

Nixon Won't Talk To Grand Jury

Washington

The White House yesterday rejected as "constitutionally inappropriate" any appearance by President Nixon before the Watergate federal grand jury.

Press Secretary Ronald L. Ziegler responded sharply to a report in the Washington Post that Watergate prosecutors have told the Justice Department there was justification for calling Mr. Nixon before the grand jury.

"It would be constitutionally inappropriate," Ziegler said.

Asked whether the President would testify before the Senate Watergate investigating committee, Ziegler said: "No consideration is being given to that matter, at all."

Ziegler said White House special counsel J. Fred Buzhardt had directed Attorney General Elliot L. Richardson and special prosecutor Archibald Cox to "find out how this happened and make sure it does not happen again."

Asked whether Mr. Nixon considers it proper for the White House to direct the order to Cox, Ziegler said it was proper "to express this concern" for stopping leaks from the grand jury room.

The key issue in Richardson's prolonged confirmation hearings two weeks ago was over how much independence Cox would have in taking over from the Justice Department the handling of the Watergate prosecution.

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