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## Foreword

Since the United States Constitution established the office of the president, most American citizens have tended to look upon their president as impervious to the physical and mental frailties that regularly afflict lesser mortals. In the populace's mind, much attention is given to a president's, or would-be president's, economic and foreign policy. Little concern is exhibited in regard to whether or not the president's health will prohibit him from performing the powers and duties of the office. Dr. Ken Crispell's book, *Hidden Illness in the White House*, graphically illustrates that American presidents are not supermen after all. Quite the contrary—because our presidents labor in an extremely stressful, often highly emotional political environment, the risk to their health and physical well-being is significantly greater than that confronting the average American.

Dr. Crispell combines the talents of physician and political scientist in documenting that presidents do become seriously ill like the rest of us. Of greater significance, he illustrates the impact presidential illness can have on national policy and, thus, on the governmental health and well-being of us all.

The incidents described in *Hidden Illness in the White House* occurred before the enactment and ratification of the Twenty-fifth Amendment to the Constitution. Hopefully, Dr. Crispell's work will

stimulate future presidents and those men and women closest to them to utilize the provisions of the Twenty-fifth Amendment whenever illness threatens the president's ability to perform the powers and duties of his office. All Americans can benefit from a better understanding of the importance of the direct relationship between presidential health and public policy. This is must reading for future presidents.

Birch Bayh  
U.S. Senator, 1963–81  
Author of the Twenty-fifth Amendment  
to the Constitution  
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