

## THE NATION

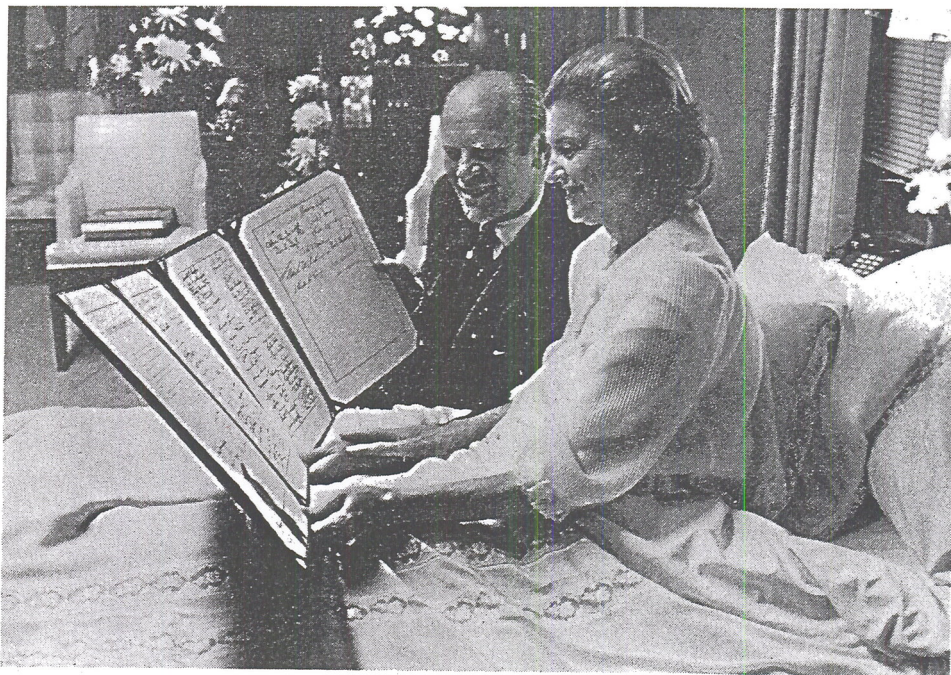
mostly ashes for the G.O.P. In the Northeastern and mid-Atlantic states, the Democrats hope to pick up as many as 16 congressional seats. Connecticut's Democratic Congresswoman Ella Grasso, 55, is favored to become the first woman in the nation's history to be elected Governor on her own by defeating Republican Robert Steele, himself an attractive young Congressman.

The Democrats are hopeful that their biggest victory in the region will come in New York's gubernatorial contest. Congressman Hugh Carey, 55, an old-fashioned liberal given mod appeal by some adroit television ads, is running far ahead of Malcolm Wilson, 60, the earnest but lackluster incumbent who moved up from Lieutenant Governor when Nelson Rockefeller resigned last December. A poll published last month by *Newsday*, a Long Island newspaper, showed Carey leading Wilson by the surprising margin of 52% to 27%. Carey's strong showing has improved the once dismal prospects of his ticketmate: former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, an ultra-liberal Texas transplant who is challenging liberal G.O.P. Senator Jacob Javits, 70, long (perhaps too long) New York's biggest vote-getter.

In the Midwest, traditional stronghold of the G.O.P., the Republicans could lose up to 22 of their 69 congressional seats—as many as six in the bastions of Nebraska and Iowa. In the 13 Western states, the Democrats should pick up at least five and perhaps as many as eleven congressional seats. The most interesting Senate fight is in Colorado, where Democrat Gary Hart, 36, George McGovern's presidential campaign manager in 1972, is trying to link conservative G.O.P. Senator Peter Dominick, 59, to some of the tainted milk money collected for President Nixon's re-election.

**Voter Apathy.** The biggest prize on the West Coast is the Governor's mansion in Sacramento, Calif. The Democrats hope to capture it with a candidate whose family used to live there: Edmund G. ("Jerry") Brown, 36, the son of ex-Governor (1959-66) Edmund G. ("Pat") Brown. Now California's secretary of state, Brown has frequently put Houston Flournoy, 45, the state's able controller, on the defensive.

As they look to November, professionals in both parties, but especially the Republicans, are worried that voter apathy will cut into their totals in unpredictable ways. There is a sense of disillusionment over Watergate and helplessness over inflation. During a radio talk show in Maine, someone called in recently to ask: "Why do we need a Governor at all? What can any of these men do for us?" Other callers immediately seized upon the same idea. With Watergate in the near past and the prospect of inflation stretching into the distant future, more than a few politicians are having trouble convincing voters that anybody can make a difference.



THE FORDS VIEWING "BEST WISHES" PETITION FROM 100 U.S. SENATORS

## THE WHITE HOUSE

# Ford on the Offensive

Amid growing criticism that he was drifting and avoiding hard decisions, President Ford took the offensive on several political fronts last week.

He made extensive, energetic preparations for his economic message to the nation this week (see cover stories, THE ECONOMY). He beat back an attempt by the Senate to undercut his foreign policy. He made a startling offer to go before Congress to explain why he had pardoned Richard Nixon. He met with 22 of the nation's mayors and pledged to sign an \$11.8 billion mass-transit bill. He reorganized his fumbling White House staff. Though he was obviously distracted by his wife's bout with cancer and visited her every day at the hospital, he also dined with congressional friends, threw a party for retiring members of Congress and was host at a white-tie-and-medals reception for the Washington diplomatic corps. It was a brisk display of a Chief Executive in action and, despite all his troubles, enjoying it.

The Senate revolt was directed not so much against Ford as against his predecessor and at what many regard as the clandestine tactics of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. Still angered by the disclosure of the CIA's intervention in Chilean politics, Senators saw a chance to strike back when a resolution authorizing a temporary continuation of foreign aid came to the floor last week. A majority voted an amendment banning military aid to Chile. Then, by a much larger margin, the Senate voted to cut off military assistance to Turkey on the ground that U.S. weaponry had been used in the Turkish invasion of Cyprus. Finally, the Senate voted to stop shipments of fertilizer to South Viet Nam.

Ford was especially alarmed that the U.S. would lose leverage in the Cyprus crisis if aid to Turkey was halted. He sent staffers to Capitol Hill where they persuaded House-Senate conferees to eliminate the objectionable amendments from the resolution. Now the Senate must decide whether to accept the revised measure.

Confronted with a list of questions from Congress about the Nixon pardon, Ford could have supplied written replies or none at all. Instead, in the interest of an open presidency and in the hope of putting the issue to rest, he volunteered to testify before a subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee this week.\* The probe will be televised. Said the delighted Democratic subcommittee chairman, William Hungate: "It is consistent with the frankness and openness he displayed as a Congressman."

**Unique Occasion.** Even some critics of the "imperial presidency" worry that Ford may be weakening his office by testifying before Congress. But he feels that he is giving nothing away since he is going voluntarily. As Ford explains it, since a presidential pardon of a former President is such a unique occasion, it deserves a unique explanation.

Ford moved to solve his staff problems by instructing all of his aides, who tend to take up too much of his time on less than crucial matters, to report to Donald Rumsfeld, 42, his newly named "coordinator of White House operations." For someone of Ford's democrat-

\*Though the record is somewhat murky, Ford will apparently be the first President to testify on a formal basis before a congressional committee. Abraham Lincoln made a few trips to Capitol Hill to confer informally about his war policies.



ic disposition, it was a tough order to give, but it had to be done. Observers feared that he was spread too thin, and had not yet made a successful transition from the leisurely politicking of Capitol Hill to the continual decision-making grind of the White House.

Open and personable, Rumsfeld has the task of giving the President the protection he needs without sealing him off. A Ford ally when he served in Congress from Illinois, Rumsfeld was even considered for the vice presidency before Nelson Rockefeller was chosen. Though Rumsfeld held some high-ranking posts in the Nixon Administration—director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, director of the Cost of Living Council, Ambassador to NATO—he was not tarnished by Watergate. Once when H.R. Haldeman, Nixon's chief of staff, tried to shift him to a smaller office, he resisted: "Listen, I didn't resign a first-class seat in Congress to take a second-class office in the White House." Now he has Haldeman's office, though without the title and imperial trappings.

Rumsfeld's arrival coincided with the long-overdue departure of some hard-core Nixon holdovers, who were finally eased out last week. Among the resignations announced: Father John McLaughlin, a Jesuit priest who had offended his own order by so tenaciously defending Nixon's morals; Richard Moore, a presidential counsel who is reportedly to be added to the list of unindicted co-conspirators in the Watergate cover-up trial; Bruce Herschensohn, an assistant who was in charge of coordinating public support for Nixon.

**Good Humor.** Bolstering Ford throughout his busy week was his wife Betty's encouraging recovery. Because cancer cells were found in two of the 30 lymph nodes removed in the operation, she will have to undergo further treatment to prevent the spread of the disease. But she appeared to be in good humor. She was surrounded with cards, letters and bouquets from well-wishers. Particularly heartening were hundreds of messages from women who had undergone the same operation. One notable correspondent: Alice Roosevelt Longworth, 90, who had two mastectomies years ago.

Despite the First Lady's progress, her illness inevitably stirred speculation about her husband's plans for 1976. "He is greatly influenced by his family," says a presidential adviser who believes that Ford would bow out if his wife was not well. The leading contender for the G.O.P. nomination would then be Vice President-designate Nelson Rockefeller, a dismaying prospect for Democrats, who think he would be the toughest man to beat. Rocky is already filling in for the President at speaking engagements in Utah and California. But Ford will soon join him on the hustings. This week he is scheduled to begin a series of trips through 18 states in behalf of Republican candidates.

## WATERGATE

# The Trial Begins, Minus Its Star

They were once inseparable, the guardians of the Oval Office in Richard Nixon's law-and-order Administration. Now they sat on the uncomfortable side of the law as defendants in a Washington federal courtroom, separated by a vacant chair—and a frosty silence. For 45 awkward, painful minutes, during a courtroom lull in the jury selection process, John Ehrlichman, baggy-eyed and subdued, bent purposefully over a yellow legal pad. The normally dour H.R. Haldeman, his crew cut turned sleekly long, glanced tentatively at his onetime friend, but got no encouragement. Before stepping out to smoke his pipe, a pale, drawn, considerably older-looking John Mitchell, 61, had sat aloof. Once the nation's chief law enforcer as Attorney General, he now faced criminal charges for the second time.

**Far Apart.** Certain to become one of the most celebrated trials in U.S. history, the Watergate conspiracy case poignantly dramatized how far this once triumphant trio had fallen—and how far apart they have grown. As Nixon's former chief of staff, Haldeman had a great deal to do with Ehrlichman's emergence as the Administration's domestic-policy boss. Now Ehrlichman's lawyers were expected to claim that Haldeman had worked deviously with Nixon to mislead their client about some of the 45 overt acts cited by the prosecution as part of a conspiracy to "commit offenses against the United States" and to obstruct justice. Mitchell, who never really trusted the palace pair, had learned from the Watergate transcripts that they had plotted with Nixon to make him the scapegoat in the 1972 wiretap-burglary of Democratic National Committee headquarters.

The other two defendants seemed almost incidental. Robert Mardian, a top Mitchell aide at both the Justice Department and on Nixon's 1972 re-election committee, warmly shook hands with his former boss. Kenneth W. Parkinson, who had been merely an attorney for the Nixon committee, sat apart from the

others on a front-row bench, almost as a spectator. Federal Judge John J. Sirica had separated the case of a sixth defendant, Gordon Strachan, because of legal complications caused by previous grants of immunity to him.

As Ehrlichman entered the courthouse on the first day, he was spat upon by a bearded, heavy-set man who identified himself as a Yippie. Inside the courtroom, everything was orderly as Sirica asked possible jurors, largely black and female, questions proposed by the

NIXON LEAVING HOSPITAL WITH FAMILY



EHRlichman LEAVING COURT



HALDEMAN HAILING CAB AFTER SESSION

