

We Love You, Mr. Nixon

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THE national Committee to Love Mr. Nixon has been formed — and just in the nick of time, too.

"We feel it is our responsibility — nay, our God-given duty — to bestow on Mr. Nixon that which he so desperately needs in this extremely critical and trying period of his life," said the committee's executive secretary, Homer T. Pettibone, "love. Love and understanding."

Pettibone pointed out that many people felt Mr. Nixon had been behaving very, very badly lately — bullying around a little country not a tenth his size, telling fibs about peace being at hand, adamantly refusing to go out to play with Congress, and sulkily declining to talk to anybody.

"Now the beginning of the fifth year in any presidency is a very formative period," said Pettibone. "We must be terribly careful never to nag, to criticize, nor especially to scream at a five-year-old President. If a five-year-old President feels that he is unwanted and unloved, the damage to his tender, growing psyche could well be permanent."

"Let us keep in mind our committee's motto: 'There is no such thing as a bad five-year-old President, only one who is misunderstood.'"

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PETTIBONE said we should first point out to Mr. Nixon that his recent conduct was in good measure our fault, not his.

"After all," Pettibone said, "we spoiled him last November by giving him too many votes. True, we hoped this would help him develop a sense of independence, self-reliance and responsibility. But it hasn't worked in the past."

"When we gave Franklin Roosevelt, then also a five-year-old President, too many votes, he immediately tried to pack

the Supreme Court. And when we spoiled Lyndon Johnson in the same fashion he, too, began kicking little countries around. We simply must realize that too many votes are bad for Presidents. They can't handle them."

Once we have confessed our own mistake, Pettibone said, we must make every effort to convince Mr. Nixon of our love. "It doesn't matter so much how you deal with a five-year-old President," he said, "as long as he feels secure and cherished by the warmth of your love."

Then it may be possible to have a long "man-to-man" talk with the President. Pettibone feels this is crucial.

We should begin, he says, by explaining that everybody bullies and fibs and sulks a little and it's nothing to be overly ashamed of. And he should pay no attention to the taunts of his little friends, like Senator Saxbe, who says he's "lost his senses."

But he wouldn't want anybody to do these things to him, would he? So he really should try harder to be a good five-year-old President. And perhaps if he could think about it and explain to us very calmly why he did these things, he'd feel much, much better.

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"THAT'S the key," said Pettibone. "Through our love and understanding we must get him to bring these things out in the open, instead of keeping them all bottled up inside, festering."

With our gentle guidance, Pettibone said, he saw no reason Mr. Nixon couldn't become a kind, honest, outgoing six-, seven-, or eight-year-old President — and finally go forth into real life a mature and respected individual.

"All we have to do," said Pettibone with a sigh, "is get him to unlock the door and come out of his room."