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Ashes of Watergate

To the Editor:

Like Phoenix, Richard Nixon is making a heroic attempt to rise from the ashes of Watergate. And given his political resourcefulness, he may yet completely neutralize the effects of that scandalous case or even turn it to his own advantage.

His dramatic announcement of reversal of directions on April 17 has two aspects which will bear watching by the Senate and the grand jury.

First, his revelation of his "own" investigation, which may be designed to upstage the Senate; to create an impression that his inquiry has revealed all, finally, and that whatever the Senate comes up with will be anticlimactic or else merely confirmatory of his own findings.

Second, his apparent retention of his "prerogatives" under his theory of separation of powers and confidentiality of relations and communications with his aides. He seems to be saying that while he will permit his people to testify before the committee, he will be the judge of which questions are proper. That is a condition which the Senate cannot and must not accept.

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West Palm Beach, Fla., April 18, 1973