

# 'HAS A LOT TO DO'

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## Aide Says Nixon 'Fully Intends' to Continue to Lead Country

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WASHINGTON, May 18 — The White House said today that President Nixon had no intention of resigning.

Ronald L. Ziegler, the White House press secretary, made the statement in response to a torrent of questions about resignation and impeachment at his regular morning briefing. It was the first time Mr. Ziegler has been forced to entertain such inquiries.

The questions were prompted in part by speeches yesterday by two prominent Democrats—Sargent Shriver, the Democrats' 1972 Vice-Presidential candidate, and Joseph A. Califano Jr., a ranking White House aide in the Johnson Administration. Both men suggested that the President consider resigning because of the Watergate scandal.

### Ziegler Replies

"The President of the United States," said Mr. Ziegler after the first question, "has a lot to do and a lot to accomplish in the second term, and he fully intends to do that."

He repeated the assertion twice, remarking that "the President intends to continue in this work" and that "he was elected to lead this country as President in 1972, and that he intends to do."

Asked whether his statement had been authorized by Mr. Nixon, the press secretary replied, "Indeed, it is made with a total awareness of the President's point of view."

### Testimony Televised

Mr. Ziegler walked into the briefing room in the West Wing of the White House just a few minutes after James W. McCord Jr., the convicted Watergate burglar had been seen nationwide on television screens testifying before a select Senate investigating committee that he had been told that the President was aware of offers of executive clemency that had assertedly been made to him.

Mr. Ziegler repeated a denial made by his deputy, Gerald L. Warren, 10 days ago. He said that "the President did not participate in any way, or have any knowledge regarding the cover-up and at no time authorized anyone to represent him in offering executive clemency." McCord's statements, Mr. Ziegler added, are "based on total hearsay."

Nevertheless, the McCord testimony, which had been foreshadowed by earlier press reports, hit the White House staff

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hard as it poured from their television sets. A middle-level staff member said somberly that he hoped "they'll turn over the whole bucket of gore soon" to end the "awful tension."

Mr. Ziegler continued to picture the President as a man resolutely, almost stoically, conducting the nation's business.

For the second day in a row, Mr. Ziegler said that Mr. Nixon was watching none of the Senate proceedings on television. But the President is seeing a daily summary of them, prepared under the direction of Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., his temporary chief of staff, and it was learned today that the White House had bought a copy of the official running transcript from Ward & Paul, a stenographic reporting firm.

The president met this morning with his Cabinet, as he has done more frequently since the scandal broke. The meeting lasted for an hour and 35 minutes, Mr. Ziegler said, and dealt with such topics as foreign policy, energy and trade.

Mr. Ziegler added that there was "some reference to the situation and setting we are in"—meaning the scandal—but that there was no specific discussion of the Senate hearings, which are headed by Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr. of North Carolina.

Mr. Zeigler appeared unflustered by the questions about resignation, although he challenged a reporter's contention that there was increasing speculation about the possibility in speeches and newspapers. He said that he had not detected mounting pressure in this area.

Mr. Zeigler was asked later whether Mr. Nixon felt, in view of assertions that some of his associates attempted to pervert the outcome of the Presidential election of 1972, that he continued to have a firm mandate from the people.

He replied that Mr. Nixon had never questioned the "legitimacy" of the election or the fact that it constituted "the total, absolute expression of the American people."

Mr. Zeigler also said that Mr. Nixon had no plans to make a statement to the Ervin Committee, either in person, by submitting a written statement or through counsel. Such an idea, he said, is "something that's not even been contemplated."

In general, the press secre-

tary clung to his steady refusal to comment on any of the principals in the case.

But when the questioning turned to John W. Dean 3d, the ousted White House counsel, whom the White House has indirectly blamed for the cover-up, Mr. Zeigler commented tartly that any statement Mr. Dean makes "must be seen in the light of the fact" that he is seeking immunity from prosecution in the scandal.

The effect of his comment was to suggest that Mr. Dean was willing to exaggerate or invent in order to convince prosecutors that he had so much information that he must be given immunity if they hoped to prosecute the "higher-ups."

Mr. Nixon, who has not commented publicly on the scandal this week, flies to Norfolk tomorrow to speak at an Armed Forces Day celebration.



Associated Press

Richard G. Kleindienst, former Attorney General, addressing a bar association yesterday in Minneapolis. He said he believed President Nixon did not know about the Watergate affair.