

# Nixon and Ford, With Similar Backgrounds,

## Each, Born in '13, Served In the Navy and House

By R.W. APPLE Jr.  
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Aug. 9—

Both are Republicans, both are conservatives. Both were born in 1913, came to maturity in the Depression, served in the Navy in World War II and journeyed to Washington to take their places in the House of Representatives.

And yet these two men—the 37th and 38th Presidents of the United States—could hardly have shown themselves to be more different as they stood, last night and this morning, each at a rendezvous with his own destiny.

Richard Milhous Nixon, in the going, and Gerald Rudolph Ford, in the coming, said much about themselves and about their stewardships.

Mr. Nixon exhibited two of the many sides of his personality in his nationally televised address last night and in his farewell talk this morning to friends and staff.

Last night, he was composed, statesmanlike, lofty — “the coolest man in the room, as he once described himself at moments of crisis. His iron will had fought down all of the extraordinary tensions and anxieties of the preceding months, and he showed nary a tremor or tear.

### Emotions Burst Out

This morning his emotions burst through, like floodwaters through a dike, and Mr. Nixon had to struggle to maintain any semblance of control. He talked on and on of his father and mother, whom he has seldom discussed in public, and of their trials and heartbreaks. He wept.

But both speeches — and, indeed, his brief remarks this afternoon when he arrived in California — had this in common: He never really addressed the issue.

He was leaving the Presidency prematurely, Mr. Nixon told the nation, because he no longer had “a strong enough political base in the Congress” to fight for survival, and because “I might not have the support of the Congress that I would consider necessary to back the very difficult decisions and carry out the duties of this office.”

Mr. Nixon stated the case obliquely. In hard political terms, the problem was not that Congress was unwilling to follow his leadership; it was that Congress was poised to eject him from office, as the Congressional leaders of his own party had told him, in the starkest terms, only the preceding evening.

It was as if he saw himself as a Prime Minister who had lost a vote of confidence on, say, agricultural policy, and was leaving office in the normal course of events.

### ‘Regret for Injuries’

He offered his “regret for any injuries” he had caused, his concession that some of his judgments “were wrong.”

But there was no explanation of what had led him to commit acts that nearly everyone in Congress came to consider obstructions of justice. There was neither protestation of innocence nor admission of guilt. There were no prescriptions for avoiding other Watergates in the years to come.

This morning, once again, it seemed as if Mr. Nixon had obliterated from his mind all the details of scandal.

He joked about his inability to pay his taxes—taxes he was found to owe, long after the fact, because of deduc-



The New York Times  
Rose Mary Woods, President Nixon's secretary, at the induction ceremony for his successor.

AUGUST 10, 1974

## Exhibit Vividly

## Contrasting Styles

tions ruled inadmissible. He said “we have done some things wrong in this Administration,” without once mentioning the word “Watergate.” He even used the word “plumbers” in another context without evident embarrassment.

Little seemed to have changed from the glory days.

The familiar two-handed V-for-victory wave as he boarded his helicopter for the last time. A reference in California to “having finished one task,” and standing ready for others. And the ever-present hyperbole, so different from the unadorned language that Mr. Ford used later.

### ‘The Best House’

Mr. Nixon called the White House “the best house,” described his mother twice as “a saint.” Without American leadership, he said “the world will know nothing but war, possibly starvation or worse, in the years ahead.”

By the time Mr. Ford walked into the East Room to take the oath of office, standing before a golden curtain, he had already been President for 30 minutes. He had succeeded to the office when Mr. Nixon's one-sentence letter of resignation was handed to Secretary of State Kissinger by Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr. at 11:55 A.M.

With his right hand held sturdily aloft, his left on a Bible opened to Proverbs iii, 5 and 6 (Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding . . .), Mr. Ford repeated the oath of office in a strong voice. He nodded his head for emphasis when he reached the end.

Before him—some seated on little gilt chairs, others standing—were staff members, Cabinet Secretaries, family friends. General Haig looked stricken. But mostly it was a Congressional crowd, coe to see one of its own inaugurated, and the dominant mood seemed that of a

good-natured family reunion.

### Back After Many Months

Some had not been to the White House in many months. John W. McCormack Speaker, who will be 83 of Massachusetts, the retired years old on Dec. 21, gossiped with old friends. So did Representative Donald W. Riegle Jr. of Michigan—a pariah in the Nixon White House for his apostasy on the Vietnam war and his switch to the Democratic party.

Last night, outside his modest home in suburban Alexandria, Va., and again following his swearing-in, Mr. Ford exhibited emotion at the downfall of his old friend. His voice broke as he prayed for peace for “our former President, who brought peace to millions.” He was near tears.

But the new President also confronted Watergate and its meaning, in which he described as “just a little straight talk among friends.”

He described Watergate as “our long national nightmare” and said it had inflicted wounds “more painful and more poisonous than those of foreign wars.” Describing truth as “the glue that holds government together,” he said it had been “strained.”

In more subtle ways as well, he put distance between himself and his predecessor.

### No Enemies

He had many adversaries on Capitol Hill, he said, but no enemies — which recalled to many in Congress and elsewhere Mr. Nixon's enemies lists. He made a point to ask the Congressional leadership in for a private chat as soon as he had finished speaking.

And as soon as that was over, Mr. Ford appeared in the White House press room to introduce his new press secretary, Jerald F. terhorst, and to disclose, amid general hilarity, that he might reopen the swimming pool over which Mr. Nixon built the press room several years ago.

He was relaxed and happy, and so were the reporters. There was little disbelief when he told them he knew he could not, at 61, change the habit of openness and candor.

The room was jammed, re-

sembling a rugby scrum at times as reporters and technicians strained toward Mr. Ford, few could see him, and fewer still could see the diminutive Mr. terHorst at his side.

Peter Lisagor of the Chicago Daily News, the resident wit of the press corps, shouted at the President.

"Life Jerry up so we can see him," he said.

No one would have dreamed of doing that had Richard M. Nixon and Ronald L. Ziegler been there.



The New York Times

The Fords and the Nixons walking from the White House after Mr. Nixon's farewell