

Kin Dispute Incidents in Nixon Book

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Richard M. Nixon's two sons-in-law denied yesterday that they saw, or said anything to indicate the former President was mentally unstable shortly before he resigned.

Edward F. Cox and David Eisenhower issued separate statements disputing stories told in a new book on Nixon's final days in the White House by Washington Post reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein.

Eisenhower, a third-year law student here who is married to Nixon's younger daughter, Julie, said: "I reject categorically the implication I saw or thought any thing suggesting President Nixon was demented in the closing days of his administration."

"Rumors of his instability were essentially press-generated," Eisenhower added. "As I told Mr. Woodward, I saw the Nixons too frequently to take the rumors seriously . . . I never feared President Nixon would commit suicide . . . I observed nothing which remotely indicated he contemplated suicide. I shared a widespread concern for his health."

The Woodward-Bernstein book says, "For months, David had been waiting for Mr. Nixon to go bananas," as he sometimes phrased it. David thought the President might commit suicide. David seemed convinced Nixon would never leave the White House alive."

Eisenhower also rejected what he called inferences that Nixon used his family and that Nixon and his wife had an unhappy marriage. He said that overall the book "accepts rumors and assertions of sources too literally and too uncritically, lending an impression which is unfair. It should therefore be read skeptically."

He added that he did not intend to confirm other

parts of the book simply because he had not mentioned them in his statement.

In his first public statement since excerpts from the book began appearing in print this month, Cox disputed the book's version of a telephone conversation he had with Sen. Robert P. Griffin (R-Mich.) shortly before Nixon resigned in August, 1974.

"At no time in the course of that conversation or any other conversation at any time did I make any of the notorious statements, including particularly the absurd accusation that President Nixon was talking to pictures in the halls of the White House, which recent broadcasts have ascribed to the conversation," said Cox, who is married to Nixon's elder daughter, Tricia.

"Furthermore, I know of no basis in fact to support in any manner the descriptions of President Nixon and his family alleged to have been made in the conversation," Cox added.

According to Woodward and Bernstein, Cox called Griffin days before the resignation.

The book, "The Final Days," says, "Cox sounded distraught. He was worried about the President's mental health. The President was not sleeping, and he had been drinking. The man couldn't take it much longer, Cox said. The President had been acting irrationally."

Cox, a 29-year-old lawyer with a prestigious Wall Street firm, said he was disputing broadcast versions he had heard.

"I have talked to Sen. Griffin, who confirmed in all respects my recollection of our conversation," Cox said. Griffin was not immediately available for comment on Cox's statement.

Cox was contacted by the authors of the book. He declined to be interviewed, but said that he would be willing to review with them any material of a questionable or sensational nature. He said they did not get back to him.

Cox declined to amplify his statement, saying that he was familiar with several other references to him in published excerpts of the book.