



Ladies and gentlemen, I have come to a decision which I felt I should tell you, and all my fellow citizens, as soon as I was certain in my own mind and conscience that it is the right thing to do.

I have learned already in this office that only the difficult decisions come to this desk. I ~~xxxxxx~~^{must} admit that many of them do not look at all the same as the hypothetical questions that I have answered freely and perhaps too fast on previous occasions. ~~xxxxxx~~^{My customary policy is} to try and get all the facts and to consider the opinions of my countrymen and to take counsel with my most valued friends. But these ~~xxxxxx~~ seldom agree, and in the end the decision is mine.

To procrastinate, ~~and to delay~~, to agonize, to wait for a more favorable turn of events that may never come, or more compelling external pressures that may as well be wrong as right, is ^{itself} a decision of sorts and a weak and ~~potentially~~ ^{potentially} dangerous ~~one~~ ^{course for a President} to follow.

I have promised to uphold the Constitution, to ~~do~~ do what is right as God gives me to see the right, and to do the very best I can for America. I have asked your help and your prayers, not only when I became President, but many times since.

The Constitution is the supreme law of our land and it governs our actions as citizens. Only the laws of God, which govern our consciences, are superior to it. As we are a Nation under God, so I am sworn to uphold our laws with the help of God. And I have sought such guidance and searched my own conscience with special diligence to determine the right thing for me to do with respect to my predecessor in this place, Richard Nixon, and his ^{loyal} wonderful



wife and family.

7 Theirs is an American tragedy in which we all have played a part. It can go on and on ^{+m} or someone must write "~~the end~~" ~~finish~~ to it.

I have concluded that only I can do that. And if I can, I must.

There are no historic or legal precedents to which I can turn in this matter, none that precisely fit the circumstances of a private citizen who has resigned the Presidency of the United States. But it is common knowledge that serious allegations and accusations hang like a ~~xxxxxx~~ sword over our Former President's head as he tries to reshape his life, a great part of which was spent in the service of this country and by the mandate of ^{its} ~~the~~ people.

After years of bitter controversy and divisive national debate, I have been advised and am compelled to conclude that many months and perhaps ^{more} years will have to pass before Richard Nixon could hope to obtain a fair trial by jury in any jurisdiction of the United States under governing decisions of the Supreme Court.

I deeply believe in equal justice for all Americans, whatever their station or former station. The law, whether human or Divine, is no respecter of persons but the law is a respecter of reality. The facts as I see them are that a former President of the United States, instead of enjoying equal treatment with any other citizen accused of violating the law, would be cruelly and excessively penalized either in

My conscience tells me clearly and certainly that I cannot prolong the bad dreams that continue to reopen a chapter that is closed. My conscience tells me that only I, as president, have the Constitutional power to firmly shut and seal this book. My conscience says it is my duty, not merely to proclaim domestic tranquillity, but to use every means I have to ensure it.

~~XXXXXX~~ I do believe that the buck stops here and that I cannot rely upon public opinion polls to tell me what is right. I do believe that right makes might, and that if I am wrong ~~all the legions of~~ ^{ten} angels swearing I was right would make no difference. I do believe with all my heart and ~~xxxxxx~~ ^{not} mind and spirit that I, /as President but ~~and~~ as a humble servant of God, will receive justice without mercy if I fail to show mercy.

~~xxxx~~ Finally, I feel that Richard Nixon and his loved ones have suffered enough, and will continue to suffer no matter what I do, ~~xxxxxx~~ no matter what ~~xxxxxx~~ we as a great and good Nation can do together to make his ^{goal} ~~dream~~ of peace ~~xxxxxx~~ ^{for all people} come true.

"Now, therefore, I, Gerald R. Ford



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NOW, THEREFORE, I, Gerald R. Ford, President of the
United States, pursuant to the pardon power conferred upon me by
Article II, Section 2, of the Constitution, have granted and by these
presents do grant a full, free, and absolute pardon unto Richard Nixon
for all offenses against the United States which he, Richard Nixon, has
committed or may have committed or taken part in during the period
from January 20, 1969 through August 9, 1974. ~~///~~

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this
8th day of September in the year of our Lord Nineteen Hundred
Seventy-Four, and of the Independence of the United States of
America the 199th.

