

Mills Sees Reason for Nixon to Quit

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., March 8, (UPI) — Rep. Wilbur D. Mills, (D-Ark.), said today that the joint congressional committee studying President Nixon's tax returns will issue a report that will give more cause for his resignation than any alleged connection with Watergate.

Mills said the information, to be released within two months, will in his opinion give reason for Mr. Nixon to resign. The committee is studying all aspects of the returns, including a controversial deduction for the President's donation of his vice presidential papers to the National Archives.

In Washington, the White House took strong issue with Mills' statement. An official, who asked not to be named, said:

"Congressman Mills is taking a dirty, cheap shot that is unbecoming his place as a respected member of Congress. Utilizing a scare tactic by referring to a report which I believe is nonexistent is the lowest form of political demagoguery. If he has the guts to raise the issue he ought to have the guts to say what is in the report."

Although Mills used the term "report," he apparently was referring to the written

conclusions the committee will issue and not any findings already on paper.

Sen. Russell B. Long (D-La.), chairman of the joint congressional panel studying the tax returns, issued a statement in Washington saying he had not discussed the case lately with Mills and did not know what Mills was talking about.

"I have said that evidence thus far indicates the President will owe more taxes but that we do not have proof of fraud," Long said. "That statement still stands." Long added that the committee should be able to report "sometime toward the end of the month."

The committee's ranking Republican, Sen. Wallace F. Bennett of Utah, said he was surprised by Mills' statement. He said that pending the committee's next meeting with staff members who have been doing the investigating, he would agree with Long that there was "no apparent evidence of fraud in the President's tax returns."

Mills, who announced he is seeking election to a 19th term, reiterated to newsmen that he would "hate to see" a presidential impeachment, but he thought that the President should resign.

"I have talked to some key Republican members of Con-

gress who say that if he is still in office by the month of June, they will ask him to resign," Mills said.

Asked if he thought Mr. Nixon had committed any impeachable offense, Mills said he did not think any had been proved so far.

"I don't think they have proven any connection (with Watergate). They may have come up with something (in the sealed grand jury report) that I don't know about."

Asked, then, why the President should resign, Mills said, "I can't say. I know, but I won't say. You'll know about it in some 30 or 40 days."

Pressed further, Mills said, "If the President should have to pay several thousand dollars (in taxes owed) . . . Those I have talked to are dissatisfied with the President's handling of his tax returns."

The Joint Committee on Internal Revenue and Taxation, of which Mills is co-chairman, is studying the President's tax returns for 1969, 1970, 1971 and 1972.

"The big question is the deduction of the value of the papers he gave," Mills said. "Such deductions for presidential papers and other items were no longer valid after July 25, 1969. 'Did he actually complete the gift prior to July 25, 1969?'"

Mills said he had a "feeling" about the question, "but I'm not going to express it, no."

Asked if he believed the release of this report will give more impetus to the president's resignation than the Watergate scandal, Mills replied, "Yes, I do."

Mills, 64, was interviewed in a hospital where he is recuperating from a back ailment. He underwent surgery last August for a ruptured spinal disc that threatened to end his congressional career.

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