

# BOOK CALLS NIXON UNSTABLE AT END

Says He Was Despondent and Possibly Suicidal in Summer of '74

By JOHN CORRY

In the last days of his Presidency, Richard M. Nixon was despondent, erratic and possibly suicidal, according to a new book by Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein. The book, "The Final Days," will be published next month. Excerpts will appear in the next two issues of Newsweek magazine.

On the night before he resigned, Aug. 9, 1974, the authors say, Mr. Nixon summoned Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger to pray with him in the Lincoln bedroom in the White House. The President is said to have sobbed, struck his fist on the carpet and said, "What have I done? What has happened?"

Later that night, Mr. Nixon is reported to have called Mr. Kissinger on the telephone and, drunkenly and almost incoherently, said, "Henry, please don't ever tell anyone that I cried and that I was not strong."

Mr. Kissinger, in turn, is shown in the book as having a deep contempt for both Mr. Nixon's character and intelligence.

"You tell our meatball President I'll be there in a few minutes," Mr. Kissinger is supposed to have said to a secretary who summoned him to a meeting with the President.

### Instruction on Briefing

On another occasion, while talking about a written briefing that was being prepared for Mr. Nixon, Mr. Kissinger is reported as Reader's Digest article for Nixon.

The Secretary of State, according to the book by the two Washington Post reporters, ridiculed Mr. Nixon's habit of taping his phone calls, although he installed a taping system in his own office that was just as elaborate.

They say that Mr. Kissinger began by having a secretary listening in on his phone conversations and taking notes. Eventually, they write, Mr. Kissinger installed a battery of hidden recorders that went on automatically whenever he picked up a phone. Even Mr. Kissinger's conversations with Nancy Maginnos, whom he later married, apparently were recorded.

In the excerpts, Mr. Nixon is shown as a man under intolerable stress. Although he is said to have had a low tolerance to alcohol, he is reported frequently to have begun drinking in the afternoon with his friend, Charles G. Rebozo. Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., the White House chief of staff, is said to have been so alarmed by Mr. Nixon's erratic behavior that, fearing a suicide attempt, he had the President's sleeping pills and tranquilizers taken away.

### Had No Pistol

"You fellows, in your business," the President is supposed to have said to General Haig, "you have a way of handling problems like this. Somebody leaves a pistol in your drawer. I don't have a pistol."

The excerpts also quote Dick Keiser, the head of the Presidential protection unit of the Secret Service, and Maj. Gen. Walter Tkach, Mr. Nixon's physician.

"You can't protect a President who wants to kill himself," Mr. Keiser is supposed to have said, while General Tkach is quoted as saying, "The President has a death wish."

In the spring of 1973, say the authors, whose reporting on Watergate resulted in a Pulitzer Prize for the Post, Mr. Nixon ordered a list of wiretaps that had been planted in the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations. He supposedly wanted to make them public.

Mr. Nixon is reported to have learned that wiretaps had been placed on the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.; reporters from Newsweek and The New York Times; Bernard Fall, the late French historian; Robert Amory Jr., a former official in the Central Intelligence Agency who was a friend of President Kennedy; a law firm that had Dominican sugar clients, and the author of a biography of Marilyn Monroe that suggested that Miss Monroe had had a personal relationship with Senator Robert F. Kennedy.

### Persuaded Not To

Mr. Nixon, the excerpts say, was persuaded by members of his staff not to release the list.

The excerpts also say that the Watergate crisis put great pressure on the Nixon family. Mrs. Nixon, who had wanted to divorce her husband in 1962 and had had only the most formal relations with him since then, the excerpts say, sank into depression and began to drink heavily.

Meanwhile, Mr. Woodward and Mr. Bernstein say, the marriages of Mr. Nixon's daughters suffered, too. Both daughters supposedly opposed the idea of their father's resignation while their husbands apparently favored it, at least in the final days of the Nixon Administration.

"I can't talk to my wife," Edward Cox is quoted as saying. "She is determined that her father shall not resign."

David Eisenhower is supposed to have become so despondent over his wife's defense of her father that he

considered re-enlisting in the Navy.

Mr. Nixon is also portrayed in the excerpts as being fearful of Jews. He is said to have spoken about "a Jewish cabal" in the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and to have said that a "Jewish cabal is out to get me."

Mr. Kissinger, for one, was supposed to have been convinced that Mr. Nixon was an anti-Semite. The Secretary is said to have apparently also had strong feelings about members of Mr. Nixon's staff. He is said to have referred to

H. R. Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman as "idiots" and "Nazis." Mr. Ehrlichman, in turn, is supposed to have suggested that Mr. Kissinger was "queer."

Mr. Woodward and Mr. Bernstein, with two assistants, reportedly spent six months doing research for "The Final Days," drawing their material from unpublished notes, memos, diaries and interviews. Mr. Nixon, however, was not interviewed.

The authors say they insisted on having at least two sources for every statement of fact.