

# FORD GIVES

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# NIXON, WHO REGRETS 'MY MISTAKES'

## 'PAIN' EXPRESSED

### Ex-President Cites His Sorrow at the Way He Handled Watergate

By EVERETT R. HOLLES

Special to The New York Times

SAN CLEMENTE, Calif., Sept.

8—President Ford's pardon for Richard M. Nixon evoked today from the former President an expression of "regret and pain at the anguish my mistakes over Watergate have caused the nation and the Presidency."

Within 10 minutes after the Presidential pardon was announced in Washington, Mr. Nixon's statement was released

at his Casa Pacifica estate, citing his sorrow in allowing Watergate to become "a national tragedy."

"That the way I tried to deal with Watergate was the wrong way is the burden I shall bear for every day of the life that is left in me," he said.

#### Hopes Burden Is Lifted

In a subsequent statement, given in response to reporters' questions, an aide quoted Mr. Nixon as saying that, in gratefully accepting the Presidential pardon, he hoped Mr. Ford's "compassionate act would contribute to lifting the burdens of Watergate from our country."

When the Nixon statement was released by his adviser and former White House press secretary, Ronald L. Ziegler, Mr.

and Mrs. Nixon were already on the way to a new haven of seclusion away from the heavily guarded Casa Pacifica.

They left at 7 A.M., Pacific Coast time, in a large black limousine accompanied by Secret Service agents and Mr. Nixon's military aide, Lieut. Col. Jack Brennan, reportedly for the Palm Desert estate of Walter H. Annenberg, Ambassador to Britain.

A close friend of the Nixons said the former President planned to play golf on the Annenberg private 18-hole course.

Mr. Ziegler and Mr. Nixon's appointments secretary, Stephen Bull, who worked throughout most of today at the Nixon offices here, avoided reporters, and no direct information was forthcoming from the Casa Pacifica as to when the former

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# Nixon Regrets Watergate 'Mistakes'

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President was informed of Mr. Ford's decision.

A close friend of Mr. Nixon, who has seen him several times since his arrival here on Aug. 9, said, however, that his statement was written last night after he and Mr. Ford held a long telephone conversation.

The informant said Mr. Ford and his predecessor had had at least three telephone conversations over the last four days.

In the month that he has been here Mr. Nixon has left the seclusion of his villa only twice before, once to go to the Camp Pendleton private beach club two miles south to swim, and another time to Ventura for a beach picnic with a small group of friends.

When the announcement of the Presidential pardon was made in Washington, followed by the statement released by Mr. Ziegler, Mr. and Mrs. Nixon had been gone more than an hour from the Casa Pacifica.

Even before the announcement in Washington, word of the forthcoming action by Mr. Ford had leaked through the guarded gates of the Nixon ocean-bluff residence and to the nearby San Clemente Inn, which, during the Nixon Presidency, served as a residence for staff members and visitors.

## Denies Discussion

Paul Presley, a long-time friend of Mr. Nixon who is active in Orange County Republican politics, operates the inn. Last night, he had dinner with Mr. Bull and Colonel Brennan but said there had been no discussion of the impending pardon.

Mr. Presley last saw Mr. Nixon at the Casa Pacifica five days ago and said "he seemed much more relaxed and in far better humor" than at any time since his arrival on Aug. 9.

"He complained good-naturedly to me about the amount of work that confronted him here but said he was going in swimming at every opportunity," he said.

Mr. Presley, like most resi-

dents of this preponderantly Republican oceanside resort of 20,000 residents, expressed pleasure at the President's decision to protect Mr. Nixon against criminal prosecution.

"He suffered enough and so has Pat Nixon and the whole family," said Mr. Presley.

## Waitress Is Happy

Laura Martin, a waitress at a diner a short distance north on El Camino Real, said she was happy that "they aren't going to try and pick the carcass."

However, Jerome Appleton, waiting in his car at the Texaco service station, said he had "lost some of my respect for Mr. Ford."

"I never knew that being an ex-President driven from office in disgrace provided protection from prosecution for a man's crimes," Mr. Appleton, a construction subcontractor from nearby San Juan Capistrano, said.

Most residents of San Clemente seemed as unexcited about the Presidential pardon as they have been all along about the presence here of the Nixon home and Western White House, since he acquired the estate in 1969 soon after taking office.

## Drivers at Entrance

On this sun-blazing Sunday, a large-scale Marine Corps invasion exercise two miles southward along the coast from the Nixon home, with thousands of Marines coming ashore in landing craft from a dozen warships, seemed to be the area's most exciting event.

However, scores of motorists on Interstate 5, close by the Nixon compound, after hearing the news of the pardon on their car radios turned off onto the Via Presidente and drove up to the Coast Guard post at

the entrance to the Nixon property. They were turned back after a brief glimpse of the Casa Pacifica's red-tiled roofs over the treetops.

On the beach below the 75-foot bluff of the Nixon property, a dozen surfers—denied use of the beach while Mr. Nixon was President—rode the breakers into shore.

A prominent San Clemente supporter of Mr. Nixon since he went to Congress in 1946, who asked not to be identified said he had heard that the Lincoln Club of Orange County, made up largely of wealthy industrialists who contributed millions of dollars to Republican campaign coffers, including Mr. Nixon's, had invited the former President to become a member of the select and influential group.

"You won't find Mr. Nixon living the life of a recluse," the Republican informant said. "Now that he is clear of any criminal prosecution, don't be surprised if he comes back into California politics. I think he should. I'd like to see him run for Senator James V. Tunney's Democratic seat in 1976."

Generally, the suggestion that Mr. Nixon run for the Senate appeared to have scant support among Orange County Republicans.

Recent published reports that Mr. Nixon, since his resignation, has been "terribly depressed and gloomy" and seemed to wander in conversation were heatedly denied by Mr. Presley and another San Clemente businessman who has visited the Casa Pacifica.

"He's been a saddened man, of course, but to say that what has happened has sunk him into a fit of depression is pure rot," Mr. Presley said.