

World-Wide

FORD DENIED ANY DEAL with Nixon as he testified about the pardon.

As the President met for two hours with a House Judiciary subcommittee investigating the Sept. 8 Nixon pardon, he insisted he had acted primarily to end the country's preoccupation with Watergate. Ford said he had discussed the possibility of a pardon with White House Chief of Staff Alexander Haig a week before Nixon resigned, but only as an option. He denied having any special information about Nixon's health. And Ford said he didn't seek a confession from Nixon, although he did see the former President's statement before it was issued.

Ford said Nixon brought "shame and disgrace" on himself and the White House. Accepting a pardon was tantamount to an admission of guilt, the President stated.

The President's answers, which weren't under oath, didn't satisfy some subcommittee members, particularly New York Democrats Elizabeth Holtzman and Bella Abzug. Rep. William Hungate (D., Mo), chairman of the subcommittee, said more witnesses probably will be called. Ford's appearance was possibly the first time a President has voluntarily gone before a congressional panel.

The first Nixon tapes were played at the Watergate cover-up trial in Washington. Those attending the trial heard Nixon congratulate John Dean, on a Sept. 15, 1972, tape, for "putting your fingers in the dikes every time that leaks have sprung." Judge John Sirica delayed ruling on Nixon's motions to quash subpoenas for his personal appearance.

Nixon sued to force the government to give him thousands of tapes and documents accumulated during his White House years. The suit applies to materials that haven't been sought for trials.