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NIXON

# The President's family

WASHINGTON — The hearts of most parents in this era of independent and irreverent youth should have been warmed last week by the impassioned defense of the President set forth by his daughter and son-in-law.

Julie and David Eisenhower stuck up for her dad in a touching and brave fashion which was a credit to them both.

It did not, however, do much for Richard Nixon. There is something deeply disturbing about a President who would permit his youngest daughter, who is totally inexperienced in politics, to face a mob of those same reporters whom he has repeatedly denounced as mean and cruel enemies.

It was embarrassing to watch Julie and David cope with questions similar to those the President himself has dodged since March 7, when he had his last press conference. At that time, he said he would meet with the press frequently in the future, but that has not happened.

At one point, the young couple was asked why they were speaking for the President under a government that was not a monarchy.

Julie became upset, and said she felt an "obligation," to reassure the public on behalf of the family that her father did not intend to resign. Julie was undoubtedly sincere, but she did not erase the uneasy feeling that an official family position was not particularly appropriate in the current constitutional crisis.

The basic problem with the appearance by Julie and David is that while it had plenty of emotional appeal it had absolutely no practical political value. They obviously were operating on blind faith in a man they love, something the rest of the country cannot afford to do at this point.

Their view is an intensely personal one, as is only natural. Julie did not understand why the public should be shocked at the tape transcripts because what emerged was "a human being reacting to a situation where he saw his dreams crumbling down around him."

The First Lady recently demonstrated this same apparent inability to grasp the dimensions of the presidential abuses which have brought about the impeachment crisis. She issued a statement saying that she was "puzzled" why some Republican congressmen were not supporting her husband.

It would have been far better if the President had kept his family members out of this.

What the President's family believes is irrelevant to the impeachment process now under way. It is not a question of family loyalty but a question of whether a President betrayed the great trust placed in him by the American people.

It is too late now to make the President into a sympathetic human figure. He is being called to account for his actions, as must all men under the rule of law.

See clippings 12 May 74, filed W/gate