

Nixon Leaves Hospital, Denies Plans To Resign

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WASHINGTON (AP) — Promising to “work right up to the hilt,” President Nixon told his White House staff today that any suggestion he would resign before the end of his term is “just plain poppycock.”

Speaking informally to several hundred White House employees in the Rose Garden following his release from Bethesda Naval Medical Center, Nixon said:

“Let others wallow in Watergate. We’re going to do our job.”

Acknowledging that his doctors have urged him to slow down and take more time for relaxation, the President said, “No one in this great office at this time in the world’s history can slow down.”

Nixon declared in promising

to work “at full tilt all the way” that the health of the nation and the world is more important than the health of any individual.

“There is so much that we want to do and so little time to do it,” he said, urging the staff to join him in bearing down on the job.

The President—smiling, looking fit and cracking an occasional joke—said some have suggested that he might resign because of the burdens of his office and “some of the rough assaults” any President is subjected to.

“That’s just plain poppycock,” Nixon said. “We’re going to stay on this job.”

Nixon was hospitalized for a week for treatment of viral pneumonia.

He credited “the spirit of Bethesda” and the spirit of all the Navy medical corpsmen for giving him the lift to get well sooner than expected.

The nurses, doctors and corpsmen assigned to the presidential case lined up to say goodbye as Nixon left.

Nixon personally shook hands with everyone and gave parting gifts as he thanked them for “the kindness and thoughtfulness” that he said deeply touched him on his first time in the hospital in 13 years.

The President, in a light blue suit, drove off in his limousine about 9:10 a.m. to return to the White House for a few hours of work prior to a weekend at his Camp David, Md., mountain retreat.