

Ford Asks the Congress for Inflation 'Summit Meeting'

A Warm Reception For Talk

Washington

President Ford, appearing before an enthusiastic joint session of Congress only three days after he took office, called last night for the convening of bipartisan "summit meeting" on the economy to find a means of controlling inflation.

In a speech interrupted 32 times by applause, the new President also called for quick reactivation of the Cost of Living Council to monitor rises in wages and prices in order to "expose abuses."

While the thrust of his address dealt with the economy, Mr. Ford received the greatest applause when he pledged that his administration would never engage in illegal wiretapping and other invasions of privacy.

And, in another promise to set a new tone for his administration, the President said that to the limits of his ability he would be President of "the black, brown, red and white Americans, of old and young, of women's liberationists and male chauvinists and all the rest of us in between."

As expected, his appearance in the House chamber was a warm reunion with the representatives and senators with whom he had served for many years.

"It's good to be back in the people's House," he said to thunderous applause. "I do not want a honeymoon with you. I want a good marriage."

And he made a special appeal to the Congress controlled by Democrats to compromise rather than pass legislation he would feel compelled to veto. But he noted in a gentle, good-humored way, that their relations would never be the same.

"Only eight months ago,

when I last stood here, I told you I was a Ford, not a Lincoln," he said, referring to his speech on becoming vice

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president. "Tonight I am still a Ford, but I am not a Model T."

The speech, which Mr. Ford delivered with twinkling eyes and a firm jaw, was a mixture of old-fashioned conservatism and devotion to civil liberties and democratic government.

On foreign policy, he pledged to keep to that direction established by President Nixon, but he borrowed a phrase first used by the late President John F. Kennedy in his inaugural address, "let us never negotiate out of fear, but never let us fear to negotiate."

He did not propose any, bold new innovations on the economy or for controlling inflation.

Instead, he called for the conservative prescription to keep down inflation, to cut back on government spending. Here he came down hard, with a bipartisan appeal.

"The American wage earner and the American housewife are a lot better economists than most economists care to admit," he said. "They know that a government big enough to give you everything you want, is a government big enough to take from you everything you have. If we want to restore confidence in ourselves as working politicians, the first thing we all have to do is learn to say No."

He said that in the upcoming congressional elections in November he would appeal to the voters across the nation to support those candidates "Democrats or Republicans, conservative or liberal, who consistently vote for tough decisions to cut the cost of government, restrain federal spending and bring inflation under control."

Mr. Ford asked the Congress to enact by Labor Day

legislation that had been proposed by Mr. Nixon to re-create the Cost of Living Council. And he supported the suggestion made a month ago by Senator Mike

Mansfield of Montana, the Democratic majority leader, to convene a conference composed of representatives of labor, industry and agriculture, along with government officials and members of Congress, to devise a "bipartisan action plan for stability and growth in the American economy."

"Neither I nor my staff have much time just now for letter writing," Mr. Ford said. "so I will personally preside."

"Furthermore," he continued, "I propose that this summit meeting be held at an early date and in full view of the American public. They are as anxious to get the right answers as we are."

Addressing himself to one of the abuses that brought down the Nixon administration, Mr. Ford said, "there will be no illegal tapings, eavesdropping, buggings or break-ins by my administration. There will be hot pursuit of tough laws to prevent illegal invasions of privacy in both government and private activities."

On the need for a higher public morality, Mr. Ford took a different tack. On that, he said, there was no need for him to preach.

"We have thousands of far better preachers and millions of sacred scriptures to guide us on the path of personal right-living and exemplary official conduct," must begin at home, not in Washington."

As expected, Mr. Ford received extended standing ovations. The ovation at the beginning went on so long that Mr. Ford, looking somewhat embarrassed, said "We're wasting good television time."

When it was over 40 minutes later and he made his way down the aisles to another ovation, the members called out, "Jerry, Jerry," and Speaker Carl Albert apologized to him for failing to call him "Mr. President."

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