

To the Editor:

The requirements in American democracy of the rule of law and equality before the law; the constitutional provisions of equal protection, due process and the numerous judicial expostulations of those principles, and even President Richard Nixon's own repeated calls for law and order *notwithstanding*, I believe that it would be best for our polity to leave Citizen Nixon unmolested by subsequent criminal proceedings.

Three reasons—one esthetic, one pragmatic and one jurisprudential—occur to me for this course of action: (1) To avoid the unseemly spectacle of criminal prosecution of the man who held the highest office in the land, a process which, once set in motion, may continue for years. (2) Such a prolonged ordeal, while pleasing to a sense of justice (or is it vengeance?) of the many Nixon antagonists, would only enhance the perception of injustice (or is it impotence?) among his defenders. Thus, the polarization of the political public would be given another potent motive. (3) Punishment is, at best, a necessary evil. It is, it seems, when everything else fails, the only way we know to maintain an orderly society. Is a forced resignation not a sufficient deterrent to future Presidents not to abuse their office? Need one answer?

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Burlington, Vt., Aug. 9, 1974