's 1971 plan than to Kennedy's much more radical proposal of that same year.

Conclusion

Nixon's domestic tone and emphasis changed as political conditions changed. In the early days and on the heels of a close election, the domestic program had a progressive cast. Helping the poor, not catching the welfare cheats, was the theme of the Family Assistance Plan. This subject absorbed the largest amount of time and energy among domestic policy proposals in the early days of the first term. Secretary of Labor George Shultz, was particularly influential in this period. He was able to win Nixon over to a quite liberal civil rights plan, the so-called Philadelphia Plan, for the construction industry. The Philadelphia Plan involved quotas (called "targets") for hiring minorities and "set asides" for minority businesses. It was strongly opposed by organized labor.

My experience under Nixon, first as a transition adviser and later as a budget and welfare appointee, was positive. I saw the president relatively frequently—on average about every two weeks as assistant director of OMB. On most of these occasions, I was impressed by his grasp of issues and his enthusiasm about the proposals discussed in this article. He seemed genuinely concerned about the underlying problems and deeply committed to, and knowledgeable about, his domestic initiatives. Several times, especially as the 1972 election drew near, I saw the darker side of Nixon—uneasy, suspicious, clearly uncomfortable with people (including me) whom he did not know well. But these were the exceptions. The Nixon domestic record, consisting of budgets, laws passed, proposals advanced, is that of an innovator with a progressive view of government's role in American life.

Taking the long view of history, in our political system, the deck is usually stacked in favor of centrists. Nixon's career prior to his presidency was as a centrist. Almost by definition, this includes people who go one way and then the other. My reading of the Nixon presidency is that he was in office at a time when the pro-government rhetoric and liberal ideas and values about social policy were still strong. People believed government should solve problems. Nixon's message on the home front was that he had better ways to solve social problems, rather than they should not be solved by government. He had second thoughts about domestic policy at the end of his first term and in the troubled days of Watergate, but he never had the opportunity to shift his ground. Gerald Ford who succeeded him did not do so either. Ironically, the shift toward more conservative anti-government ideas on the domestic policy scene came under the Democrats in the aftermath of Proposition 13 in California (cutting local property taxes in half). Jimmy Carter began the change. Ronald

Reagan accelerated it, and with a vengeance, and now Republicans in the 104th Congress (1994–5) are adding fuel to the conservative fires. But Nixon was a seventies-style leader on domestic issues. By today's standards, as the lead sentence of this article states, we would call him a *liberal*.

Some observers predicted in the 1980s that the conservative post-Nixon mood of the country would end soon, and that we would return to a more positive view of government's role in the society. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., in *The Cycle of American History* published in 1986, confidently predicted that this would be the case. Citing a thirty-year rhythm of public philosophies, Schlesinger forecast in 1986 "the burnout of the most recent conservative ascendancy, and the age of Reagan."²⁴ Schlesinger added, "like its earlier versions in the 1950s, 1920s and 1980s, [it] will fade into historical memory." By inference, Nixon's style of progressive Republicanism would by now have re-emerged. Arthur, how could you be so wrong?

The underlying question is whether there are cycles of social ideology such that at sometime in the future Schlesinger will be proven right. Economist Albert O. Hirschman wrote what I believe is the best commentary on this subject.²⁵ In his 1982 book based on the Janeway Lectures on historical economics at Princeton University, Hirschman described what he called "*shifting involvements*." He wrote about cycles of "*private interest*" and "*public action*." The former are periods when people care most about personal gain and do not relate to the larger community and support public actions. The latter are periods of pro-government thinking and action. Hirschman said that for such a cyclical pattern to exist, there has to be an endogenous variable that causes these shifts in involvement. The answer he found was *disappointment*—namely, that people tire of, and become disenchanted by, one mode of thinking and shift to the other.

I believe the forty-year liberal and pro-government cycle of public action in the United States from the New Deal (the mid-thirties) into the Carter years (in the mid-seventies) ended with *disappointment* in public action manifest in the backlash towards Lyndon Johnson's Great Society. The result was the cycle of private interest now operating so strongly.

How long will this conservative cycle last? Will it be another forty years, to 2015 or thereabouts, before there are again shifting involvements? Clearly, a shift is not going to come soon. It is impossible to forecast when the current cycle will end. There are forces at work that suggest it too could last for forty years. The enthusiasm of new conservative political leaders at every level of government suggests this outcome. It's anybody's guess.

The intriguing intellectual question is what Richard Nixon would have been like had he been born a generation later than he was, and Newt Gingrich too for that matter. Both men cycled through different public ideologies in their political careers in ways that positioned them at the center, the right, and the left in public affairs. At their roots, these equilibrating career patterns in our Madisonian pluralistic political system have to be counted as an asset; they permit peaceful change to occur despite the volatility and intensity of human emotions.

Notes

1. Joan Hoff, *Nixon Reconsidered*, (New York: Basic Books, 1994) p. 49.
2. *Ibid.*, as quoted by Frank Gannon, White House aide, January 18, 1973, p. 77.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 136.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 136.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 138.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 144.
7. Tom Wicker, *One of Us: Richard Nixon and the American Dream* (New York: Random House, 1991).

8. *Ibid.*, p. 535.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 539.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 541.
11. Richard M. Nixon, Television Address on the New Federalism, August 8, 1969, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, 1969* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), pp. 637–45.
12. Revenue sharing turned out to be the most conspicuous legislative achievement of the Nixon administration in domestic affairs. Appropriately, it went into effect just before Christmas in 1972 and involved the distribution of \$30.2 billion to 38,600 states, counties, townships, cities, and Indian tribes over a period of five years. For further information on revenue sharing, see Richard P. Nathan, Allen D. Manvel, Susannah E. Calkins, and associates, *Monitoring Revenue Sharing* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1975).
13. Nixon, President's Remarks, Winter Session of the National Governors Conference in Washington, D.C., February 27, 1970, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, 1971* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1972), pp. 50–8.
14. *Ibid.*, Presidential Message, March 17, 1971. In the welfare area, in particular, the Nixon administration's support for increased federal control cooled toward the end of the first term. However, the adult welfare categories (aged, blind, and disabled) were federalized under the aegis of the Social Security Administration in 1972. These three groups accounted for nearly half of the caseloads of state and county welfare agencies in 1972.
15. Richard M. Nixon, "State of the Union Address of the President of the United States," delivered before a Joint Session of the Senate and the House of Representatives, January 22, 1971.
16. The four categories of federally assisted welfare programs in 1969 when Nixon took office were aid for the aged, blind, disabled, and the most troubled category of all, aid to families with dependent children (AFDC). Costs and caseloads under AFDC were rising rapidly in the 1960s. Total costs doubled from January 1960 to 1969; caseloads rose in that period from 5.8 to 9.3 million. Many welfare systems had severe administrative problems. Administrative costs were high; almost 20 cents out of every dollar of AFDC spending in 1968 went for administration. Recipients, too, were discontented. Payment levels in many jurisdictions were very low—\$7 per family per month under AFDC in Mississippi, as compared to ten times that amount in some states.
17. Nixon, Presidential Address, White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, and Health, December 2, 1969, *Public Papers, 1969*, pp. 979–85.
18. Richard P. Nathan, "Tax Aid to the Poor—Reconsidered," *The Wall Street Journal*, April 24, 1974.
19. Nixon, Building a National Health Strategy, *Public Papers, 1971*, p. 171.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 183.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 184.
22. James Reston, "What of the Democrats?" *The New York Times*, February 19, 1971, p. 37.
23. John Osborne, *The Third Year of The Nixon Watch* (New York: Liveright, 1972), p. 62.
24. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Cycles of American History* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1986), p. 45.
25. Albert O. Hirschman, *Shifting Involvements: Private Interest and Public Action* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982).