

SF Examiner
**Nixon seeks
safeguards
for privacy**

Examiner News Services

WASHINGTON — Warning that computer data banks pose "an awesome potential for harm" President Nixon formed a high-level panel yesterday to forge "a personal shield for every American . . . to protect his right to privacy."

Nixon named Vice President Ford as chairman of the 11-member Domestic Council committee and instructed it to begin within four months carrying out steps to safeguard individual rights to privacy.

In a national radio ad-

dress, Nixon did not refer to the wiretapping controversies of his administration, but an accompanying White House statement said he had instructed the new panel to steer clear of this area until a congressionally created

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wiretap study commission makes its recommendations.

Following up on an issue he first raised in his State of the Union message last month, Nixon focused his 10-minute address on the threat to privacy posed by misuse of information fed into computers by government and private agencies.

He said the names of more than 150 million Americans are now in computer-banks across the country, along with a vast store of personal data. The Government alone, he said, has information stored in more than 7000 computers.

This information is needed for legitimate purposes, the President said, but until the day comes when science finds a way of installing a conscience in every computer, we must develop personal human safeguards that prevent computers from becoming huge, mechanical, impersonal robots that deprive us of our essential liberties.

"What a person earns, what he owes, what he gives to his church or charity is his personal business and should not be spread around without his consent," Nixon said.

The increasing sophistication of computer technology has "created the possibility for new abuses of the individual American citizen," Nixon continued, and "a system that fails to respect its citizens' right to privacy fails to respect the citizens themselves."

He said Ford's council would concentrate on:

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- Examining how the Federal government collects and protects information on citizens.

- Recommending procedures to permit citizens to inspect and correct information about themselves contained in public or private computers.

- Proposing regulations on use of mailing lists and ways to prevent improper alteration or disclosure of personal information.