



Out of Bethesda naval hospital after a week of recuperating, President Nixon . . .

Nixon Intends to Stay on Job

'Let Others Wallow in Watergate,' He Tells Staff

By Carroll Kilpatrick
Washington Post Staff Writer

President Nixon said yesterday on returning to the White House after a week in the hospital that any suggestion he may resign "is just plain poppycock."

In an obviously determined mood, he told a group of White House aides who welcomed him back to his office: "Let others wallow in Watergate; we are going to do our job."

If the President's words were belligerent, they did not sound so. He spoke deliberately and his tone was one of resolution more than of defiance. He was pale after a week in the hospital but otherwise appeared to have recovered from the attack of viral pneumonia. His voice was strong.

With Watergate criticism continuing, he seemed intent upon saying to the estimated 200 aides gathered in the Rose

Garden that neither hostile criticism nor illness had broken his spirit.

Referring to the "great causes" he was "elected overwhelmingly to carry forward," the President asserted: "And what we were elected to do, we are going to do."

The collective pronoun referred to himself and to his staff, which he said should work to the limit in the 3½ years remaining to carry out the mandate.

Mr. Nixon left the hospital shortly after 9 a.m. and drove to the White House for a series of staff meetings.

Just after 2 p.m., he drove with his friend C. G. (Bebe) Rebozo to Camp David for the weekend. While there he will work on a letter to Chairman Sam J. Ervin Jr. (D-N.C.) of the Senate Watergate committee explaining his decision

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on whether to release tape recordings of presidential conversations.

While recuperating at Bethesda naval hospital, "I had a lot of chances to think, to sleep, to rest," the President told the welcoming group at the White House.

His doctors told him that he must slow down a little and relax more, Mr. Nixon said.

"I just want you to know what my answer to them was and what my answer to you is," he said. "No one in this great office at this time in the world's history can slow down.

"This office requires a President who will work up to the hilt all the time. That is what I have been doing. That is what I am going to continue to do, and I want all of you to do likewise."

While many will say "you will risk your health," the President said he wanted to emphasize that no man's health is "nearly as important as the health of the nation and the health of the world.

"I do want you to know that I feel that we have so little time in the positions that all of us hold, and so much to do."

He said he did not want any of them to look back "at the end of the next 3½ years" and say that "something went undone that might have been done that would have made a difference in whether we have peace in the world or a better life here at home.

"That would be the greatest frustration of all."

The President said he wanted his staff to know that when he comes to the White House Monday after the weekend at Camp David, "it is going to be full tilt all the way, and we want all of you to work that way, too."

Some "very well-intentioned people" have amused him by suggesting that the "burdens of the office" and the "rather rough assaults that any man in this office gets from time to time brings on an illness" that might force him to slow down or resign, the President said.

"Well, now, just so we set that to rest, I am going to use a phrase my Ohio father used to use," and he added that any suggestion he might leave office "is just plain poppycock."

After his 11-minute speech, the President went into his office for a round of meetings with his staff. He met first with his senior advisers, Melvin R. Laird, Anne Armstrong, Bryce N. Harlow, Henry A. Kissinger, Roy L. Ash, Alexander M. Haig, Jr., and Ronald L. Ziegler.

Later, he met alone with Kissinger.



By Douglas Chevalier—The Washington Post

President Nixon thanks staff at Bethesda naval hospital for competence and spirit as he leaves after a week there.

Press Secretary Ziegler said that the President will have a "busy week" when he returns from Camp David late Sunday or early Monday. He will meet Monday with his new energy adviser, John A. Love, and other officials, Ziegler said.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, the President will meet the Shah of Iran. A Cabinet meeting and a conference with Republican congressional leaders also will be scheduled, Ziegler said.

When the President left his office after more than four hours to drive to Camp David, he seemed relaxed and stopped for several minutes by his car to chat with Ziegler and deputy press secretary Gerald L. Warren.

The President decided to drive to Camp David rather than take a helicopter because "he wanted to drive through the countryside," Ziegler said.

As he left the Bethesda hospital earlier yesterday, the President made a brief speech thanking the staff and presenting gifts to those who had attended him.

"I told the staff at Bethesda," Mr. Nixon said in the Rose Garden, "that I got out perhaps a day or two earlier, not because their medicating which was excellent, and their competence, which was superb, but because their spirit lifted me."

"And I can assure you," he said to the White House staff, "another reason I am back a little bit early is that your spirit lifts me."