


THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 7, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
FROM: RAY PRICE 
SUBJECT: Resignation Speech

A first draft is attached. I'll be working on additional thoughts for it.

As I believe you know, I think this has become a sad but necessary decision in the circumstances. But I do hope you'll leave office as proud of your accomplishments here as I am proud to have been associated with you, and to have been and remain a friend. God bless you; and He will.

Attachment

Price

FIRST DRAFT
August 6, 1974
Words: 772

RESIGNATION SPEECH

Good evening.

In all the decisions that I have made in my public life, I have always tried to place one consideration above all others: and that was to do what was best for the Nation.

Throughout the long months of Watergate, I have felt it was my duty to fight to ~~retain this office, and to complete the term to~~ which you elected me. ~~In the past few days,~~ however, it has become apparent that I no longer have the political support necessary to carry out the duties of this office in the way that the best interests of the Nation would require.

*I want to have met with the
House and Senate, some of whom
including my strongest supporters
in both parties -
I have been
advised that because
of the Watergate matter
I will not have
not support in the future*

*for decisions difficult decisions affecting
President, & our fight against inflation & crime & energy & peace
is essential to our country*

I prefer to fight through to the finish whatever the personal consequences. I don't want to leave office as a quitter. ~~The resignation is totally~~ it would involve my family. ~~is~~ But as I recollect I cannot put the interest of the American people

Resignation

1st Draft-8/6/74

Therefore, I shall resign the Presidency effective at noon tomorrow. Vice President Ford will be sworn in as President at that hour, in a ceremony in _____

As I recall the high hopes for America with which we began this second term, I feel a great sadness that I will not be here to carry through with the achievement of those hopes during the next two and a half years.

But in turning over the reins of Government to Vice President Ford, I know -- as I said when I nominated him 10 months ago -- that the leadership of America will be in good hands.

In turning this office over to the Vice President, I also do so with a profound sense of the weight of responsibility that will fall

Resignation
1st Draft-8/6/74

-3-

on his shoulders tomorrow -- and therefore of the understanding,
the patience, the cooperation, he will need from all Americans.

As President, he will have my full support, and I ask that you
give him yours.

As we look to the future, the first essential will be to begin
healing the wounds of Watergate -- to put the bitterness and divisions
of the recent past behind us, and to rediscover together those shared
ideals that lie at the heart of our strength and unity as a great and
free people.

With this action, I hope that the process of healing will speedily
begin.

I regret deeply any injuries that may have been done in the course
of the events that led to this decision. I would say only that if some of
my judgments were wrong, there were made in what I believed to be
the best interests of the Nation.

Resignation
1st Draft-8/6/74

-4-

To those who have stood with me during these past difficult months -- to my family, my friends, the many others who joined in supporting my cause because you believed it was right -- I will be eternally grateful for that support.

To those who have not felt able to give me your support, let me say that I understand the considerations that led you to that conclusion. I respect the motivation behind it.

All of us, in the final analysis, have been concerned with the good of the country, however our judgments might differ.

So let us all now join together in affirming that common commitment, and in helping the new Administration succeed for the benefit of all Americans.

Resignation
1st Draft-8/6/74

-5-

In leaving this office, I do so with regret at not completing my term, but with gratitude for the privilege of serving as your President for the past five and a half years. These years have been a momentous time in the history of our Nation and the world.

They have been a time of achievement of which I believe we can all be proud -- achievements that represent the shared efforts of the Administration, the Congress and the people.

When I first took the oath of office as President five and a half years ago, I made what I described as a sacred commitment: to "consecrate my Office, my energies, and all the wisdom I can summon to the cause of peace among nations."

I have tried, in all the days since, to be true to that pledge.

Resignation
1st Draft-8/6/74

-6-

As a result of those efforts, I am confident that the world is a safer place today not only for the people of America but for the people of all nations -- and that all of our children have a better chance than before of living in peace rather than dying in war.

This, more than anything, is what I hoped to achieve when I sought the Presidency. This, more than anything, is the legacy that I hope I have left as I leave the Presidency.

To have served in this office is to have known a very personal sense of kinship with each and every American. In leaving it, I do so with a prayer that God's grace will be with you in all the days ahead.

Thank you, and good evening.

#

August 8, 1974 - resignation thursday

a beaten man, but doggedly playing it out

gray clouds hung over the white house

about 2:30 p.m. - last conversation - RN called, said the draft looked fine, he wanted to get it to Rose - were there some changes I'd wanted to make in the first part? Yes -- Ron had just called (I'd had to interrupt his call to take the President's), concerned about the references to his having met with the congressional leaders of both parties, and been advised by them that he didn't have the political base necessary to justify continuing the fight, or to be able to govern effectively; it wasn't really true; ^{ron}suggested I'd better check Haig, who was the only one who'd sat in on the meetings. This passage had nagged at me too (it came from either AH or RN, I think RN)

Above notes by Ray Price

memo for the president

from: ray price

One parting thought: We're all judged by our contemporaries,
by our conscience, by history and by God. For the moment, you've
taken a pretty bad beating from the first. But you should do
pretty well with the other three.

Best always --

8/1974
Above by Ray Price
