

# The Former President

As he re-enters private life, former President Nixon is fortunate to have the sustaining loyalty of a devoted family, and of those Americans who refuse to let the misdeeds which forced him out of office overshadow his positive accomplishments, particularly in the field of foreign policy.

Mr. Nixon is no stranger to defeat or adversity, as he has reminded those around him frequently in these last days. It is unfortunate, however, that nowhere in his final public statement did there appear any acknowledgement that something about his own deeds in office might have justified his downfall. He remarked with obvious accuracy that he no longer had a strong enough political base in Congress to complete his term in office. But why had he lost that base?

It would have been far easier for the nation to stress his accomplishments if he himself had shown more candor about his shortcomings.

It need hardly be stressed at this point that the work of analyzing the White House tapes and other evidence of the Watergate conspiracy must go full speed ahead, both for legal determination of guilt or innocence of those already under indictment, and so that future generations can know the validity of the political convulsion through which the nation has been dragged.

As it stands now, in private life, Mr. Nixon is subject to the same rule of law that he was sworn to uphold as President. The reaction of Congress and, most significantly, special Watergate prosecutor Leon Jaworski after Mr. Nixon's speech of resignation confirm that there has been no deal to immunize the former President against prosecution. It would have been a mockery of the Constitution and of the principle of equality of all men under the law had it been otherwise.

Mr. Nixon's status before the law is entirely in the hands of the established system of justice—grand juries, prosecutors and courts, just as it should be, just as is any other citizen's. We join in the hope of the progressive Republican Ripon Society "that the Congress and the new President will allow Special Prosecutor Jaworski and the courts to seek justice unhampered by politics and public opinion."