

A Calm Watergate View

Washington

A member of the Nixon Cabinet said yesterday the Watergate case is an "essentially ephemeral" matter, which will not damage the credibility of the President or impede the work of his administration.

Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Casper W. Weinberger said he is not wasting time worrying about the political espionage charges, because "pursuing our business as usual is vastly more important than getting involved in essential-

ly ephemeral matters."

(Webster's Third International Dictionary defines "ephemeral" as being "of interest or value for only a short time.")

Weinberger's breakfast press conference was the first public appearance by a cabinet member since Mr. Nixon told a cabinet session on Friday that he was taking personal responsibility for clearing up the charges against high officials of the administration and the White House staff.

Weinberger, a political as-

sociate of Mr. Nixon for two decades, declined to give details of the cabinet meeting, but said: "I trust the President. He said he had no prior knowledge of the bug-ging, and I trust the President."

"I don't think it goes to the credibility of the President at all," he added.

The former budget director conceded that "anything in politics that has to be explained is bad. No party welcomes a series of events that has to be explained as much as this one."

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