



# Nixon Vows to Stay On

## Supporters Cheer Wildly At Luncheon

By Bob Kuttner

Washington Post Staff Writer

President Nixon assured wildly cheering supporters at a testimonial luncheon yesterday that he will serve out his term and leave office in 1977 with his head "held high."

"I shall do nothing that will weaken this office while I am President," Mr. Nixon declared, prompting chants of "God Bless Nixon."

About 1,400 supporters attended the luncheon at the Shoreham Hotel. It was the high point of a conference held by the National Citizens Committee for Fairness to the President, which was organized last year by a Massachusetts rabbi, Baruch Korff. The committee spends most of its budget on newspaper advertisements, and claims a national membership of 2 million.

The attendance of several high administration officials and members of the Nixon family gave yesterday's luncheon the air of an official function. The printed program was emblazoned with the presidential seal, and references on the literature, pins, bumper stickers and posters were to "the presidency," with few allusions to Mr. Nixon by name.

However, the speeches and the audience response reflected a fierce loyalty to President Nixon and a particular hostility to the news media that occasionally erupted into boos and fists directed at the press converging the luncheon.

In a warm-up speech prior

United Press International

At testimonial, President stands with Rabbi Korff, left, and son-in-law Edward Cox.

to Mr. Nixon's arrival, Sen. Carl Curtis (R-Neb.) told the group, "The get-Nixon crowd, including those who continue to conduct a trial-by-press, are in for a big surprise."

Curtis also attacked the Watergate grand jury, "the make-up of which can hardly be described as representative of our country." The federal grand jury is predominantly black.

The audience gasped as Curtis named several members of Watergate Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski's staff who had worked in Democratic administrations. "I criticized the firing of Archibald Cox," Curtis said. "My criticism was that it wasn't soon enough." Cox, the first Watergate special prosecutor, was fired Oct. 20.

"Lynching hasn't stopped in the United States," Curtis declared. "It's just that different people are doing it."

The audience cheered often and loudly.

Another speaker, Ambassador to Italy John Volpe, got a standing ovation with the declaration, "You just look at this Nixon family. They are a close-knit family."

Pins were presented to the President's daughters, Tricia Nixon Cox and Julie Nixon Eisenhower, and Mrs. Nixon was honored as a defender of the American family.

"You will be in our hearts all the days of my father's presidency — 965 more days," said Mrs. Cox.

Members of the audience besieged the head table for autographs, briefly delaying Mr. Nixon's entrance.

Agriculture Secretary Earl L. Butz, Office of Management

## PRESIDENT, From A1

and Budget Director Roy Ash, Treasury Secretary William E. Simon, economic adviser Herbert Stein and lesser officials unaccustomed to autograph-seekers all signed programs and had their pictures snapped by the high-spirited crowd. At length, Rabbi Korff appealed for order so the Secret Service would let the President enter.

In brief remarks devoted mostly to foreign policy achievements, Mr. Nixon stressed the need for a strong presidency and did not directly refer to his Watergate troubles.

Citing his foreign policy objectives, Mr. Nixon said, "Whoever is President will hold in his hand responsibility for building on what we have done."

"A strong American presidency is essential if we are to have peace in the world."

Referring to his departure today on a 15,000-mile Middle East trip, Mr. Nixon said that when he felt tired, he would be "heartened by the memory of this luncheon."

"As Sen. Curtis implied, what we say here will be little noted by the media," said the President, "but what you have done here and throughout the United States will be long remembered."

The speech was frequently interrupted by cheers, V-signs and flag-waving by the friendly crowd. Rabbi Korff sat by the President's side.

After the President spoke, Rabbi Korff read a proposed resolution of support, citing "the climate of hysteria being engendered by members of the press" and "the impeachment syndrome within the House Judiciary Committee," and declaring "our faith in God and country, in constitutional government, in the presidency and in our beloved President who is one of the strongest links in the chain of the presidency."

The audience shouted "Aye."

Rabbi Korff paused. "Maybe," he said, "a nay will come from the press."

The Marine Corps Band struck up "Hail to the Chief," and the presidential party exited to loud applause.



By Gerald Martineau—The Washington Post

Helen Rolingson displays her support for the President at testimonial luncheon.