

# Ford Suggests That 'Unbiased' Party

THE NEW YORK TIMES

By MARJORIE HUNTER

Special to The New York Times

MONTEREY, Calif., June 22

—Vice President Ford suggested today that a third party listen to Presidential tape recordings to clear up discrepancies between versions prepared by the White House and the House Judiciary Committee.

"I don't put any higher credibility on the committee version than I would on the White House version," the Vice President said.

His suggestion came in response to questions at a news conference here this morning, just a day after The New York

Times reported that the House committee transcripts of some of the tapes differed extensively from edited versions made public by the White House.

Asked if the published comparison of the two sets of transcripts had changed his mind about the President's innocence of any part in the Watergate cover-up, Mr. Ford replied:

"After scanning, I should say, the reports yesterday that appeared in The New York Times, my opinion has not changed. I think you have to bear in mind that the transcripts of the tapes as interpreted by the committee may be subject to some criticism and perhaps we

## Clear Up Tape

SUNDAY, JUNE 23, 1974

## Discrepancies

have to get an unbiased report of what those tapes show."

In suggesting that "perhaps we have to have a third or neutral party to take the tapes and get transcripts from them," the Vice President said he was not certain how this might be arranged, but that it would not be "an impossible task to undertake."

Asked if he would be willing to be the third party, Mr. Ford replied: "I don't think I will, no."

Asked if he believed that the White House would make the tapes available to a third party, the Vice President replied: "I haven't talked to the White House." However, he said, "If there are important discrepancies, I would, as one person, suggest that it be undertaken."

The Vice President said that the impeachment inquiry had come down to the one issue of whether the President was involved in the cover-up.

"As I've said, and I think it's becoming even more clear, the preponderance of the evidence favors the President," he said.

He said that he felt that the action of the Watergate grand jury in naming Mr. Nixon as an unindicted co-conspirator was "gratuitous and uncalled for" and "outside the province of their responsibility."

However, he said that he did not think that Leon Jaworski, the special Watergate prosecutor, had been unfair to the

President. Mr. Nixon's lawyers made this charge yesterday in briefs filed with the Supreme Court on the tapes issue.

The Vice President also defended Mr. Nixon's recent gift of a \$2-million helicopter from the Presidential fleet to Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat.

"It's traditional to have an exchange of gifts between heads of state," he said. "I don't remember precisely what Mr. Johnson gave to various heads of state when he was President of the United States." However, he said that "bearing the tradition in mind, I'm not going to be critical of it."