

What Does It All Mean?

What are the lessons of last week's historic events? Newsweek asked a wide range of Americans—some of whose careers were directly touched by Nixon over the years—for their reactions. A sampling of their views:

J. Kenneth Galbraith

Economist, ambassador to India under President Kennedy

While Mr. Nixon's going is good and a definite boost to the Republic, we will suffer for it in the days ahead. That is because his departure will bring out all that is loathsome in our literary tradition. There will now be a drawing of morals until healthy stomachs retch. Someone, I promise you, will say that the fault lies deeply within ourselves: Well, the hell it does. It lies with Richard Nixon and the people who voted him into office.

The only lesson to be drawn from the Nixon debacle is that the wrong man can be elected in this country after due notice by a landslide. Mr. Nixon has been tediously around and excessively visible

There is, perhaps, a subtle retributive justice that in voting for Richard Nixon the privileged of the Republic installed the man who, advised by his economists, did more to motivate doubts about the free-enterprise system than any President since Hoover and who, additionally, caused more loss of capital to the affluent even than Lenin. A costly lesson, probably unlearned.

Kevin Phillips

Now a syndicated columnist, Phillips was an assistant to John Mitchell and wrote 'The Emerging Republican Majority'

Gerald Ford's goodwill toward Congress may not prevail. Having deposed the Chief of State, Congress now has to

among liberals that discontent leads to liberalism. Nothing could be further from the truth." Conservative self-identification is at an all-time Gallup-poll high, and University of Michigan Institute for Social Research data show that the military is the most respected institution in the United States.

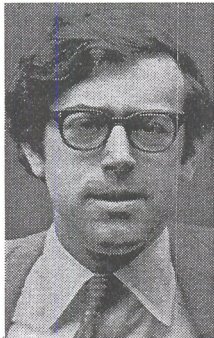
McGeorge Bundy

President of the Ford Foundation, director of national-security affairs for Presidents Kennedy and Johnson

The great task before Gerald Ford is to restore the open Presidency without which our government can do nothing big or lasting. This takes priority over even such issues as inflation and the renewed danger of war in the Middle East. Apart from the specific abuses detailed by the Judiciary Committee and confirmed by the tapes, the White House has in recent years been suffused with a secretiveness and hostility that have led to executive impotence in many areas not directly affected by Watergate. Even in foreign affairs the real achievements of the Nixon Administration are fragile because they have been excessively private and personal.



Galbraith



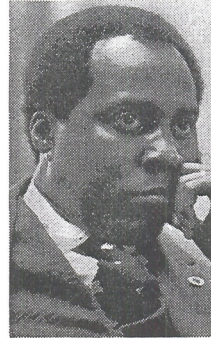
Phillips



Bundy



Wills



Jordan



Hiss

for close on to 30 years. Nixon was a pre-meditated political assault, committed in broad daylight. How did it happen?

One reason is the decline of language. Every newspaperman covering Nixon—Joe Alsop and William Buckley possibly excepted—knew that he had a deeply bogus streak. All said this privately. Few said so in public. The media isn't biased, it's mealy-mouthed. As late as last Thursday night, there was Eric Sevareid deeply touched by the Nixon whopper that he had always tried to serve the public interest as opposed to his own. There should have been raucous laughter.

Further, there is the solid preference of Americans of the highest respectability and the saintliest character for any politician, however deplorable, if he seems not to be a threat to their personal wealth and comfort. In the 1972 election, Nixon was perceived as no threat to the privileged. McGovern, to say the least, inspired no such confidence.

prove its own leadership capabilities. Past legislatures that have dethroned kings have quickly proven so inept—England's Rump Parliament, France's National Assembly—as to invite men on horseback, among them Oliver Cromwell and Napoleon.

The power, bias and malice of important elements of the press have been spotlighted, and comments by Barry Goldwater and others suggest that if the battle to tame runaway White House power has been won, a bitter battle to tame runaway media power is only beginning.

Since the failure of Cologne's Herstatt bank in late June, concern has grown about the possibility of bank failures and worldwide depression, and the last, weakened days of the Nixon Administration whetted this economic psychology of fear. As for the political consequences of chaos, psephologist Richard Scammon has noted, "There is a euphoric belief

The Presidency is only a fragment of itself unless it works in open trust with the rest of the executive branch, with the Congress and with the people. Even a large-spirited President, as we saw in the late '60s, can be gravely damaged by secretiveness. But in an open Presidency any fair and honest man has a chance for high success. This is Ford's opportunity.

Garry Wills

Syndicated columnist and author of 'Nixon Agonistes'

Let him go. Let him, politically, be forgotten. Nothing he said at the end surprised or disgusted—any more than it inspired. He is gone, and our politics recovers its health. But as for the law, let that take its course now, apart from politics. Those who would interfere with the

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course of law say "the President has been punished enough." What they mean is that political loss exempts from law—in effect, that Presidents, no matter what they do, are too good to go to jail. It is the same mentality that says there should be one law for rich men and another for the poor, one law for whites and another for blacks. Three dozen or so men have been convicted in Mr. Nixon's service. Ask the families of those in jail if loss of office is the greatest punishment imaginable. Mr. Nixon left office, getting that characteristic last free ride on Air Force One, to avoid conviction in the Senate and to hope for immunity from the law. It is the nation's task to say that no man is thus immune.

Donald Segretti

Former Nixon campaign aide and convicted Watergate defendant

We must get down to business and begin to speak to each other again—to argue with each other clearly and articulately, not with the rancor that has marred the past few months, but with a new awareness that all sides of every question deserve a fair hearing in the marketplace of ideas. It was this lack of civility, this refusal even to consider listening to the other side, that caused the explosiveness of Watergate.

What destroyed Richard Nixon was not the media, not the acts of his subordinates, but rather his handling of his own response to the scandal. We must now demand that our country be governed in the open so that all citizens may observe and understand what our leaders are doing and why. Only then will this "experiment called democracy" continue with any resemblance to what it is supposed to be.

The pain and the heartbreak have been great, but we have all learned something very important from our mistakes. The Greeks explained that the importance of tragedy is the catharsis it brings. We have had our tragedy; we have had our catharsis; it is now time to solve real social and economic problems that have been neglected so long.

Rabbi Baruch M. Korff

Director of the National Citizens' Committee for Fairness to the Presidency

As Richard Nixon has always done, his friends now must look to the future. What would he want of us? Strict adherence to the Constitution, surely; a strong national defense; careful expenditure of the people's money; above all, continued loyalty to the Presidency so that never, never, shall any of his successors be savaged as he has been by media giants and vested interests. We shall not be ruled by NEWSWEEK and Time any more than we shall be governed

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by the ACLU, ADA and George Meany. We shall not have our elected officials assassinated, by violence or by hatred.

Never again must a President be forced to strip bare his office for the inspection of his foes. We must apply the generous spirit of the Talmud's advice: "The head of state may neither judge nor be judged, testify, nor be testified against." By that I mean our Chief Executives must be shielded from petty assaults and defended from public brutalization. In that urgent effort, I intend to do my part. I am prayerful that the millions of Americans who have joined me in the fairness movement will continue their efforts to preserve the Presidency and to sustain President Gerald R. Ford.

Vernon E. Jordan Jr.

Executive Director, National Urban League

Nixon is gone, but black people and members of other minority groups are left to deal with the aftermath of his Presidency: with the malignant philosophy of benign neglect; with his appointees to the Supreme Court; with revenue sharing, which places special powers in the hands of the states and localities, seldom the sources of black achievement; with across-the-board cutbacks in social programs; in short, with a legacy of systematized insensitivity to the needs and aspirations of black people.

Despite all this, it is my hope that President Ford can, and will, by the exercise of his leadership, take us into a new era of social progress. I hope that in the conduct of his Administration and in the selection of his Cabinet, he will prove sensitive in areas where we in the black community have become accustomed to a pervasive insensitivity.

Alger Hiss

Hiss, convicted of perjury largely as result of the efforts of young Rep. Richard Nixon in 1950, is seeking to reopen his case.

As far as [Nixon's relationship with me] was concerned, it was just political opportunism. He didn't know me, so I can hardly say he betrayed me. Besides, I see no rational reason for bitterness.

I applaud Nixon for achieving détente with Russia, even more so with the Chinese, though it is hard to tell how much of that was Nixon and how much was Kissinger. But I feel Nixon and Kissinger were both Johnny-come-latelies in détente. It could have been achieved a long time ago.

At all events, I am not a believer in the "great man" theory of history, though I still do think that Roosevelt, for one, was an extraordinary individual. I do think there are certain more or less ineluctable forces in history, that those

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known as leaders are often in the forefront, rather than actually leading.

It may seem too personal a matter to bring up at such a time, but I can only hope that Nixon's resignation can permit me and the American people to seek and find the truth of my case.

(Hiss was interviewed by Newsweek.)

George F. Will

*Syndicated columnist for
The Washington Post*

The Constitution is supposed to prevent gross and protracted abuses of power. For this purpose it vests limited and enumerated powers in the separate and rival institutions that are supposed to act, if only out of jealous self-interest, to quickly check their rivals' abuses. But in spite of Mr. Nixon's many obstructions of justice and other abuses of power, which extended over several years, his last crisis would have faded away if he had not committed the inexplicable blunder of taping felonious conversations.

The sobering truth is that without that blunder his crimes would not have caused his downfall. Moreover, it was a



Commager



Will

jerry-built, extraconstitutional institution—the special prosecutor's office—that turned the tapes into a lethal weapon against Mr. Nixon. And if Mr. Nixon had refused to appoint a special prosecutor in May 1973, Congress would have groused at him but would not have impeached him. If there had been no tapes, Mr. Nixon would not have had to fire Archibald Cox last October. Without the Saturday Night Massacre, there would have been no "fire storm" to cause the impeachment machinery to clank into gear.

So we lassoed a rampaging White House with a thin rope of tape. We may not be so lucky as to stumble upon such a handy rope whenever we need one.

Henry Steele Commager

Historian

What good has come out of the crisis and the agony of Watergate—what besides ridding the body politic of

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Richard Nixon and his piratical crew?

Watergate has restored the Constitution to a central place, not only in politics but in ethics. It has, let us trust, reinvigorated the Congress and awakened it to a sense of its responsibilities as a coordinate branch of government.

These two things are obvious. Less obvious, perhaps, it has helped make clear a distinction between false conservatism and the true conservatism of a Jefferson, a Theodore Roosevelt, a Franklin Roosevelt. Practically and symbolically, Mr. Nixon associated conservatism not with conserving the resources and institutions of the nation, but with exploiting them for shortsighted and often private ends; with power—military, economic and personal; with a spurious "honor" which required that we go on for four years fighting a war that should never have been started in the first place; with inveterate hostility to freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, and with control of the press and of television; and with private aggrandizement of the natural resources which belong to the whole people; with uncritical approval of corporate practices and malpractices; with the worship of money and wealth in all of its most vulgar manifestations.

His "conservatism" and his appeal to what he contemptuously called Middle America meant hostility to the press, to the academy, to the arts ("The arts—they're Jews—they're left-wing—stay away"), to the "liberal establishment" and to the young with all their hopes and idealism. But true conservatism preserves natural resources, human resources, the resources of the law and of the Constitution, intellectual, moral and artistic resources, and the resources of our history, our traditions and our ideals.

George Ball

*Investment broker, Under Secretary
of State under JFK and LBJ*

I would be less than candid if I wrote words of high praise about Richard Nixon, whom I have profoundly mistrusted for two decades. The domestic economic policies of his Administration were a series of unsuccessful improvisations with no central theme. My provisional verdict on his foreign policy—uneven but with definite achievements—awaits the confirmation of future events.

The manner in which he extricated our forces from Vietnam was protracted and costly, while the war, in which we still have a heavy investment, goes on and on. His establishment of communications with China was a commendable initiative but marred by flamboyance and quite unnecessary harm to our relations with Japan. If Henry Kissinger, as a holdover Secretary of State, succeeds in turning the flabby talk of détente into concrete achievements in controlling nuclear weapons, that will unquestionably reinforce the reputation of the Nixon

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Administration, where the effort began. But if nothing positive and permanent comes out of SALT II and the arms race continues, historians are likely to regard détente as a transient aberration.

Much the same comment applies to the Middle East. If Secretary Kissinger can use the momentum of his two brilliant military disengagements to solve the obdurate issues of the Palestinians and Jerusalem, the reputation of the Nixon Administration will be the beneficiary. But the outcome is by no means clear.

Herbert Klein

*Former White House
communications director*

Each President has his own style, and Mr. Ford's style will be different from that of Mr. Nixon. The office and its power remain the same, posing a challenge,



Ball



Klein

a great opportunity and overwhelming responsibility. To be a strong President today, one must delegate, but, as Mr. Nixon has said, the Commander in Chief also must bear the responsibility for the power delegated or held.

Mistakes were made by those who accepted delegated power in the Nixon Administration. And strangely, had Mr. Nixon been elected President in 1960, I do not believe he would have delegated as much responsibility. It was not his style then. Yet the very power Mr. Nixon delegated became part of his downfall. It also provided the precious hours which gave him the opportunity to lead the nation and the world to unequalled progress toward lasting peace. Those who write and broadcast the immediate history may not give Mr. Nixon the high marks he deserves and eventually will receive when we pass from the trauma of Watergate.

The orderly procedure which has alleviated a national crisis has preserved the Presidency and given new opportunity to Mr. Ford, who I believe is the man for this time—his time—a strong yet humble man. Mr. Ford's first act was to appoint a highly capable newsman as his press secretary, Jerry terHorst. Mr. terHorst has the full trust of the new President and the respect of the press. He will be an asset as Mr. Ford commu-

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nicates to the nation his strength of leadership, strength which will bind the nation, rebuilding national unity behind a man and a high office, the President of the United States.

Emmet John Hughes

*Speechwriter for Eisenhower,
author of 'The Living Presidency'*

Dear Mr. President:

All at once, we welcome you and we burden you. Even as we salute, we seek and want; this is the American way with Presidents.

Let us once again swing open wide the gates, doors and windows of our White House and let in the sweet smell of dissent. This place was built not to be a fortress but a forum—a home for men free, not frightened. And the purest Republican regime here should still find room for stray Democrats and stray ideas.

Let us all—again—taste the raw democratic diet: the bread of trust and the wine of truth. We hunger for this not just because we have heard so many lies told but because we have seen so many lies lived.

Let us glimpse, once again, some signs of compassion. There is no other way to put the brutish past behind us. If Presi-

dential mercy were visited upon Richard Nixon and all those Vietnam protesters to whom he promised no mercy, who would rail against you?

I would finally urge one cause above all others. This is to ask that you not use your Presidential powers slackly because your Presidential forebears used them ruthlessly. If there ever be a twilight to the Presidency, there will also be a twilight to our country. The fact that Presidential power for years has been used obscenely does not make this power itself an obscenity. It is now your Presidency—for a while. There is no reason to conduct it as an act of contrition for the sins of your predecessors. Let it be yours. Let it be *you*. For in politics as in poetry, any truth is better than make-believe.

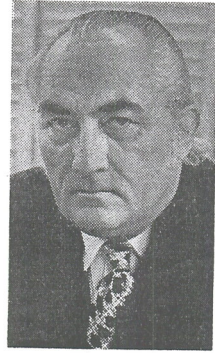
The Rev. Jesse Jackson

Chief of PUSH (People United to Save Humanity), based in Chicago

Richard Nixon, politician, has been headed for this day when his political career is being ended in such an ignominious manner from the very first political campaign he ran more than 25 years ago. But the deeper malady is the sins of the American nation over this past quarter century, during which time in

both foreign policy and domestic life, the United States in practice has negated and turned its back upon the lofty humanist ideas set forth in the Declaration of Independence.

The challenge awaiting the new President is to use the authority of his office



Hughes



Jackson

to restore the nation's moral health. This is a process that will require statesmanship and selflessness on the part of Gerald Ford. This can be accomplished if the new Administration is patriotic enough to see itself as a caretaker government, organizes a bipartisan Cabinet to conduct the business of state and takes as its highest object the moral regeneration of American society.

President Gerald Ford has a unique opportunity to lead a beleaguered nation back to moral decency. All America would benefit by his nominating Sen. Edward Brooke, Republican of Massa-



Graham



Schlesinger

chusetts, as Vice President-designate of America. New progressive leadership is necessary. This would be a great stroke of unity and move to reconcile racism.

Billy Graham

We should learn anew that there is such a thing as right and wrong, and that we all—regardless of our position—are ultimately morally accountable for

our actions. The Bible teaches and experience proves that no man or nation can continually break God's laws and get away with it.

This should be a time of turning to God. Perhaps we as Christians failed to pray enough for President Nixon. Let us not make the same mistake in failing to pray for President Ford. We must pray that honor and truth and integrity and candor and right motives will always govern our public affairs. We should also pray for Mr. Nixon and his family as they seek privacy and rest. He has paid a terrible price for his mistakes; we should have compassion for him.

Arthur Schlesinger Jr.

*Historian, aide to JFK,
author of 'The Imperial Presidency'*

In a way, Mr. Nixon was consistent to the finish. He showed himself as morally obtuse about Watergate at the end as at the beginning. To the very last he gave no evidence of recognizing that he had done anything really wrong. Here was the man who ran what was by any standard the most lawless Administration in the history of the republic; and all he could see—after the violations of the Constitution, the abuse of power, the obstruction of justice, the

subversion of government; the lies to Congress and the American people; after the exposure, the evidence, the confessions, the indictments—was a mistake or two in judgment. He was being driven out of office, so far as his farewell address told us, only because of the erosion of his "political base" in Congress. His Presidency was dying of self-inflicted wounds; and Mr. Nixon talked as if he were the innocent victim of a hit-and-run driver.

One felt that, consciously or unconsciously, he was laying the groundwork for a stab-in-the-back myth—that he sees himself, and wants the country to see him, as a righteous President cruelly cut down by Congress in the midst of his selfless campaign for world peace. His total failure to admit guilt or to acknowledge the political and moral enormity of his offenses carries with it the threat of a struggle for vindication. As insurance against this, it is surely necessary for Congress and the courts to place the full story solidly on the record. If Mr. Nixon were capable of saying that he had done wrong, this might not be necessary. But since he plainly thinks himself unfairly treated, let posterity judge the record. As Mr. Nixon himself said last March, when he was still riding high, "the only way to attack crime in America is the way crime attacks our people—without pity."

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