

ex-president

'A Lonely, Troubled Man With Debts'

VARIOUSLY described as moody, mercurial, buoyant, tired, irascible and stalwart, Richard Nixon had maintained the quarantine he had imposed on members of the press since his resignation from office last August 9. But last week word of the ex-President's state crept out from friends and associates who had visited the ocean-side villa at San Clemente.

"President Nixon is a lonely, troubled man who faces staggering legal fees and hospital bills that he cannot afford," said Rabbi Baruch Korff, head of a Washington-based legal fund to defray some of Nixon's expenses. The Nixon Justice Fund, already having paid out some \$100,000, had aimed toward a figure between \$400,000 and \$500,000 to aid the ex-President.

In addition, Nixon faced hospital bills and medical charges for treatment of

his extended bouts with phlebitis, owed federal and California income taxes exceeding \$460,000, and carried a newly negotiated mortgage of better than \$500,000 for the San Clemente estate.

Last week the six-month transition allowed for the changeover "to the life of a private citizen" ended, and the Nixon staff was reduced substantially as a result. Instead of the \$850,000 requested by President Ford, Congress had allotted \$100,000 for the six months, with a like sum set aside for the term February 9 to June 30 of this year.

"No other President has been given such a meager amount of money," complained Lieutenant Colonel Jack Brennan, a Marine Corps military aide assigned to the former chief executive.

Rabbi Korff also reported that Nixon had had an optimistic appraisal of \$2.5

million in profits from his forthcoming book, by agent Irving Lazar, who had visited San Clemente briefly.

The New York Times quoted the ex-President as saying he hoped to return to active participation in politics in perhaps two or three years, when "my book will have established for the American people the fact that I was not the culprit but one of the victims of Watergate and that I have been unjustly vilified."

Rabbi Korff said he had discussed Watergate with him, and quoted Nixon as saying, "It was wrong of me, and because of it I left office. I could not continue to subject this nation to a state of bedlam... I should not have allowed a climate to reverberate that would ever lead to a Watergate."

Ronald L. Ziegler, long-time chief spokesman for the ex-President, said in a TV interview that Nixon was not "planning" a politi-

'I was not the culprit but one of the victims'

cal comeback, nor was he "contemplating or thinking about the day when he will become a spokesman for the Republican party or will be ambassador to China." Both those possibilities had been the subject of news reports recently, after Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater, a fellow Republican, said Nixon had brought them up during a conversation between the two men.

A former Nixon White House staffer reported (anonymously) in The New York Times that the ex-President had spoken of grooming his daughter, Julie Nixon Eisenhower, for political life, since, "after all, she is both a Nixon and an Eisenhower."

S. F. Sunday Examiner & Chronicle