

## WATERGATE'S WELCOME AFTERMATH

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Much to everyone's relief, the whole sorry business of Watergate is now, or should be, behind us. We feel, as always, that the incident itself was of minor significance, another example of underhanded maneuvering common to the everyday, sleazy business of political campaigning. Almost any politician on the national scene could have survived it in a breeze. The Nixon offenses of misusing presidential power, covering up, obstructing justice and lying to the American public differed in no significant degree from those same practices in the two administrations immediately preceding his own. The unusual combination of an almost-united, powerful, antagonistic press working with determination and persistence and the peculiar quirks in Nixon's personality, which molded his reaction, resulted in the inevitable outcome. Our support of Nixon throughout the whole affair was based not on any particular admiration for the man himself (although the positive accomplishments of his administration should need no defense) but upon an increasing annoyance with the hypocrisy evident in the methods used to force his resignation. All in all, we are happy to see Nixon out of office and feel certain that the country will be better served by a new administration under Gerald Ford.

For the first time in almost fifteen years, our Chief Executive is not a bitterly controversial one. In each of the cases of Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon, most of the electorate has been hotly divided into strong pro and con camps, with most of the animosity based entirely on antagonisms to the personalities and styles of the Presidents themselves. Not since President Eisenhower first took office in 1952 has there been such general approval of a new President as there is now for Gerald Ford. In President Ford there is no phony, manufactured image of a glamorous Jack Kennedy to contend with; no irritation with the boorishness and slick, wheeler-dealer, typical politician tactics of Lyndon Johnson; no discomfort or distaste for the smug propriety and awkward posturing of a tricky Richard Nixon.

Even though the general calm and goodwill now prevailing is certainly a temporary state of affairs, and even though the present cooperation will disappear as soon as Congress and the news media recover from the confusion and trauma of Watergate and regroup into warring liberal and conservative factions, the interlude is a welcome aftermath. We hope it will be a long one, everyone deserves a rest.