

Post D23/74
The Real Richard Nixon

Listening to Mr. Nixon's last speech as President made one wonder whether the date was August 1974 or January 1977.

Was this a disgraced President resigning after a tenacious and shrewd effort to hold on to the office failed, or was it a President who was leaving the office having served with distinction as a political and moral leader?

Was this a man handing over the government to the first unelected Vice President in a state of grave crisis, or was this a man whose successor was assuming the office of President having run on the basis of Mr. Nixon's records?

Was this a man who one would expect to hide from the public eye, or the retiring elder statesman to whom the country can turn in the future for guidance?

Was this a man who wrecked the careers of loyal supporters and damaged the political system of his country, or was this a man to whom friends and the country owe a debt of gratitude?

"Will the real Richard Nixon please stand up?" was the caption on a 1960 cartoon of Herblock (Washington Post, August 9). Is Mr. Block's question still unanswered?

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