

The Hope of the World

by Anthony Lewis

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The White House staff has functioned in a single-minded pursuit of centralized power. Ideas, debate, dissent, even contact with the unfriendly: All have been suppressed in this Government in favor of loyalty to Mr. Nixon.

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It is a sordid record - and a menacing one, for running through it is the authoritarian mind. What begins with that spirit in politics, in rigging elections, goes on to police agents terrorizing innocent families in some small town in Illinois. The danger of official lawlessness is tyranny.

The explosion of the Watergate scandal has saved America from the immediate threat of centralized Presidential power. Richard Nixon is in no position now to threaten the courts or the press, or even to demand blind loyalty from his subordinates. Indeed, the men of character in his Government will be in the extraordinary position of being able to make the President accept them on their terms. He will need them more than they need him.

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