

Sanders' Oval Room Humor Is Fresh, Powerful Talent

One picture is worth ten thousand words.

—traditional Chinese saying

They are a strange breed, these particular newspapermen: they work on the biggest dailies in the country and they don't write ten words a day.

Yet their work probably reaches — and influences — more Americans than the words of James Reston, William Buckley and Richard Nixon combined.

They are the editorial cartoonists and their names are household words: Herblock, Mauldin, Oliphant, Conrad, Fischetti and now Sanders. Bill Sanders of The Milwaukee Journal.

"The art of cartooning," writes George Reedy of Marquette's Journalism School, "is fundamentally one of legitimate exaggeration. The caricaturist must penetrate to the heart of an event; strip away all of the secondary details; magnify the essence and place it on a sheet of paper where it can evoke instant and virtually universal recognition."

What makes Bill Sanders an outstanding cartoonist, Reedy claims, is that Sanders has captured the essential horror of the past few decades — "the modern alliance between evil and inanity."

The beauty of the Sanders cartoon collection is that he has organized it into sections (Big Brothers; Jack Radical, Anti-American Boy; Watergate Warm-up, etc.) and written a preface of each. Thus, we go behind the "10 word cutline" and get a chance to catch what happens inside Sanders' head.

He has done his homework. He's as hip to the Vietnam War as David Halberstam.

"I was in Vietnam," he writes, "in November of 1967 with several other cartoonists on a tour. We finally went to Cam Ranh Bay for a two-day rest. Willard Mullin, the famous sports cartoonist, used the occasion to pick up an inexpensive bottle of Beefeaters gin at the giant PX. As he walked out of the building, delighted with his bargain, he said jokingly, 'This ain't a war — it's a way of life!'"

Sanders' mini-history of our Vietnam involvement is a little masterpiece. After recalling that LBJ allowed that he was not about to be humiliated by a "raggedy-ass little fourth rate power," Sanders also recalls that Richard Nixon said way back in 1968, "I've come to the conclusion that there's no way to win the war. But we can't say that, of course."

There used to be a standard joke about Vietnam, Sanders muses, that we should simply declare a victory and get out.

"I'm sure its originator," he concludes, "never dreamed Nixon would do just that."

His comic sense sketches with a few lines add a freshness to a situation that even non-cartoonists can appreciate and you can almost see the embryos emerging on the drawing board:

• Writing of Dita Beard and ITT: "The Law and Order Team, knowing what a strain the disclosure would place on Ms. Beard, did the friendly thing and sent G. Gordon Liddy over to take her to a hospital. Mr. Liddy was not too familiar with the Washington area so he took her to the nearest hospital he could find — which happened to be in Denver, Colorado."

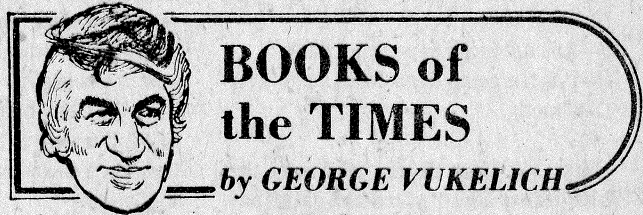
• John Ehrlichman, talking to an official: "Do you mean to tell me that if Congress does something that's not in the public interest, the President does not have the power to set it aside?"

• White House press secretary Ron Ziegler: "I am not going to comment from the White House on a third-rate burglary attempt . . . I'm sure certain elements are trying to stretch this into something more than it is."

Sanders concludes with a written editorial as powerful as any of his drawn ones:

"The real judgment of history will come to rest on how we, as a nation of free peoples, respond to the cancer we have discovered in our body politic.

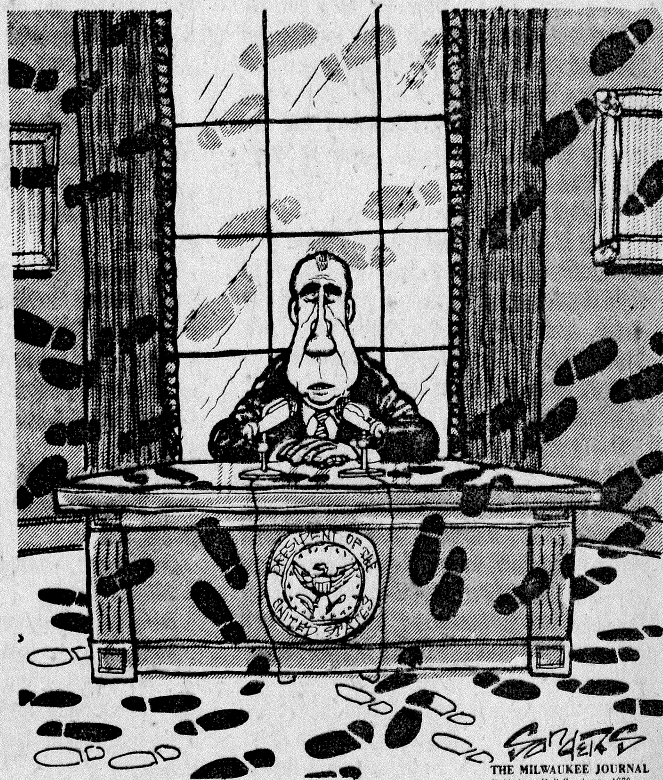
"We have brought to power a man so petty that he pilfers tax money to enhance his private home. We have brought to power a man so callous that he would wiretap his own brother. We have brought to power a man so isolated from reality and so obsessed with image and power that he was willing to subvert civil liberties and the democratic process to maintain them. We have brought to



BOOKS of the TIMES

by **GEORGE VUKELICH**

Run for the Oval Room . . . They Can't Corner Us There!
By Bill Sanders. Alpha Press, 224 pages.



I have just discovered major new developments in the Watergate case.

power a man who installed the most dangerously corrupt administration in the history of this country . . .

"These were the zealous champions of law and order. These were self-righteous men who anointed themselves as keepers of the national morals.

"In the end they corrupted the instruments of power for the single purpose of maintaining power. In doing so, they attempted to steal our birthright — a citizen's privilege to choose his President in a reasonably democratic fashion. It is the type of corruption that has always been a signpost to dictatorship.

" . . . This nation should demand the impeachment of Richard Nixon.

"To do less is a vote of no confidence in our system of government. To do less is to confess that the institutions of this great nation are so fragile that only one man can control our destiny. To do less is to forever codify the principle that once a man is elected to the Presidency, he becomes the sole interpreter of the law and may choose to place himself above it without recourse.

"If we accept that principle, we will not have simply reached the end of Watergate — we will have reached the end as a democratic society."

It's no surprise that Bill Sanders' editorial cartoons are published in **The Milwaukee Journal**. What's surprising is that some of his writing stands by itself and is as good as anything the **Journal** is publishing now. Bill Sanders. Remember the name. He's the heaviest cat to hit Milwaukee since Henry Aaron left.

Bill Sanders' career as a cartoonist began when he went to Korea with the Army in 1955 and started submitting cartoons to Stars and Stripes. He has worked for the Greensboro (N.C.) Daily News and Kansas City Star. In 1967, he joined the Milwaukee Journal where he has become known as a crusader for civil rights and liberties. He was cited with a special award by the Wisconsin Civil Liberties Union in 1972.