

# Nixon Improving, Steps Up Activities

By Carroll Kilpatrick  
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President Nixon, recovering rapidly from viral pneumonia, stepped up his activities yesterday and planned to leave the hospital Friday for a weekend at Camp David.

The President's doctors reported that his lungs were clear of congestion and that his temperature and blood pressure were normal.

During the day, Mr. Nixon conferred with a number of officials on both Watergate and economic issues. He directed Vice President Agnew, who called on him in the afternoon, to preside at a Cabinet meeting today on Phase IV economic proposals.

Later today, Secretary of the Treasury George P. Shultz will unveil the proposals at a White House press conference.

Dr. Walter Tkach, the President's physician, said that the President would go to Camp David about noon Friday and return to the White House Monday to prepare for the two-day state visit beginning Tuesday of the Shah of Iran.

Dr. Tkach said "I lost a fight" when he attempted to persuade the President to go to San Clemente, Calif., or Key Biscayne, Fla., upon his release from the hospital, for about 10 days of convalescence.

But he said that when he made the original recommendation for a longer rest, Mr. Nixon was "much" sicker than he is now and he had not thought the recovery would be as rapid as it has been.

"If I'm smiling for the first

time it is for a very good reason," Dr. Tkach said as he met reporters at the hospital. "The President is convinced, and the doctors agree, that he looks and feels better."

The doctor said he had prescribed rest and mild exercise for the President at Camp David and a limited schedule when he returns Monday. He said the President should rest about an hour in the morning and another hour in the afternoon for about 10 days after he takes up his regular duties again.

An afternoon bulletin said Mr. Nixon continued his program of increased activity and staff work without difficulty.

"The President is feeling well and his generally improved physical state remains stable," the bulletin said.

Mr. Nixon lost only two pounds since his illness, Dr. Tkach said, and he now weighs 168 pounds.

While the President's physical condition was improving, he continued to be plagued by Watergate-related matters, forcing him to spend about 40 minutes early yesterday with J. Fred Buzhardt and Leonard Garment, the special counsels handling Watergate problems.

The two officials spent more than two hours at the hospital Monday night meeting with White House press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler and Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., White House staff chief.

The meeting with Buzhardt and Garment was to discuss strategy in dealing with criticism over the President's practice of recording all office and telephone conversations.

After they left, the President conferred with Shultz and White House counsellors Melvin R. Laird and Bryce Harlow, chiefly on economic problems.

After lunch, Mr. Nixon met with Vice President Agnew and later with Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.) and Minority Leader Hugh Scott (R-Pa.).

Agnew said yesterday that there is no agreement between him and the President on the question of his assuming the presidential duties should Mr. Nixon be disabled, and that the two had never discussed it.

Agnew spent about 50 minutes with the President in his first visit to the hospital. He said he found the President "relaxed and alert and in very good spirits."

## WXP JUL 18 1973 Nixon Hospitalized At \$1.75 a Day

United Press International

It costs President Nixon \$1.75 a day to stay in Bethesda Naval Hospital, where he is being treated for viral pneumonia.

The Navy said Monday that is the going rate for the Commander in Chief and Naval officers. Enlisted men are charged nothing.