

# WXPost Farewell Stirs Campaign Memories

By Lou Cannon

Washington Post Staff Writer

Richard Nixon wrote his own epitaph yesterday in language that his campaign audiences had been hearing in one version or another for 28 years.

"Always give your best, never get discouraged, never be petty," said Mr. Nixon. "Always remember others may hate you, but those who hate you don't win unless you hate them, and then you destroy yourself."

Mr. Nixon spoke these words to his assembled staff and Cabinet in the East Room of the White House. He was still President when he spoke them. Two hours later, as the Spirit of '76 flew over Missouri, Mr. Nixon gave up his self-destroyed presidency to Gerald R. Ford.

Mr. Nixon's 19 minutes of farewell remarks contrasted markedly both in style and in substance with his graceful plea for reconciliation Thursday night when he formally announced his resignation to the American people.

The departing President's speech yesterday would have sounded strangely familiar to the campaign audiences who tuned in Mr. Nixon as his train wended its way across the whistlestops of the Middle West. His favorite speech then was known among some of the report-

ers who covered him as "the day the dog died speech", and it concluded many remembrances of childhood:

"I remember that when we were growing up my older brother for one year very desperately wanted a pony."

"I remember my mother used to get up at 5 o'clock every morning in our little country grocery store to bake pies so that I and my five brothers could get the education my father didn't have."

"I remember my mother and dad—after they were past the earning age, they had operations. They were ill . . . Now they didn't happen to have Social Security."

Mr. Nixon recalled his father yesterday, in similar sentences.

"I remember my old man," he said. "I think they would have called him sort of a little man, common man . . . He was a streetcar motorman first, and then he was a farmer, and then he had a lemon ranch. It was the poorest lemon ranch in California, I can assure you. He sold it before they found oil on it."

Mr. Nixon also remembered his mother

"Nobody will ever write a book, probably, about my mother," he said. ". . . My mother was a saint. And I think of her, two boys dying of tuberculosis, nursing four others in order that she

could take care of my older brother for three years in Arizona, and seeing each of them die, and when they died, it was like one of her own."

Death seemed to be very much on Mr. Nixon's mind yesterday.

He related a story, from a book named "Tiri" he said he had been reading on his last night in the White House, about a young man stricken by the death of his beautiful wife. It was an autobiographical account by Theodore Roosevelt, he said.

"He thought the light had gone from his life forever—but he went on," said Mr. Nixon. "And he not only became President, but as an ex-President, he served his country always in the arena, tempestuous, strong, sometimes wrong, sometimes right, but he was a man."

It was an inspiration to Mr. Nixon, who still seems to look upon his demise as an election lost.

"We think that when someone dear to us dies, we think that when we lose an election, we think that when we suffer a defeat all is ended," he said. "We think, as T.R. said, that the light had left his life forever. Not true. It is only a beginning, always."

If Mr. Nixon made any beginnings yesterday, they were in the directions he had taken before.

No one in his administration, he said, "ever profited at the public expense or the

public till." True, he conceded, with no mention of the three articles of impeachment lodged against him by the House Judiciary Committee, there had been a few mistakes. "But for personal gain, never. You did what you believed in."

The speech must have had an eerie ring to the older members of his audience, at least to those of them who recalled his famous Checkers speech 22 years ago when vice presidential nominee Richard Nixon tried to explain away a secret fund that had been collected in his behalf.

In that speech Mr. Nixon talked about his family, his patriotism and his dog and declared, as he suggested minor consequence because he had not acted out of the profit motive, because "no contributor to any of my campaigns has ever received any consideration that he would not have received as an ordinary constituent."

It was to that Checkers audience and to all the other political audiences of the intervening years that Mr. Nixon appealed yesterday before the band played "Hail to the Chief" for him for the last time in the East Room.

He seemed yesterday to be running still, in some long-ago political campaign leaving the presidency without any recognition that he had lost.



President Nixon jokes with staff members at farewell. Behind him are his family: David and Julie Eisenhower, Mrs. Nixon, and Tricia and Edward Cox. Photos by Frank Johnston—The Washington Post

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