

# Nixon, in Memoirs, Blames Foes for Watergate Scandal

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LONDON, Sept. 28—In his forthcoming memoirs, Richard M. Nixon maintains his innocence and contends that Watergate was merely a partisan scandal used by his enemies to bring him down, according to publishing sources in the United States and Europe who have read part of the manuscript.

He expresses regret that he did not question his aides more closely because he knew very little about the Watergate break-in and subsequent events. Admitting only an error of judgment, he denies personal responsibility, says that he may have let the American people down, though he did not intend to do so, and concludes that Watergate caused him a great injustice.

The former President declares that he resigned only to prevent six months of national divisiveness that would have resulted from an impeachment trial.

## Former Aides Disputed

These views emerge in a closely guarded account in which Mr. Nixon disputes former aides and friends, differs with previously published books and discloses his own reflections on events ranging from his controversial campaign for the House of Representatives in 1946 to his resignation in the face of impeachment proceedings in 1974.

Knowledgeable publishing sources in Europe and the United States, who have seen the 164 pages of completed manuscript dealing with Watergate and the last two weeks of the Nixon Administration, say that the document also contains the following descriptions and views:

¶When Mr. Nixon decided that he could no longer remain in the White House, he summoned Vice President Ford and told him to prepare himself for the Presidency. In reply, Mr. Ford said that he wanted to talk it over first with his wife, Betty. In the same conversation, Mr. Nixon pleaded with his successor to retain Henry A. Kissinger as Secretary of State.

¶After President Nixon's farewell to the nation on television, Mr. Kissinger walked back to the Oval Office with Mr. Nixon and told him that he had just delivered one of the greatest speeches in American political history and would be

regarded as one of the great Presidents.

¶Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, in their book "The Final Days," describe an emotional scene in which President Nixon and Mr. Kissinger got down on their knees and prayed together, but Mr. Nixon writes that they stood and prayed.

From the beginning, Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., then the White House chief of staff and now the North Atlantic Treaty Organization commander, was certain that Mr. Nixon would have to resign. Ronald L. Ziegler, press secretary and later Presidential assistant, opposed resignation.

¶Tricia Nixon Cox, the former President's daughter — whose own diary

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Former President Nixon working on his memoirs at San Clemente last year

entries are quoted extensively in the manuscript—at one point heard a group booing her father and started toward them until restrained.

In the final hours, Pat Nixon tried to persuade her husband to go to a window to acknowledge what she thought were friendly crowds outside the White House. In fact, they were shouting, "Jail to the chief."

#### Sales Campaign Underway

World rights to the Nixon memoirs are owned by Warner Books, whose executives have been conducting an international sales campaign. At the recent Frankfurt Book Fair in West Germany, they showed a secret 13-page topic outline to potential publishers of foreign-language editions. It was read only in a small booth behind a drawn curtain and only in the presence of Warner executives.

The potential clients were not permitted to make notes on the contents of the Nixon documents and were asked to promise not to discuss them. Despite the stringent security measures, it is known that one copy of the secret outline got away.

The outline promises that Mr. Nixon will also discuss how he learned of the Watergate break-in; why he had a tape-recording system installed in the White House and why he decided not to destroy damaging recordings after their existence was publicly disclosed; how he learned of an 18½-minute gap on one of the tapes; his assessments of H. R. Haldeman, John D. Ehrlichman, Charles W. Colson and John W. Dean 3d, all White House aides; a \$100,000 contribution from Howard R. Hughes; and the pardon granted to Mr. Nixon by President Ford.

#### 2 Choices for Vice Presidents

In addition, the book will discuss the Vietnam war and Mr. Nixon's two choices for Vice President. The outline puts it succinctly: "The resignation of Vice President Agnew" and "The decision-making process behind the choice of Gerald Ford to be Vice President in October 1973."

The Vietnam war will be covered in great detail, beginning with 1969 and the secret bombing of Cambodia during the first months of the Nixon Administration, and ending in 1973 with secret discussions about the renewal of bombing and the impact of domestic considerations, including Watergate, on these matters.

On Vietnam, the outline promises to explain such controversial matters as Vice President Agnew's speech attacking the news media, the Mylai massacre and the news media, the Mylai massacre and Congressional attempts to cut off war funding or set a date for withdrawal from Vietnam, the impact of North Vietnamese propaganda on American opinion, the impact of Secretary Kissinger's "peace is at hand" news conference and the decision to break off negotiations and begin the Christmas bombing in 1972.

Mr. Nixon will also trace the develop-

ment of his "long and close relationship" with Asian and European heads of state, from his first visits as a Congressman to his decisions as President. The outline stresses that it was Mr. Nixon, rather than Secretary of State Kissinger, who set the course of American policies abroad.

#### 1969 Note to Kissinger

For example, Mr. Nixon will tell of a note to Mr. Kissinger within a week of his inauguration in January 1969 in which he suggested an "opening of relations with the People's Republic of China."

Two supplements accompany the secret outline. One is a 14-page list of "foreign contacts," including scores of prime ministers, presidents, chancellors, kings, ambassadors, princes, generals, admirals, queens and other leaders around the world. The second supplement, six pages long, mentions every foreign journey made by Mr. Nixon as President.

Warner Books has invested heavily in the Nixon memoirs, but the details of the contract have never been disclosed. One of its clauses provides that the amount of money to be received by the former President cannot be made public.

William Sarnoff, the Warner chairman, says that all sorts of inaccurate figures have been published, giving figures that range from half a million dollars to \$4 million. "The real figure may be somewhere in between," he says.

Other sources privy to the terms of the agreement contend that Mr. Nixon will receive \$2 million plus provable expenses of as much as \$300,000. Payments are stretched out over five years to reduce Mr. Nixon's income taxes. The contract calls for a down payment of \$350,000, another \$350,000 at the end of this year and periodic installments thereafter.

#### Comics and Bestsellers

Warner Books, a paperback publisher that is part of a communications conglomerate, also owns a distribution company, DC Comics, Superman, Batman and Mad Magazine.

It is the publisher of a series of books by Xaveria Hollander, a former madam who wrote the bestseller "The Happy Hooker."

In paperback, Warner Books also published "All the President's Men" by Mr. Woodward and Mr. Bernstein, and Warner Brothers, another part of the conglomerate, produced the film based on the book.

In June, The New York Times Company purchased from Warner Books for an undisclosed sum the worldwide newspaper and magazine serialization rights for Mr. Nixon's memoirs. Special Features, the syndicate affiliate of The Times, is offering the memoirs to The New York Times and other periodicals for serialization two to four weeks before their publication in book form.

The former President has set his own target date—Jan. 9, his 64th birthday—to finish the book, according to Franklin R. Gannon, the director of Mr. Nixon's research staff in San Clemente, Calif. Mr. Gannon, whom others call the writer

putting the book together, attended the Frankfurt book fair earlier this month with executives of Warner Books and Irving P. Lazar, Mr. Nixon's literary agent.

Sources in the book industry in the United States and Europe say that Mr. Nixon is working on his memoirs seven days a week. He is said to dictate into two portable cassette recording machines—one in his office and one in his study—on the basis of extensive, longhand notes on legal pads and "research packages," mainly chronologies of events, prepared by Mr. Gannon and his staff.

Mr. Gannon worked in the White House, first on a fellowship in 1971 and then for two Presidential counselors, Robert H. Finch and Donald H. Rumsfeld, now Secretary of Defense. In 1974, Mr. Gannon was named a special assistant to the President, working under Mr. Ziegler. On Aug. 9, 1974, he was aboard Air Force One when Mr. Nixon returned to San Clemente after his resignation.

Mr. Gannon, who was born in New York in 1942 and grew up on Long Island, graduated from Georgetown University, received a master's degree from the London School of Economics and a doctorate from Oxford. Before becoming a White House fellow, he worked for J. Walter Thompson, the advertising agency.

The job of assisting Mr. Nixon with his memoirs was first offered to Patrick J. Buchanan, a former Presidential speechwriter, according to a source familiar with the negotiation, but Mr. Buchanan preferred to return to journalism.

#### Compared Nixon With Lincoln

Mr. Gannon, in a 1974 article, compared Mr. Nixon with Abraham Lincoln, saying, "both Presidents have shared a determination to preserve the traditions and institutions of self-government, whatever the political or personal cost."

Not long afterward, Mr. Gannon began working on the Nixon memoirs.

"I think people will be amazed by President Nixon's reactions in the book," Mr. Gannon said in Frankfurt. "For example, the things he noticed—the decoration of a room, or if someone had a soup stain on his tie during a state visit—that quality of recollection makes his memoirs exceptional."

"As much as 42 pages will be photographs and documents," says Mr. Sarnoff, the Warner chairman. "There will be lots of pictures of the final moment and days, plus family photos, handwritten memos and even doodles."