

Study Set To Avert Scandals

Nixon to Ask Joint Approval From Congress

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President Nixon yesterday was reported studying plans for a bipartisan commission to recommend both new laws and voluntary self-restraint agreements by political parties to avert future Watergates.

White House aides said Mr. Nixon, who is spending the weekend at Camp David, would go over staff ideas today. Later this week, he is expected to ask Congress to pass a joint resolution approving the commission.

"It would be a study commission, not an investigative committee," said a White House aide, who added, however, that the commission would presumably make full use of any lessons disclosed by the Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities. The panel's Watergate hearings begin Thursday.

Administration sources conceded that Capitol Hill reaction to the President's proposal might be mixed.

Mr. Nixon is considering inviting the chairman of both major parties to join the blue-ribbon commission, asking congressional leaders to pick some commission members from the House and Senate and allowing the 16 to 20 member commission to select its own chairman and vice chairman, without White House intervention.

Playing a lead role in drafting the commission proposal is Leonard Garment, acting White House legal counsel. Garment succeeded John W. Dean III, who resigned last month after being implicated

in the Watergate scandal.

In charge of securing Senate and House support for the proposal is the White House congressional relations staff headed by William Timmons.

White House sources said that the commission, as envisioned by staff planners, would study remedies for a broad array of campaign problems and abuses exposed in 1972 and in years past. These include the cost and length of election campaigns, the need for a new watchdog body to replace the private, largely ineffective Fair Campaign Practices Committee, "dirty tricks" (fraud, bribery, sabotage), and the raising and spending of campaign funds.

Meanwhile, the House Republican Conference named 15 GOP representatives to a "task force" headed by Rep. Bill Frenzel (Minn.) to find ways of tightening federal campaign laws covering voter registration, campaign outlays and contributions, and reporting procedures.

Said Rep. Edward C. Biester Jr. (Penn.), a task force member: "While we all want to see the facts in the [Watergate] case brought out and all guilty persons pun-

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ished, we must look beyond Watergate."

The House GOP move followed other congressional proposals to revise federal election procedures, notably a Senate Democratic policy resolution adopted Wednesday which calls for public financing of all federal elections.

Addressing a 600-delegate convention of the GOP Heritage Groups Council at the Sheraton Park Hotel, Republican National Chairman George Bush won warm applause when he assured his audience that, "the party is clean, separate and apart" from those administration figures implicated in Watergate. Issues such as war and peace, taxes, and "individual rights" would decide the 1974 and 1976 elections, he said, "not the ugliness of a scandal."

In a UPI interview, Gov. Jimmy Carter of Georgia, newly named chairman of the National Democratic Campaign Committee, warned his

party not to "manipulate" the Watergate scandal "in an overly partisan manner." But Watergate, he said, would eliminate the presidency as an "asset" to GOP office seekers around the country next year.

In the long run, declared Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) at the Syracuse University commencement "Watergate is more an opportunity than a tragedy for America because it will teach the nation reason" and spur long-overdue election campaign reforms.

In Philadelphia, Sen. Henry M. Jackson (D-Wash.) declared that "it's much too early to talk about anything relating to impeachment, but Nixon has already tarnished the office."

Jackson urged the President to "refurnish" his White House staff with "the best he can get," including a "first-class professional" to take over the FBI. The FBI director, Jackson suggested, should have at least 10 year's FBI service and be appointed for a non-renewable term of 15 years.