

Ford to Testify Today About Nixon Pardon

President Ford is scheduled to testify before a House Judiciary subcommittee this morning about his grant of a pardon to former President Nixon.

Mr. Ford is to appear on

live television beginning at 10 a.m. at a session expected to last about two hours. His appearance was originally scheduled for last Thursday, but was postponed until the Watergate cover-up trial jury was chosen and locked up away from TV and newspapers, so as not to jeopardize the right of defendants to a fair trial.

The subcommittee asked the President to answer 14 questions contained in resolutions of inquiry introduced by House members after Mr. Ford pardoned the former President for any crimes he may have committed while president.

The questions ask whether Mr. Ford knew when he issued the pardon that criminal charges would be brought against Mr. Nixon; whom he consulted; whether he had in-

formation that Mr. Nixon was in poor health, and whether any advance deal had been made for a pardon in exchange for Mr. Nixon's resignation.

Members may also wish to ask about the agreement Mr. Nixon made with the General Services Administration that would give him control over his presidential tapes and other records and provide for destruction of the tapes upon his death.

Rep. William L. Hungate (D-Mo.), chairman of the subcommittee, said the interrogation must stay within the general area of the 14 questions. But he noted that tapes are mentioned in one or more of the questions, and indicated that some questioning concerning the GSA agreement may be permitted.

The Senate has passed a bill to overrule the agreement and require that the Nixon records remain under federal control and that no tapes be destroyed without approval of Congress. House action on this bill is expected when Congress returns after the November elections.

Mr. Ford's offer to testify, which some researchers believe is without precedent, came in response to Hungate's request for answers to the questions. The President's initial response was to send up transcripts of press confer-



Associated Press

Rep. Peter W. Rodino Jr. (D-N.J.), left, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, confers with Rep. William L.

Hungate (D-Mo.) about today's appearance of President Ford, who is to testify before Hungate's subcommittee.

ences. When that irritated committee members, the President announced he would testify.

The format: Hungate and

other members will make opening statements, the President will make his statement, and finally the nine subcommittee members will question

him under a rule limiting each to five minutes.

Only about a dozen seats will be available to the public, who will be let in for periods

of about 20 minutes each. But four television cameras are in place to carry the proceedings across the nation live on all major networks.