

# Nixon Hails Ties With- Hemisphere

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President Nixon said yesterday that the United States is in a better position to work with its traditional friends to build a solid structure of peace than at any time in recent years.

At an East Room ceremony welcoming a Mexican parliamentary delegation to the White House, Mr. Nixon said that this country would work more closely with its friends now that it is at peace with all countries.

"Let us never forget that the fact we are talking to people who were once our adversaries does not mean that we have lost interest in people who are our friends," the President said.

Speaking of Mexican-U.S. relations, Mr. Nixon said that despite disagreements "we have learned to settle our differences at the conference table and always in a peaceful way."

The President said again that he intended to hold a summit meeting with Soviet leaders in Moscow next month.

Earlier, the President was quoted by Rep. Richard H. Ichord (D-Mo.) as having said he had nothing to do with Watergate—"My God, I'm not that stupid."

Ichord was a guest along with eight other House members on board the presidential yacht Sequoia Tuesday night. Ichord said that the President looked "amazingly well" and "certainly hasn't lost his ability to joke."

White House deputy press secretary Gerald L. Warren said Mr. Nixon talked with the House group about a wide range of issues, including the impeachment inquiry.

In another action, the President established a federal task force to study ways to improve state worker compensation programs, which, he said, have not kept pace with the times."