

NYTimes  
**The Future of Elliot Richardson**

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 24 — "Aside from everything else," a man said at lunch here today, "Elliot Richardson looks like Clark Kent. You expect him to pop into a telephone booth any minute, and come out in his Superman suit."

Mr. Richardson, lately Attorney General in the Nixon Administration, is no Superman, but his admirers in Washington consider that he is a much bigger man politically than he was a week ago. Last Friday it was announced that President Nixon, using Mr. Richardson as his intermediary, had arranged to present a summary of the tape recordings of his conversations about the Watergate case to the Federal District Court and the Senate Watergate committee, which had also demanded the tapes.

On Saturday, Archibald Cox, the special Watergate prosecutor, declined to accept that arrangement, and President Nixon decided to dismiss him and abolish his office.

**Anthony Eden Recalled**

Mr. Richardson, who had appointed Mr. Cox and had promised the Senate that the special prosecutor would have full independence, resigned rather than execute the President's order.

His action, while not an exact parallel, was reminiscent of Anthony Eden's when he resigned as British Foreign Secretary in 1938 in protest against the Chamberlain Government's policy of appeasing Mussolini and Hitler.

Everybody else's behavior in

**He Is Viewed as Man  
of Principle, Still  
Loyal to G.O.P.**

British politics began to be measured against Mr. Eden's, and he went on to become Prime Minister and now the Earl of Avon.

What is Elliot Richardson to become?

With great circumspection and coolness, he negotiated the resignation of Vice President Agnew, who was faced with charges of corruption in Maryland.

Mr. Richardson then gave a virtuoso performance at a news conference in the Great Hall of the Justice Department on Oct. 11, explaining the Agnew case and how it was handled. He was erect, elegant, unruffled, discreet and statesmanlike—to quote a few of the words used about him in the capital.

Mr. Richardson could not have known that within 12 days he would be back at the same podium explaining his own resignation. He was greeted with a storm of applause from Department of Justice employes who were in the hall along with newsmen—applause that was heard coast to coast on television and radio.

**Exposure May Help**

There were differences of opinion about his second performance. Some said he had made a firm stand on an issue of principle. Others felt he was keeping his options open. Nevertheless, as one publicist observed here today, in a country as big as the United States exposure is essential to political success, and Elliot Richardson has had a lot of exposure

The question is how can he capitalize on it?

He is clearly a man not only of talent but also of ambition. He has served in more Cabinet offices than any other American. He is only 53 years old, and the best is yet to come—if he can reach out and take it.

At the moment Mr. Richardson has no base of operations. He said yesterday that he intended to take some time off for reflection and might do some writing. He did not rule out another job in the Nixon Administration, but none has been offered, and to take one now might diminish the impact of his resignation.

Mr. Richardson came here from Massachusetts, and he could go back there and run for office, as Richard Nixon ran—unsuccessfully—in California after his defeat for the Presidency in 1960. However, there is no big job available in Massachusetts in 1974 except the office of Attorney General, and Mr. Richardson has already had that and better.

As Washington sees it, Mr. Richardson thus faces the familiar problem of the man out of power—how to keep alive politically until he can offer himself for a major national office. There is no reason at this point to doubt that Mr. Richardson will try.

He was very careful yesterday not to cut himself off from his party. He is still a Republican in good standing. He expressed his gratitude to President Nixon and said he still strongly believed in "the general purposes and priorities of his Administration."

In other words, Elliott Richardson presents himself as a man of principle, not a sore-head, and he still stands ready to serve his country.

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