

Nixon's Tearful Good-bye

Washington

A sad, emotional Richard Nixon, trying hard to blink away the stark reality of his final hours in the highest office in the land, said good-bye yesterday to his cabinet and staff packed into the East Room of the White House.

"We will see you again," he said as his family, standing beside him, fought to hold back their tears. The former President fought hard, too. He gulped at times, cleared his throat, put on reading glasses he never used in public, and perspired profusely.

He received a standing ovation when he entered the room and another when he and his family departed to board a helicopter to take them to Andrews Air Force Base and his last ride as President aboard the Spirit of '76.

When the presidential craft landed five hours later at the El Toro Marine Base near San Clemente, the Nixons were warmly applauded by a crowd of several thousand well-wishers. Mr. Nixon spoke briefly, promising to continue to work for peace without saying how.

For part of his flight to

California, Mr. Nixon was still the President. His resignation letter, which he signed before the last ceremonial meetings in the White House, was delivered to Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger at 11:35 a.m., one hour into the flight to California.

It read: "Dear Mr. Secretary: I hereby resign the Office of President of the United States. Sincerely, Richard Nixon."

Alexander M. Haig Jr., White House staff chief, handed the letter to Kissinger in the secretary's White

House office 25 minutes before Gerald R. Ford took the oath of office as the 38th

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An anguished Pat Nixon watched her husband say farewell to the staff

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President.

The East Room was crowded when the Nixon family entered at 9:32 a.m. Members of the cabinet and their families, White House staff members and families and old Nixon friends, including Rabbi Baruch Korff, who headed a final citizens' campaign to save the Nixon presidency, applauded loudly and at length.

The Nixon legal team, including James D. St. Clair, Leonard Garment and J. Fred Buzhardt, was prominent near the front of the room.

The restraint that marked the President's formal resignation speech to the nation Thursday night was missing as Mr. Nixon let his emotions dominate the scene.

He urged all those present to work with "devotion and dedication" for the new President, and he reminisced about the great houses he has seen all over the world.

"But this is the best house," he said. "It is the best because . . . this house has a great heart, and that heart comes from those who serve."

He said he already had said good-by to the household staff—a staff, he said, that always gave him a lift no matter how tired or down he might be because "they always smiled."

Expressing pride in the cabinet and staff, Mr. Nixon said, "We have done some things wrong in this administration" but no one in it has profited from his government position.

"Mistakes, yes," he said, "but for personal gain, never."

For emphasis, he repeated that no one in his administration had done anything for personal financial gain, an argument he has used often in attempting to explain away the Watergate scandal. "Not one single man or woman" in his administration feathered his nest, the outgoing president said.

He said he wishes he were a wealthy man so he could pay his taxes and "recompense you for the sacrifices all of you have made to serve in government."

Suddenly, turning his thoughts to his parents, Mr. Nixon said: "I remember my old man. I think that they would have called him sort of a little man, common man."

But he wasn't, Mr. Nixon continued. "He was a great man because he did his job, and every job counts up to the hilt, regardless of what happens."

His voice almost breaking, the President then recalled his mother. After a long pause, he said: "I guess all of you would say this about your mother — my mother was a saint."

She will have no books written about her, he said, "but she was a saint."

Then Mr. Nixon referred to one of his favorite presidents — Theodore Roosevelt. "I am not educated, but I do read books," he said, and he put on his glasses to read a passage he found while reading on "my last night in the White House."

It was a passage from Theodore Roosevelt's diary after the death of his first wife. "And when my heart's dearest died," the diary recorded, "the light went from

my life forever."

But Richard Nixon said that Roosevelt "went on" and became president and also served his country as a former president. "He was always in the arena, tempestuous, strong, sometimes wrong, sometimes right, but he was a man," Mr. Nixon said.

Mrs. Nixon, Julie and David Eisenhower and Tricia and Edward Cox maintained their composure with difficulty.

As soon as Mr. Nixon finished his 19-minute speech, he and his family, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Ford, walked outside to a waiting helicopter.

The departing President waved animatedly to the crowd as he boarded the craft. Mrs. Nixon and Tricia and Edward Cox accompanied them to San Clemente. The David Eisenhowers remained in Washington.

Washington Post

SF Chronicle

AUG 10 1974

AUGUST 9, 1974

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

The following letter was delivered by General Alexander M. Haig Jr. to the Secretary of State in his White House office at 11:35 a.m. today:

The White House
Washington

August 9, 1974

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I hereby resign the Office of President of the United States.

Sincerely,

/s/ Richard Nixon

The Honorable Henry A. Kissinger
The Secretary of State
Washington, D. C. 20520

AP Wirephoto

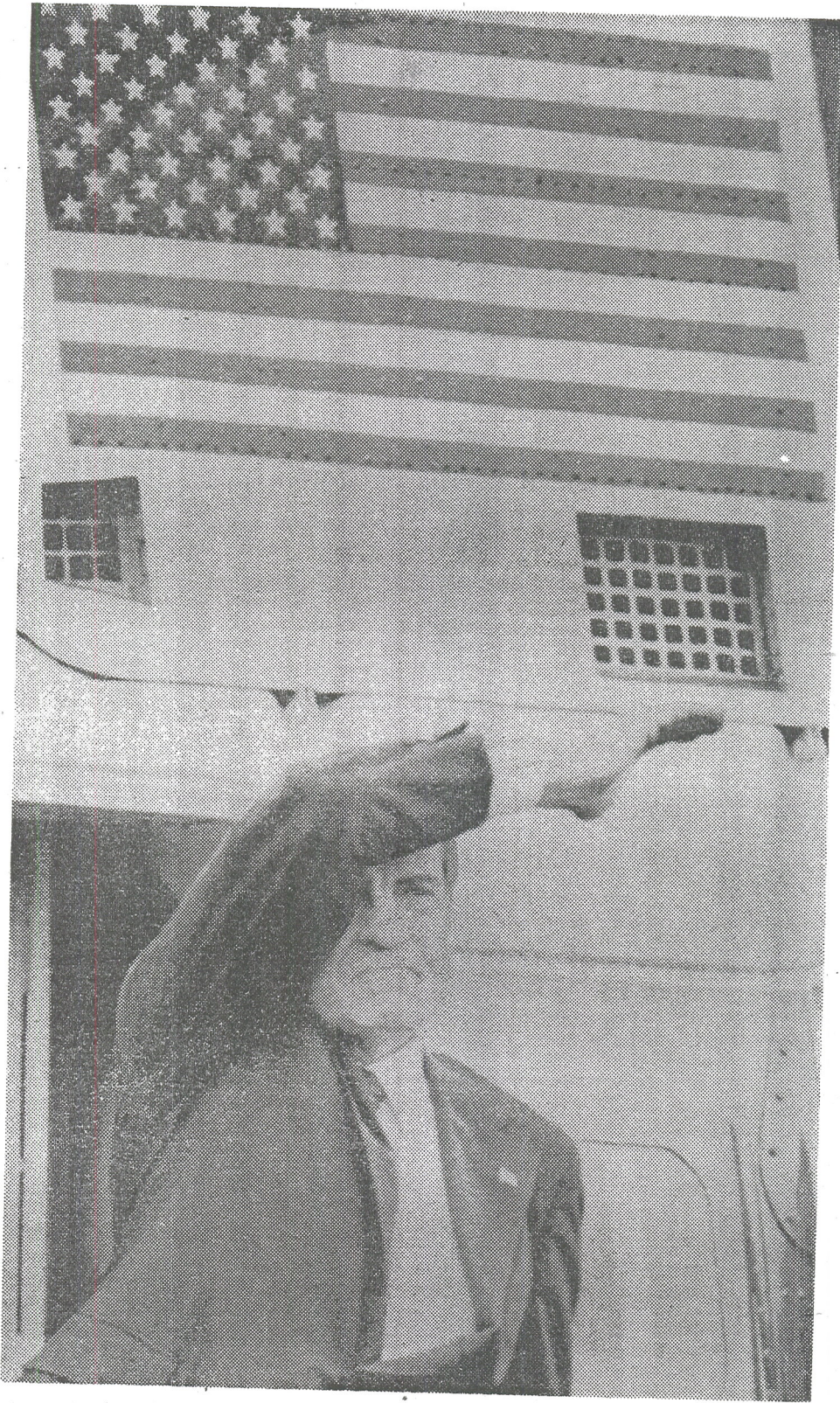
This letter of resignation was delivered after Mr. Nixon left Washington

"Folksy Nixon Invokes
Memories of His 'Old Man'"
SFC 10 Sep 72,
filed Nixon



Mr. Nixon stretched his arms wide as a greeting to the California sun as his party landed at El Toro Marine Base yesterday

AP Wirephoto



UPI Telephoto

Mr. Nixon waved from the steps of a helicopter outside the White House