

INTERNATIONAL VIEW

A COOL REACTION FROM ABROAD

Richard Nixon often suggested that he was personally essential to world peace and prosperity, and it was a notion that played even longer and louder outside the U.S. than it did in Peoria. For many months there was general agreement in a number of foreign capitals that the relentless pursuit of Nixon through Watergate amounted to a kind of dangerously irresponsible "lynch law," as a strident London *Times* editorial put it a year ago. But by last week overseas perceptions of the nature of America's often puzzling struggle over Watergate had changed almost completely. As a comment on the Nixon doctrine of presidential indispensability, the muted world reaction to his abdication was devastating.

Nowhere was that more apparent than in the money markets in London, Frankfurt and Zurich, where Nixon's departure was viewed as a boon to the U.S. economy. As the inevitability of his resignation became obvious, foreign investors bid the once wallowing American dollar up to new highs. Millions went to purchase stock in American corporations, adding fuel to Wall Street's exuberant "resignation rally."

Deliverance. At the same time, there was little emotional reaction to Nixon's abdication. The general feeling in European capitals was mainly one of surprise at the unexpectedly smooth resolution of America's long, arcane agony over Watergate (one BBC commentator noted that Nixon's farewell "was more of an inaugural address than anything else") and astonishment at the resilience of American institutions. Nixon's departure, said *Vorwärts*, the weekly journal of West Germany's Social Democratic Party, was "a deliverance." Headlined Turin's daily *La Stampa*: AMERICA HAS WON, NIXON RESIGNS.

In the Middle East the resignation created ripples of uncertainty. Arab governments were unhappy to see Nixon go; they credit him with the "even-handed" policy that the U.S. has followed so successfully since the October war. The Arabs have their doubts about President Ford, who has been a vocal supporter of Israel. In Egypt, where President Anwar Sadat has staked his hopes for an acceptable settlement on the personal assurances he received from Nixon only

two months ago, the resignation news was played down.

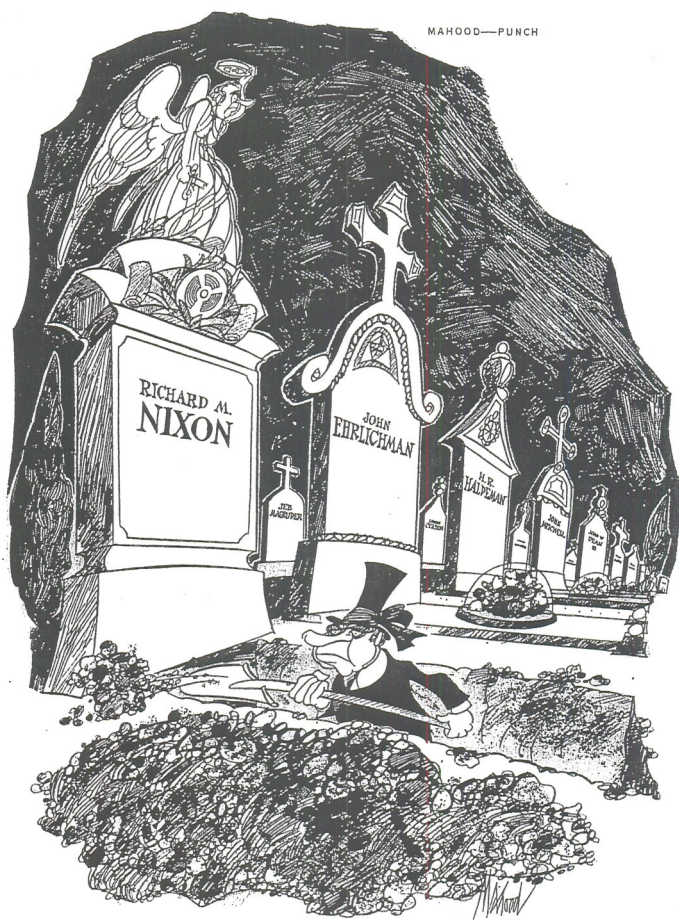
The Israelis had worries of their own about Ford. Whatever the new President's inclinations, which Israelis see as pro-Israel, one aide to Premier Yitzhak Rabin fretted that "the Russians will want to test the new man, and the test could come in the Middle East." Possibly in Syria: the Soviet Union has poured in \$2 billion worth of armaments in the past several months, making Syria today perhaps a greater military threat to Israel than Egypt.

The Soviets treated the presidential changeover with deliberate understatement. Undoubtedly, that reflected Party Chairman Leonid Brezhnev's big stake in détente, and his concern that the fall of his U.S. negotiating partner not be seen as a blow to his own prestige. Until last week, in fact, the Kremlin had told the Soviet people virtually nothing of Nixon's domestic political difficulties. When Moscow radio finally announced Nixon's imminent resignation on Thursday, it took care to quote U.S. congressional leaders as saying that American foreign policy would remain unchanged, "especially in regard to the Soviet Union."

Actually, Moscow has been striving to depersonalize détente for some time. During a banquet at the June summit, for example, Nixon exuberantly toasted his "personal relationship" with Brezhnev; in the Russian translation that came out later the word personal was deleted. By early last week, said a Western diplomat in Moscow, "the Soviet view was that it is regrettable, but not the end of the world, if Nixon goes." The Soviets were relieved when Gerald Ford announced that he would keep Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. The Russians also hope that a political honeymoon for Ford might mean postponement of se-

rious internal U.S. debate on détente. As one diplomat stationed in Moscow said, "as long as détente continues, Brezhnev will be in good shape."

The Soviets are not alone in their sanguine view of a U.S. foreign policy without Nixon. Even before his resignation, there was a spreading conviction abroad that Nixon's role in American foreign policy, creative though it was, had largely been played out. Said *La Stampa*: "He pulled America out of Viet Nam, reestablished normal relations with the Soviet Union and China, and saved the devalued dollar . . . But to carry out the new international *Realpolitik*, Nixon is no longer necessary. He has done his part." Although they credit Nixon with having made the breakthroughs, Europeans would just as soon have the difficult follow-up left to Henry Kissinger. As one Whitehall official



put it, Nixon's détente achievements are all "past tense."

In some places, to be sure, Nixon's exit was received with regret and even foreboding. Chiang Kai-shek's regime on Taiwan was upset over the demise of the man who had been one of its strongest political allies in the U.S. since the 1950s, even if he did initiate Washington's rapprochement with Peking.



LONDONERS READING RESIGNATION STORIES

Not a totally tidy foreign policy situation, but widespread relief and optimism over the prospect of continuity.



SAIGON NEWSBOYS WITH PAPERS RIGHT OFF PRESSES

The Thieu regime in Saigon was privately fretful. Drawing a lugubrious analogy, one former South Vietnamese Cabinet officer noted that "even after Nixon married off Viet Nam, his daughter, in the Paris agreement, he still very carefully looked after her interests. A new President would only be a stepfather and would not love her as much." Indeed, Viet Nam is not well loved in the U.S. Congress. The House of Representatives last week cut \$300 million off an Administration request for \$1 billion in aid to Saigon next year.

Flash Points. Nonetheless, the U.S.'s negotiating partners, allies and clients are pleased that Kissinger will continue to manage U.S. foreign policy. Less predictably, many governments are also pleased that Kissinger will be answering to a new President. The Japanese and some European leaders have long felt that the Nixon-Kissinger duo was too fond of close-to-the-vest diplomacy and the rawest sort of balance of power politics. Ford is perceived as more open, more willing to consult with America's allies, and therefore a beneficent influence on Kissinger.

In general, says Karl Kaiser, one of West Germany's leading foreign policy scholars, "the prospects are not bad at all. The major element of continuity is the Secretary of State. The foreign policy of Ford will be about the same as Nixon's—moderate, prudent internationalism. On balance, it is encouraging to see the American system cleanse and correct itself."

That is not to say that Ford inherits a totally tidy foreign policy situation. Flash points and long-term concerns are all over Henry Kissinger's State Department maps. Real peace remains a long way off in the Middle East and Cyprus, while Viet Nam threatens to rear its troubled head again. Pentagon analysts are anxiously studying threatening military movements by North Viet Nam that included the alerting of at least one

infantry division just above the Demilitarized Zone.

Less urgent but nonetheless important for the U.S. are diplomatic issues pending on all corners of the pentagonal world into which Nixon and Kissinger divided their "era of negotiation."

THE SOVIET UNION. For all the ritual pledges of allegiance to détente in both Moscow and Washington, the Nixon Administration's dealings with Russia face tests in several tricky areas. In Europe there are the plodding negotiations on East-West political relations in Geneva and the talks on NATO-Warsaw Pact force reductions in Vienna. The promised expansion of U.S.-Soviet trade is hung up principally on Senator Henry M. Jackson's opposition to a bill granting the Soviets most-favored-nation trading status. Jackson demands a Kremlin commitment to further increases in emigration of Soviet Jews.

Finally, there is the Nixon-Kissinger failure to reach the "conceptual breakthrough" at the Moscow summit that was to produce a second-phase agreement on SALT (strategic arms limitation talks). Kissinger faces a tough grilling at upcoming Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings on the state of détente especially in the sensitive area of nuclear arms.

WESTERN EUROPE. Relations between the U.S. and its European allies have improved considerably since the rivalry over Middle East diplomacy following the October war. But some old U.S.-European difficulties are re-emerging. The Europeans are upset at the apparent lack of U.S. interest at the conference in Geneva in getting the Soviet bloc countries to open up their borders to a freer flow of people and ideas.

CHINA. Kissinger's decision to stay at State was particularly reassuring to Peking: the Chinese had been concerned about the effects of Watergate on the relationship that is one of their safeguards against aggression by the Soviet Union.

But the Ford Administration now must wait out a mini-Cultural Revolution and the uncertain fate of Premier Chou En-lai before it can tell what to negotiate next—and with whom.

JAPAN. The country that Nixon described as the linchpin for peace in the Pacific, and then slugged with successive economic and diplomatic *shokku*, is not at all sorry to see Nixon's removal from the White House. The Japanese felt slighted by the Nixon-Kissinger brand of surprise diplomacy, and they will be anxious to establish close relations with the new leader of their No. 1 trading partner. To do that, however, they will have to cooperate on economic matters more fully than they have in the past.

The Ford Administration has an opportunity to gain some ground in the Third World. India was singed by Nixon's pro-Pakistani "tilt" during the 1971 Bangladesh war, but New Delhi dealt sympathetically with his departure nevertheless. Indian Foreign Minister Sardar Swaran Singh went out of his way to say that Nixon's "action in resigning is in the best tradition of democracy." In Latin America, still sore about what it regards as a Nixon policy of neglect, President Ford would do well to continue the renewal of U.S. attention haltingly begun by Kissinger in the past six months. Additionally, Ford will soon have to make a decision that Nixon avoided: whether to take a leading role in bringing an increasingly prosperous Cuba back into the American community, or stand by while Latin American states re-establish diplomatic relations with Havana one by one on their own. Nixon had shied away from recognition of Cuba after Southern Senators, his main support in the Senate, strongly opposed rapprochement with the Communist island.

Many nations had feared that the Watergate scandal posed a fundamental threat to the power of the American presidency, but even before Nixon's res-



THE DAY AFTER THE ABDICATION: HEADLINES IN THE LONDON SUN, MUNICH'S ABENDZEITUNG, PARIS' LE FIGARO
 "It can't be true," said a Beirut taxi driver. "You need a tank to remove a President."

ignation that concern had been largely dispelled. In Europe and other areas it became obvious that the President—and not the presidency—was under attack. The turning point came last spring, with the release of the first batch of the Watergate tapes. Said a leading member of Britain's Conservative Party: "When we began to hear those tapes, [Nixon's] authority disappeared, and we knew his position would crumble anyway." The final fading of Nixon's presidential magic came with the release of last week's tapes, particularly the one in which Nixon said, "I don't give a (expletive deleted) about the lira." That, said the London *Times*, told all about "Mr. Nixon's attitude and order of priorities."

As Nixon went down, Watergate began to take on a kind of mystical quality. Europeans found profound meanings in the American experience. London's *Daily Telegraph* saw the resignation as "an unconscious act of cleansing and renewal, with Richard Nixon as the ritual sacrifice, embodying all the less reputable aspects of [Amer-

ica's] rumbustious democracy. Even the festering remains of the Viet Nam hangover are included in the general exorcism, despite the fact that in this case it was Mr. Nixon who was the doctor who brought about the cure."

Never Greater. TIME's chief European correspondent William Rade-maekers found the exorcist theory especially popular in Europe. There the extravagances of the past decade of America's tortured history—the political assassinations, the war in Viet Nam and the callous domestic politics of the Nixon years—are considered parts of a whole. The catharsis of Nixon's fall may allow the U.S. to return to a state of domestic tranquillity that would be reflected in a stable foreign policy. Europeans believe that now the American Congress will play a more important role in matters of foreign policy, and that this may not be a bad thing.

The immediate effect of the Watergate denouement was to prompt an almost global wave of admiration for America's institutions. "It can't be true,"

said Simon Háj, 31, a Beirut taxi driver. "You need a tank to remove a President in the Arab world." Said Brazil's leading political pundit, Carlos Castello Branco, just before the resignation: "Nixon was never morally smaller than now, but the U.S. was never morally greater. If the U.S. had no other justification for world leadership, this alone would entitle it to present itself as a leader and inspirer in a world where the notion of government with honor and liberty has largely been lost."

In Italy, Author Luigi Barzini marveled at the way the U.S. has "survived bad Presidents, dim-witted Presidents, and Presidents who would have brought the country to ruin if they had had their way. It has survived the murders of a few good Presidents. It can survive the resignation of a dishonest one. In fact, the demonstration that 18th century laws could come to life and punish crimes committed at the highest levels of power has improved the opinion the world has of the United States." There too Richard Nixon played his part.