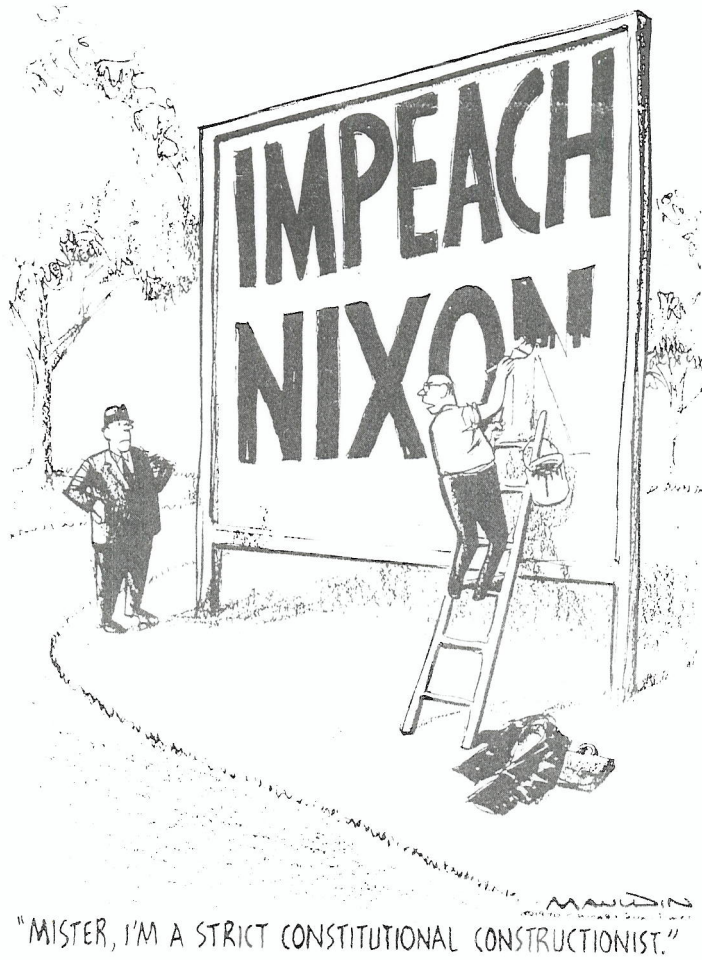


# IMPREACHMENT Make It Happen



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The American Civil Liberties Union, pursuant to a vote by its Board of Directors Sept. 30, has called for the impeachment of Richard M. Nixon on six grounds "affecting civil liberties," including specific, proved violations of the rights of political dissent; usurpation of Congressional war-making powers; establishment of a personal secret police which committed crimes; attempted interference in the trial of Daniel Ellsberg; distortion of the system of justice; and perversion of other federal agencies.

On Sept. 30, 1973, the national Board of Directors of the American Civil Liberties Union called for the impeachment of Richard Nixon. It was an historic step, both for the ACLU as an organization and for the country.

For the ACLU, it was the first time in the organization's history that it had called for the impeachment of a federal officer. The step was, however, consonant with the ACLU's own institutional traditions. When grave abuses against civil liberties are committed by public officials, the ACLU frequently brings complaints against them which result in disciplinary proceedings. These proceedings sometimes lead to removal from office. Also, the ACLU regularly brings lawsuits for money damages against public officials who trample on rights.

In the past we have brought such proceedings against policemen, school administrators, prison wardens, mental hospital administrators, military officers and other relatively low-ranking public officials. Now we bring such a complaint against the President. We act in the belief that the occupant of the most exalted office in the nation must be at least as accountable for depredations on civil liberties as the policeman on the beat.

For the country, it would not be the first time that a federal officer was impeached. It has happened before—though, as the material which follows suggests, rarely with such good cause. Richard Nixon's assault upon the Constitution is without precedent. In invoking the remedy of impeachment, which would bring Mr. Nixon to trial before the Senate, the House of Representatives would be using the Constitution to help insure the preservation of constitutional government.

Before the ACLU Board acted, many millions of citizens were, on their own initiative, calling for impeachment. The historic significance of the ACLU Board's action for the country was that a major national body identified itself with and gave organizational impetus to what had previously been a spontaneous and unorganized movement. In the weeks following the ACLU Board's action, several other national organizations joined the drive for impeachment. However, at this writing, the movement for impeachment continues to have its greatest strength among citizens who are not responding to leaders but who are, themselves, leading the way for the country's leaders. If citizens determined to protect the Constitution continue to provide that leadership, Richard Nixon will be impeached.