

Nixon Defense Eyed By Fish, Korff Groups

By Thomas Collins

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NEW YORK, Aug. 30—Some of former President Nixon's supporters are marshaling their forces for a possible national campaign in his defense in the event he is brought to trial on charges stemming from the Watergate scandal.

Rabbi Baruch Korff, an outspoken Nixon supporter during the months when Congress was moving toward impeachment, has reorganized his National Citizens Committee for Fairness to the Presidency under a new title: the United States Citizens' Congress. At the moment, he said, he is "on standby."

Hamilton Fish Sr., a former New York congressman who heads an organization called Operation Freedom Inc., has already taken ads in three Southern newspapers warning that a Nixon trial would disrupt the country and "make the previous Watergate controversy a mosquito bite." His group is soliciting funds to support an advertising campaign in key cities.

In an interview, Korff said he has been "on the telephone with San Clemente continuously," but declined to say whether he actually talked to Mr. Nixon.

"I cannot tell you the truth and I don't want to tell you an untruth," he said. "I merely want you to know that we are

not oblivious to his needs nor to his welfare."

The two Nixon supporters said they were not acting in concert, although they shared the same views. They recently dined together at the Harvard Club in Manhattan to discuss Operation Freedom's newspaper ads.

Korff said Fish had wanted him to lend his name to the ads, but that he declined. "I told him it was premature. He is ideologically akin, but his methodology is different."

Korff said that his new organization will carry on the objective of fairness to the presidency—"both former and present occupants of the White House"—but will also become politically active in other areas. It will lobby for conservative legislation, engage in educational efforts regarding the political process and support or oppose candidates for political office.

The group's present position is that it is waiting to see if Mr. Nixon is brought to trial before beginning a campaign in his defense. If there is any attempt to try Mr. Nixon, a Korff aide said, the United States Citizens' Congress will take "concerted action."

The Citizens' Congress will hold an organizational meeting next week, at which it will elect a chairman. Korff said he wanted to remain in the background, but his aide said he "wouldn't be surprised" if Korff were asked to head the group. The Citizens' Congress is presently engaged in a membership and fund-raising drive.