

# The 37th President First to Leave Post

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By JOHN HERBERS AUG 9 1974

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WASHINGTON, Aug. 8—Richard Milhous Nixon, the 37th President of the United States, announced tonight that he had given up his long and arduous fight to remain in office and would resign, effective at noon tomorrow.

Gerald Rudolph Ford, whom Mr. Nixon nominated for Vice President last Oct. 12, will be sworn in tomorrow at the same hour as the 38th President of the United States to serve out the 895 days remaining in Mr. Nixon's second term.

Less than two years after his landslide election to a second term, Mr. Nixon, in a conciliatory address on national tele-

*Text of the address will be found on Page 2.*

vision, said he was leaving not with a sense of bitterness but with a hope his departure would start a "process of healing that is so desperately needed in America."

The 61-year old Mr. Nixon, appearing calm and resigned to his fate as a victim of the Watergate scandal, became the first President in the history of the Republic to resign from from office.

"As we look to the future, the first essential is to begin healing the wounds of this nation," Mr. Nixon said, "to put the bitterness and divisions of the recent past behind us and to rediscover the shared ideals that lie at the heart of our strength and unity as a great and as a free people."

After Mr. Nixon spoke, the special Watergate prosecutor, Leon Jaworski, said that his office had neither made nor sought any "agreement or understanding" with the President in connection with his resignation.

Mr. Nixon began his speech by saying he had felt it was his duty to persevere but added, "In the past few days it was evident I no longer had a strong enough political base in Congress to continue with the effort."

## Full-Time President Needed

"I have never been a quitter," he said, "and to leave is abhorrent, but America needs a full-time president." Impeachment proceedings in the months ahead, he said, "would have totally absorbed all my time and that of Congress in a period when interest should be on peace abroad and inflation."

"Therefore, I shall resign the Presidency effective at noon tomorrow," he said.

Mr. Nixon said he would have preferred to carry the fight through to the finish and that his family had unanimously urged him to do so.

He said that to have resigned several months ago would have been unfaithful to the political process, but added that, with the disappearance of the political base, "I now believe the constitutional purpose has been served."

"I shall leave this office with regret at not completing my term," he said.

Mr. Nixon said that the goals ahead for the nation were "far-reaching and difficult." He cited the new relationship with China and said that in the Middle East many "now look upon us as their friends."

Mr. Nixon's announcement came only two days after

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he told his Cabinet that he would not resign but would let the constitutional impeachment process run its course, even though it was evident he would be removed from office after a trial by the Senate.

In the next 48 hours the pressures for him to resign and turn the reins of the Government over to Mr. Ford became overwhelming.

## Pressed by Haig to Step Down

His chances of being acquitted were almost hopeless. Senator Barry Goldwater, the Arizona conservative who was the Republican Presidential candidate in 1964, told him that he had no more than 15 votes in the Senate, far short of the 34 he needed to be sure of escaping conviction. Members of his own staff, including Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., the White House chief of staff, strongly recommended that he step down in the national interest.

In the end only a small minority of his former supporters were urging him to stay and pledging to give him their support. It was his friends, not his legions of enemies, that brought the crucial pressures for resignation.

Seventeen months of almost constant disclosures of Watergate and related scandals brought a steady attrition of support, in the country and in Congress, for what many authorities believed was the most powerful Presidency in the history of the nation.

However, a Presidential statement of last Monday and three transcripts of Presidential conversations that Mr. Nixon chose to make public ultimately precipitated the crush of events of the last week.

In that statement, Mr. Nixon admitted, as the transcript showed, that he on June 23, 1972, ordered a halt to the investigation of the break-in at the Democratic headquarters in the Watergate complex here six days earlier by persons in the employ of agents of Mr. Nixon's re-election campaign. He also admitted that he had kept the evidence from both his attorneys and the House Judiciary Committee, which had recommended that the House impeach him on three general charges.

## Republicans and Southerners Defect

Then came the avalanche. Republicans, Southern Democrats and others who had defended Mr. Nixon said that these actions constituted the evidence needed to support the article of impeachment approved by the House Judiciary Committee, charging obstruction of justice. And it gave new support to other charges that Mr. Nixon had widely abused his office by bringing undue Presidential pressures to bear on sensitive Government agencies.

As the pressures mounted and Mr. Nixon held publicly to his resolve not to resign, the capital was thrown into a turmoil. A number of Senators anxious for a resignation began publicly predicting one.

At the White House yesterday, Mr. Nixon met in his White House offices with Mrs. Nixon and his two daughters, Mrs. David Eisenhower and Mrs. Edward F. Cox, and with his close aides. Members of his staff, acting independently of the Congressmen, sent him memorandums he had requested as to their recommendations. Most called for resignation rather than taking the country through a painful impeachment debate and vote in the House and a trial in the Senate.

Last night, Raymond K. Price and other speech writers were ordered to prepare a resignation statement for use tonight. Secretary of State Kissinger met with the President late in the evening and Mr. Nixon told him that he would resign in the national interest.

At 11 A.M. today, as crowds for the third day gathered along Pennsylvania Avenue outside the White House, Presi-

dent Nixon summoned Mr. Ford to his Oval Office and officially informed him that he would submit his resignation tomorrow to the Secretary of State, as provided by Federal law, and that Mr. Ford would become President.

Shortly after noon, Ronald L. Ziegler, the President's confidant and press secretary, his face saddened and weary, appeared in the crowded White House press room and announced that the President would go on national radio and television tonight to address the American people. As with most previous such announcements, he did not say what the President would talk about.

But by that time, other Presidential aides were confirming that Mr. Nixon planned to resign, and the tensions that had been building for days subsided.

At 7:30 P.M. Mr. Nixon met in his office in the Executive Office Building with a bipartisan Congressional leadership group—James O. Eastland, Democrat of Mississippi, President pro tem of the Senate; Mike Mansfield, Democrat of Montana, the Senate majority leader; Hugh Scott, Republican of Pennsylvania, the Senate minority floor leader; Carl Albert, Democrat of Oklahoma, the Speaker of the House, and John J. Rhodes, Republican of Arizona, the minority leader. The meeting was to give them formal

notice of his resignation.

Among the White House staff today there was a sadness but there were no tears, according to those there. Mr. Nixon, who was described as wretched and gray yesterday while wrestling with his decision, was described today as relaxed. To some, he appeared relieved.

He ordered Mr. Price to begin drafting the resignation speech yesterday, even before he made his decision to resign, aides said. Five drafts of it were written before it was turned over to Mr. Nixon to make his own changes.

#### Six Years After Nomination

It was exactly six years ago last night that Mr. Nixon was nominated on the first ballot at the Republican National Convention to be the party's nominee for President, a note of irony that did not escape members of the President's staff.

That evening marked the beginning of an ascension to power that was to put the Nixon mark on an important segment of history. After a first term marked by innovations in foreign policy and a return of resources to the state and local governments in domestic policy, Mr. Nixon in 1972 won re-election with 60.7 per cent of the vote.

In early 1973, as he ended American military involvement in the Vietnam war and as he moved to strengthen the powers of his office in a multitude of ways, his popularity rating in the Gallup Poll registered 68 per cent. But as the Watergate disclosures broke his rating dropped quickly and was below 30 per cent before the end of the year.

Mr. Nixon made a number of counterattacks to win back his lost popularity. He campaigned from time to time across the country as if he was running for office. He disclosed information about his taxes and property. He hired a succession of lawyers to defend him in the courts and in Congress.

He made television and radio appearances. He ordered his subordinates to step up their activities to show that the Government's business was moving ahead. He made foreign trips to show he was still a world leader.

#### Cheered in Tour of Middle East

In the Middle East in June he was cheered by vast throngs, and he held a summit meeting with Soviet leader, Leonid I. Brezhnev, in Moscow.

Yet, when he returned to the United States, the Gallup Poll showed his rating at 24 per cent and the Watergate charges broke anew as the House Judiciary Committee stepped up its impeachment inquiry. His Administration was tottering when he made his remarkable statement last Monday, apparently in an effort to put his own interpretation on information that was expected to have been made public at the Watergate trials as a result of a Supreme Court

decision upholding a court order for the information.

When the decision to resign came, Mr. Nixon moved to achieve an orderly transition of power to Mr. Ford. General Haig, who has had broad delegated authority in recent months, met frequently with the Vice President to brief him on policy, as did other Administration officials.

Mr. Kissinger gave a number of assurances that the nation's "bipartisan foreign policy" would remain firmly in place. The Defense Department announced that American military forces around the world would continue under normal status. And across this city thousands of Federal employes performed their chores as if nothing was happening.



White House Photograph via United Press International  
**President Nixon and Vice President Ford, whom he named last Oct. 12, conferring at the White House yesterday**

# NIXON

FRIDAY, AUGUST 9, 1974 —

20¢ beyond 50-mile radius of New York City, except Long Island. Higher in air delivery cities.

# RESIGNS

## *HE URGES A TIME OF 'HEALING'; FORD WILL TAKE OFFICE TODAY*



Associated Press  
Vice President Ford at event for servicemen yesterday



The New York Times  
President Nixon on TV as he announced his resignation.