

Nixon Out of Danger

Sits Up in Bed, Removed From Critical List

By Stuart Auerbach
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LONG BEACH, Calif., Nov. 3—Former President Nixon was off the critical list today and dangling his feet over the side of his bed—five days after post-operative problems brought him close to death.

His doctors issued their most optimistic bulletin since Mr. Nixon was hospitalized 11 days ago.

"This is his best morning since the hospitalization began," said Dr. John C. Lungren, his chief physician.

Nevertheless, Connie B. Hamilton, the chief of critical care nursing at Memorial Medical Center here said that the former President "is physically quite ill. I doubt he feels like doing anything"—including watching the Sunday football games.

After five days of crises, starting with post-operative shock of last Tuesday, today's medical bulletin was the first that did not mention potential dangers to Mr. Nixon's life. Lungren, his long-time doctor, was described as "ebullient" this morning over Mr. Nixon's progress.

As a result, Lungren eased up on the intensive care that had been given Mr. Nixon since his surgery early Tuesday morning to block life-threatening clots in his left leg from traveling to his lung. He was moved from "critical care" to "subintensive care."

That means that only one specially trained nurse able, Miss Hamilton said, to give drugs and start treatment on her own in any emergency—will be watching Mr. Nixon at all times.

Until now, two nurses have been watching him and constantly monitoring his vital signs via electronic measuring devices attached to his body. One nurse, Miss Hamilton said, was in Nixon's room at almost all times. The other sat outside, both watching the

monitors and looking at the former President through a glass panel.

"We are lightening the amount of care that is necessary because he is slightly improved," said Miss Hamilton.

Even so, the nurses will keep constant check on Mr.

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Nixon's heartbeat, heart rhythms and the pressure on the blood in his veins. The first signs that he was going into shock Tuesday, six hours after the operation, was a sudden drop in his blood pressure and a rapid rise in his pulse rate, Miss Hamilton says. The doctors are still taking no chances. They are leaving tubes in Mr. Nixon's veins in case they should have to give him emergency medication.

"With a patient like Mr. Nixon," said Miss Hamilton, "the situation may change from minute to minute."

As an indication of Mr. Nixon's improvement, the doctors for the first time since his operation allowed him to sit up in bed—"dangle on the side of the bed," as Miss Hamilton put it.

While he's doing that small bit of exercises, nurses will be keeping an especially close watch on his pulse and blood pressure to make sure that he

is not thrown into shock again.

He was also given his first non-liquid nourishment today—soft foods such as custards, mashed potatoes, and pureed meats and vegetables.

Mr. Nixon is also receiving treatment every four hours to keep his lungs clear; liquid tends to collect in the lungs of patients who have been forced to lie in bed for long periods of time.

The doctors said Mr. Nixon was "alert" today and "slept at intervals throughout the night." His vital signs—temperature, blood pressure and pulse—were listed as normal and his red blood count continued to increase, although it is slightly below normal. This indicates that the massive internal bleeding that sent him into shock has stopped. As another indication, the doctors said the blood mass on Mr. Nixon's left flank appears about the same size today as it was yesterday.

All told, Mr. Nixon has re-

ceived six units of blood, nine units of platelet concentrate (a blood clotting element) and one unit of albumen since Tuesday. His family visited him throughout the day for about five minutes each hour.

Miss Hamilton said the former President has been talking to his nurses and they all feel that "he's an extremely warm person."