

Nixon Predecessors: The Better Comparison

To the Editor:

President Nixon's attempt to compare himself and his problems with President Lincoln (in his remarks at the Lincoln Memorial observing the 165th anniversary of Lincoln's birth and in the Op-Ed article by one of his staff assistants, Franklin R. Gannon, Feb. 12) is foolish and sad.

President Lincoln was attacked because of differences over such high moral issues as state's rights versus the unity and strength of the nation and freedom or slavery for blacks. Nixon is attacked for responsibility and personal involvement in immoral and illegal acts.

A better comparison for Mr. Nixon to make is with President Grant. His term was marked by national scandals, involving among others several White House staff members, a Cabinet member and Grant's private secretary. Congressmen were bribed by transportation interests, Congressional salary raises were investigated and an illegal "whisky ring" flourished. The public lost confidence in the Government. The year 1873 saw a financial panic, and the fairness of the Presidential election of 1876 was questioned.

The comparison of Mr. Nixon with Grant is also pertinent because during Grant's second term our nation celebrated its 100th anniversary. During President Nixon's second term we will celebrate our bicentennial. The continuing and lengthening shadow of Watergate, and all that that brings to mind, will undoubtedly darken that occasion. (Rev.)

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