



ALONE ON HIS PALM-SHROUDED SAN CLEMENTE ESTATE, FORMER PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON SHOWS A REFLECTIVE MOOD

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SEQUELS

The Man Who Walks the Beach

One year after the fall, Richard Nixon remains wan and drawn. At age 62, he tires easily and goes to bed early. He has developed high blood pressure. He continues to take daily injections of anti-coagulant drugs to fend off any recurrence of his phlebitis. In his thoughts, he often indulges in moments of self-pity. He feels he has been deserted by many of his onetime friends. He considers himself Watergate's wronged victim rather than its chief villain. He blames the media, his political enemies and bad advice from former aides for his unique role in history as the only U.S. President ever forced to quit.

Uphill Struggles. Yet Nixon is neither continually depressed nor a beaten man. He is determined to regain his health and vindicate his presidency. Both may be uphill struggles, but friends and associates who have visited Nixon's San Clemente estate or talked to him by telephone praise his scrappy spirit. "There's no hang-dog attitude about him," reports Harry Dent, one of Nixon's past political advisers. "He sounds like the old Nixon—still interested in politics and everything that's going on." Adds Louisiana Congressman Otto Passman, who often gets phone calls from Nixon: "The man is tough. All his life, whenever he gets slapped down, he gets up fighting." Vowed Nixon to one recent visitor: "We'll have our day again."

If not his day, he will at least have his say. He is hard at work on his memoirs, aiming for publication early in 1977. Nearly every weekday morning at about 8:30, usually dressed in a dark suit

and necktie, he boards a blue golf cart and rides the 200 yds. from his Casa Pacifica to the office overlooking the ocean. He rummages through his pre-presidential papers, tape-records observations and reminiscences, fills yellow legal pads with notes and narrative. He is often joined by Franklin Gannon, a former White House speechwriter and a Rhodes scholar, who helps organize the research and write the book. One Californian with San Clemente ties reports that 100,000 words have been written, but they take Nixon only up to 1946. Rather than start with Watergate or his presidency, Nixon intends "to give us Whittier and Mom and Dad all over again," says this source. Nixon has a strong incentive to plunge on: he has received a \$350,000 advance payment so far from his publisher (Warner Paperback Library in New York) and will qualify for another such advance when he completes 200 pages. Nixon's agent, Irving ("Swifty") Lazar, says the total promised advance is \$2.5 million.

As his story progresses, Nixon pursues his struggle to secure ownership of the tapes and papers, many still secret, that he generated as President. Now held in Government custody in Washington under special congressional legislation, they are accessible to him only if he travels there. Last week Nixon was questioned for seven hours about his claims to the papers by William Dobrovir, an attorney representing Columnist Jack Anderson in a suit demanding access to Nixon's records. Nixon considers the tapes and papers vital to completion of his book and intends to carry

his legal fight to the Supreme Court if necessary. His lawyers estimate this could cost \$500,000 in legal fees. He has already paid his chief lawyer, Herbert Miller, and Miller's Washington firm \$200,000 in past fees for various services, and he owes another \$300,000, due by year's end. At Nixon's request, Rabbi Baruch Korff, the persistent Nixon defender and fund raiser, has agreed to resume leadership of a Nixon Justice Fund to finance the battle for the papers.

Apart from high legal fees, the former President has no serious financial problems. Since his resignation a year ago, he has received \$260,000 in federal funds. This includes a transition-period allotment of \$155,000 plus \$45,000 for the maintenance of his office, as well as his \$60,000 annual presidential pension. He has paid off the \$386,700 he owed in back taxes for 1970-72 (the legally uncollectible taxes of \$148,000 for 1969, which Nixon once promised to pay, have been more or less forgotten).

Aimed at Me. President Ford had recommended another \$203,000 for office and staff during the next twelve months, but Congress cut this to \$150,000. Nixon aides had insisted that the higher figure was needed so that his estimated 2 million pieces of post-resignation mail can be answered. A group of California Republican women has been working on this as volunteers—and why public funds should be used to write everyone who sought to console Nixon has not been explained. Nixon, however, has complained to visitors about cutbacks in his allowances as being "just aimed at me."

Beyond his past and future book income, Nixon is trying to sell TV versions of his story. Lazar is pursuing negotiations with both NBC and TV Interviewer David Frost for Nixon ap-

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pearances late next year at which he would submit to questioning about his presidential years. In both cases, says Lazar, Nixon has received tentative offers of slightly less than \$1 million. CBS, on the other hand, broke off talks with Lazar before any real bargaining on Nixon's fee. People closest to Nixon do not expect him to speak out in a major public way until after the 1976 presidential election—partly to avoid political repercussions and partly to sustain curiosity about the memoirs.

Despite reports that he has considered moving to New York, his friends do not expect him to leave San Clemente until his book is finished. Even then, most of them doubt that he would choose New York, since he considers it the cen-

ter of a hostile "Eastern establishment." He is known to be itching to travel overseas, but his physical stamina is still in doubt, and if he should prove well enough for that, he would immediately be confronted by demands that he appear as a witness in the many continuing Watergate-related legal actions.

Serious Suits. Although pardoned for any possible crimes committed while President, Nixon faces more than 30 legal actions in which either he is a defendant in a civil suit, or his testimony is wanted or his lawyers are seeking to protect his tapes and documents. Nixon was grilled by Special Prosecutor Henry Ruth in the presence of grand jurors in June. The most serious suits against him and members of his Admin-

istration are the claims by Morton Halperin and Anthony Lake, both former members of the National Security Council, that their privacy was invaded when their telephones were tapped in 1969-71. Nixon may also be subpoenaed to testify at the tax-fraud trial of Frank DeMarco and Ralph Newman, who helped document Nixon's tax claims.

Meanwhile, life at San Clemente is far from spartan. Nixon has 33 Secret Service agents assigned to his protection. He is skittish about security, and his staff has complained—incorrectly—that Lady Bird Johnson has more guards (she has a dozen at most). When a news photographer snapped him with a telephoto lens from the distant window of a neighboring house, Nixon changed the route

he takes to his office. "If they can get me with a telephoto lens, they can do the same with a scope on a rifle," he told aides. "I'm not going that way any more." There have been at least ten occasions when intruders have tried to get past the guards at San Clemente: two youths on motorcycles reached the front door. They claimed they only wanted to talk to him.

Nixon now has five regular staff aides. They include former Marine Colonel Jack Brennan, his military aide as President; Private Secretary Nora Vandersommen, who was a White House secretary; Office Secretaries Loie Gant and Jo Anne Miller; and former Marine Sergeant Carl F. Howell, an assistant to Brennan. Rose Mary Woods,

Nixon's longtime personal secretary, remains on Nixon's payroll but has worked mostly in Washington while awaiting retirement on a comfortable federal pension. The Nixons also still have Manolo and Fina Sanchez as personal servants. Manolo, his former White House valet, has taken on a strange chore in the entertainment of male guests. Nixon, who likes off-color stories but hates to tell them, often gives Manolo a sort of cue, like "Manolo, tell him the one about the girl in the bikini..."

Visitors rarely stay long at San Clemente, so as not to tire Nixon. Pat Nixon spends much of her time working in her vegetable gardens, and both Nixons

enjoy frequent stays by their married daughters, Julie and Tricia. Other recent visitors have included former Nixon Lieutenants John Mitchell and H.R. Haldeman, Herb Klein, Nixon's former communications director, Physician John Lungren, former Assistant HEW Secretary Patricia Reilly Hitt and his millionaire pals Robert Abplanalp and Bebe Rebozo.

Nixon's most prominent post-retirement outing was the party in his honor given by the Philadelphia press lord Walter Annenberg at his ranch in Palm Springs on Feb. 22. Nixon was subdued but gracious as Frank Sinatra and Bob

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Hope made light talk to lift his spirits. "It was a dinner party with people who loved him and supported him, but it was like being in a family where there had been a tragedy, a death," recalls Mrs. John Swearingen, whose husband is chairman of Standard Oil of Indiana. She said that Nixon was not bitter, but there was a "sadness and misery in his eyes." Nixon told "how he had lived in a big house with many rooms and when you're on top it is filled with all your friends and afterward you don't need a house quite so large."

For relaxation, Nixon mostly walks along the ocean, mainly on relatively secluded beaches like the one at nearby Camp Pendleton. Or he takes limousine rides. He is driven by a Secret Service agent and followed by another car containing more agents. Sometimes other motorists recognize him and either wave in a friendly way or gesture in hostility as they pass. He recently summoned help by radio when two cars collided ahead of him at Camp Pendleton; three Marines died. He also plays golf about once a week, usually with Brennan, and is "happy as hell" when he breaks 100. His own private three-hole course, built for him by a group of businessmen, is now overgrown with weeds.

Watergate Joke. Nixon still receives regular intelligence briefings by telex from the Ford White House. He never criticizes Ford even in the most private conversations. But he did tell

Dent that "South Viet Nam would not have gone down the drain if I hadn't had my problem"—a reference to Watergate. He has explained to others that he thinks "the Communists were never sure just how he would react," and thus would have been more cautious if he had remained as President. Nixon sympathizes with Ford in confronting what Nixon calls "the radical Democratic Congress."

As for Watergate, Nixon can sometimes joke about it, needling one associate working on a non-Watergate book: "You really ought to write about Watergate; it's much more profitable." He sometimes discusses the various Watergate characters. He describes G. Gordon Liddy as "nutty," but wonders about Jeb Stuart Magruder. "He appeared to be confused as to how someone like Magruder could have become involved in such a thing," explains one of his visitors. Nixon retains respect for Charles Colson, according to one source, "because Chuck never turned on him." But he has soured on Bob Haldeman. "He blames Haldeman for his troubles," reports one acquaintance. "He thinks Haldeman used terribly bad judgment."

Nixon still cannot concede any personal guilt over Watergate. "He views his situation in terms of politics, not in terms of law," explains a friend. "In the book he will write himself into history as a victim. He is not capable of thinking of himself as one who committed crimes."