

Fight With Congress

Nixon's Defense of Presidential Power

A Radio Message To Nation

Washington

President Nixon appealed to the American people yesterday to help him resist the encroachments of Congress on the powers of the presidency.

"We must recognize that the American system requires both a strong Congress and a strong executive," he said in a radio address on his national legislative goals.

"We therefore must not place limits on presidential powers that would jeopardize the capacity of the President, in this and in future administrations, to carry out his responsibilities to the American people."

CONGRESS

Only a few months ago, before disclosure of the Watergate scandals, it was Congress that was worried about the encroachment of presidential powers on the constitutional prerogatives of the legislative branch.

While many members of Congress believed that the imbalance of presidential over congressional powers had not yet been removed, Mr. Nixon, nevertheless, has found himself faced with a crippled presidency and with a rejuvenated Congress moving to restrict his powers to make war, to control the amount and nature of government spending and to exercise supreme authority in policy initiatives and oth-

er areas.

MESSAGE

The radio address preceded a long "State of the Union" message that Mr. Nixon will send to Congress today.

Already this year, Mr. Nixon has sent at least five written State of the Union messages to Congress, a departure from the tradition of the President delivering one such message annually and in person to a joint session of the House and Senate.

However, these messages

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came in the winter and spring and there was a feeling that the Watergate scandals, which have dominated the news since, virtually erased them from the public memory.

Thus, his radio address and presumably his message today will be largely repetitive, reminding the public and Congress that with most of the year now gone, his major recommendations have not been carried out.

FOCUS

The address and the message were also intended to divert attention from the Watergate scandals and to policy issues by focusing attention on "what the President is doing," as Mr. Nixon said in his press conference last Wednesday.

"It is important that we act, that we decide, that we get on with the business of government," Mr. Nixon said, "that we not let whatever may be our disagreements over the means of achieving these goals bar us from the achievement. It is important, on all sides, that we approach the legislative season with a willingness to

make those reasonable adjustments that are necessary to reach a common objective."

Much of the 2500-word speech, however, was partisan as was the approach the President took — appealing first to the people who support his views on the matter, and then submitting the message to Congress.

He cited six major areas for immediate legislative action. These are:

- Establishing a stable prosperity without inflation.
- Insuring that the nation's energy needs are met.
- Building better and more livable communities.
- Making full use of the nation's human resources.
- Combating the "scourge of crime and drugs."
- Maintaining a level of national defense that maintains peace.

Of these six areas, he singled out the nation's economy as having the most urgent needs.

Achieving goals that both political parties support, Mr. Nixon said, "means holding the spotlight of public attention and public debate on those issues that directly and personally affect your lives. For it is your attention — your participation in the debate and discussion — that in the final analysis will determine whether and how well these goals are achieved.

"It means that the Congress should join the executive in making up for the precious time lost this year in failing to act on those measures which vitally affect every American by going into extra session, if necessary, to complete the people's business before the year ends," the President said.

Congress had hoped to ad-

journal by mid-October.

LANGUAGE

Some of Mr. Nixon's language was considered likely to raise hackles of Democratic congressional leaders. "Our goal," he said, "is to achieve what America has not enjoyed since the days of President Eisenhower — full prosperity without inflation and without war."

On the subject of inflation, Mr. Nixon sought to show that his administration is doing all that is possible to stop the steep price rise that has occurred in recent months.

"The tough new Phase Four controls come into force this month," he said. "The Federal Reserve is checking the growth in the nation's money supply. We have moved vigorously to expand production, especially food production, and so to reduce the pressure on food prices."

He sought to place much of the burden for inflation on Congress by charging it with over-spending.

"We still face the prospect of strong new inflationary pressures as a result of over-spending by the federal government," the President said.

"Programs which the Congress either has already passed or is now considering would produce an additional deficit of \$6 billion, and in addition, the Congress has not yet made nearly a billion and a half dollars of cuts that I have recommended," Mr. Nixon added.

"If these actions by the Congress stand, the result will be higher prices for every American family."

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