

THE EX-PRESIDENT

The End of a Painful Transition

There will be a small farewell party at San Clemente this week, probably a mixture of tears and forced gaiety. The six-month period of federally subsidized transition is ending for former President Richard Nixon on Feb. 9, and with it a fleet of Government cars, caretakers, telephone operators, and the salaries for much of his staff. He will now have to get along on his \$60,000 annual pension, plus \$200,000 a year to operate an office, and whatever he can earn by writing about his unique career in politics. Nixon has received part of his \$175,000 advance from Warner Paperback Library, the publisher of his memoirs.

Recent visitors to Nixon's Casa Pacifica compound report that his spirits and his health have taken an upturn. Actually, the dwindling staff seems more depressed than the boss. "How much can you walk on the beach?" asked one youthful aide last week. "We have developed a special bond with each other; we depend so much on each other. But it is the bitter life of exile."

Ghost Town. Originally, 22 Washington aides followed Nixon to San Clemente, most of them still drawing their Government salaries. Concerned about their future, many have left. With the departure this week of another half a dozen, only five full-time aides will remain, including Personal Secretary Rose Mary Woods and former Nixon Speechwriter Franklin Gannon, who will help research Nixon's memoirs. He will draw a \$34,000 salary. There will still be some 30 Secret Service men alternating duty in protecting the Nixons, but generally, lamented one departing secretary, "it will be a ghost town around here; it's really sad."

Former Press Secretary Ronald Ziegler will remain a "voluntary consultant" to Nixon on a part-time basis. In preparation for a career on the college lecture circuit, Ziegler has let his hair grow longer and allowed photographers to snap him riding a motorcycle and

playing drums. But that career is off to a shaky start. Student-government groups at both Boston University and Michigan State voted not to meet his \$2,500 fee on the ground that he should be free to speak, all right, but not at student expense. B.U. President John Silber later re-invited Ziegler in the interest of free speech, offering to pay him \$1,000 in university funds, but Ziegler's agent rejected that as too small. Silber observed that "the process of Ziegler's mind provides excellent material for a textbook on logical fallacies."

Rose Mary Woods will continue to serve Nixon in Washington, drawing a \$42,000 salary out of his federal office allotment. She has been zealously guarding Nixon's varied left-behind memorabilia and fuming at court orders that impounded them. Both Nixon's attorneys and the special prosecutor's staff last week asked Federal Judge Charles Richey to permit the transfer to Nixon of such items as his reading glasses, a wedding picture of Tricia, and his collection of elephants and gavels. Friends find her bitter and, according to one, "pretty worn down with the frustration and the pettiness she encounters."

Judge Richey rejected a Nixon suit that his presidential tapes and papers were his private property. They belong to the Government, declared Richey. But this does not mean "unlimited public access," Richey decided, and Nixon's privacy thus will be somewhat protected. But if Nixon's Watergate ordeal seemed to be easing, the fallout is still being felt by others. Tim Babcock, former Republican Governor of Montana, last week was sentenced to four months in prison by Washington Federal Judge George Hart for concealing the source of a \$54,000 contribution to Nixon's 1972 re-election campaign.

Nixon, on the other hand, seems buoyed by recent visits from such diverse personalities as Henry Kissinger, Ronald Reagan, Frank Sinatra and Bar-

ry Goldwater. To intimates, he has fantasized that he would not mind being U.S. Ambassador to China some day. Senator Goldwater revealed that Nixon had "talked of his desire to get back into the political arena, not as a candidate but as party spokesman." Goldwater naively suggested that the party would welcome him in that role. Asked about this, Senate Republican Leader Hugh Scott, personally burned by some of Nixon's Watergate deceptions, offered a no-comment in German: "Ich kann nicht Englisch sprechen [I cannot speak English]."

Nixon was cheered by the most optimistic report yet from his personal physician John Lungren. The doctor said that Nixon can now swim and take long walks and in a few weeks may be able to "take occasional trips by car, plane or helicopter."

Shared Ordeal. Nixon's medical treatment has been expensive. He has written one check for \$11,000 and still owes \$22,000. He also has heavy mortgage commitments on his San Clemente and Key Biscayne estates. The Florida home is up for sale. One buyer offered a price that would have given Nixon a \$150,000 profit, but insisted that a road past the house be made private to keep tourists away. County officials refused, and the offer was withdrawn.

Soon Dick and Pat will be relatively alone in the huge house, guarded against intruders by rotating television cameras atop white poles. Their shared ordeal has apparently aged Pat but strengthened the bond between them. "She is used to smiling no matter how she feels," confided one aide. "But you sense that just beneath the surface there is pain. You see her trembling mouth; you know she is cut to the quick beneath her proud gestures."

NIXON IN SAN CLEMENTE OFFICE



PAT NIXON AWAITING KISSINGER'S ARRIVAL AT CASA PACIFICA

