



Nixon's Troubles Continue to Grow

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THE STRANGE business of the erased White House tape may not be the last nail in the President's political coffin. But in the mild language of the new Republican leader of the House, Representative John Rhodes of Arizona, "it certainly isn't going to help."

There are other developments in the wind that are not going to help, either. For example, a friendly warning has now been passed to the President by influential members of the Joint Committee on Internal Revenue Taxation. The warning was that he really must "get his tax problems solved" before the committee goes to work in earnest.

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THIS COMMITTEE was chosen by the President, as the one most likely to be favorable to him. Yet on the evidence disclosed by the President himself, leading committee members more and more lean to the view that there was no justification for the large tax deduction taken for the Nixon vice presidential papers. The view is based on the technicality that the gift of the papers was not "completed" prior to the cut-off date for gifts of this type.

If the President heeds the warning, therefore, he will have to make a horribly unpleasant choice. Either he must admit error and belatedly pay the resulting taxes and penalties. Or he must simply hope against hope for a different kind of committee report.

To make this matter worse, the joint committee is expected to complete its work as late as April. So a report that the President has failed to pay a very large

sum owed to the Internal Revenue Service — if this is indeed the outcome — will almost exactly coincide with the payments of painful sums to the IRS by just about all the voters in the country.

It now seems to be the rule, in truth, that each great trouble encountered by the President is hardly out of the way, before another trouble, equally great, crops up to make new headlines. Meanwhile, another dangerous aspect of Richard M. Nixon's political situation is now beyond any reasonable possibility of doubt. In brief, the President can no longer count on real aid or support from the majority of Republicans in the House and Senate.

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A BILL of impeachment is another dreadful hurdle that is looming higher and higher before the President. The best nose-counters have concluded that a majority of the House Judiciary Committee already wants to vote a bill of impeachment. The White House has been so advised.

How the whole House will vote, if and when a bill of impeachment is brought before it, is certainly an open question. The point, here, is that a great many members of the electorate understandably have a genuine horror of the whole impeachment procedure. Moreover, these people who hate the idea of impeachment include large numbers of those who would be both pleased and relieved by the President's voluntary resignation.

The truth seems to be that a majority of the voters would much like the President to resign.