

NYTimes SEP 16 1974
**NIXON IS SECLUDED
AS DEBATE GROWS
ABOUT HIS HEALTH**

**Concern Is Heightened Over
Flare-Up of Phlebitis and
Formation of New Clot**

DOCTOR FEARS TENSIONS

**Speculation Is Raised About
Ex-President's Avoiding
Testimony at Trial**

By **LAWRENCE K. ALTMAN**

Former President Richard M. Nixon remained secluded yesterday at his San Clemente, Calif., estate instead of a hospital, as his doctors had recommended, amid growing concern and controversy over the true state of his physical and mental health.

Concern over a flare-up of Mr. Nixon's chronic phlebitis and the formation of a new blood clot in his left thigh has heightened by various statements over the weekend from Maj. Gen. Walter R. Tkach of the Air Force. Dr. Tkach, the chief White House physician in the Nixon Administration, examined the former President on Friday.

Dr. Tkach was reported to have strongly recommended that Mr. Nixon "not get under any more pressure."

This statement from the former White House physician raised speculation that Mr. Nixon might intend to rely on his medical condition to help him avoid testifying in the Watergate cover-up trial beginning Oct. 1.

'Seems More Tired'

In an interview with United Press International, Dr. Tkach said that he had detected "no depression" in Mr. Nixon's mental state but that "he seems to be more tired."

Dr. Tkach was reported to have feared that further tension and pressure could lead to a heart attack because Mr. Nixon is under "severe physical strain."

Rear Adm. William M. Lukash of the Navy, the new White House physician, said in a telephone interview last night

with The New York Times that he had spoken with Dr. Tkach just after his return from San Clemente and relayed Dr. Tkach's medical report to President Ford over the weekend.

Stocking Prescribed

"I have had no other contact with Dr. Tkach since then," Dr. Lukash said. Dr. Lukash was Dr. Tkach's assistant during the Nixon Administration and had been a member of the team that treated Mr. Nixon when he had an attack of phlebitis in the left lower leg during trips to the Middle East and Soviet Union earlier this year.

Mr. Nixon was left with a post-phlebitic, or heavy, swollen left leg as a result of that attack of phlebitis. It had further aggravated damage that resulted from Mr. Nixon's first

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attack of phlebitis on a foreign trip 10 years ago.

Despite that condition, Mr. Nixon was reported by close associates to have been reluctant to wear a protective elastic stocking designed to minimize swelling from the phlebitis condition. The stocking had been prescribed by his doctors.

In an interview published in today's issue of Newsweek magazine, Dr. Tkach said that Mr. Nixon was not dying but that:

"He is under tremendous tension. It's going to take a miracle for him to recover . . . I don't know whether I can pull him through."

Dr. Tkach was reported as saying that Mr. Nixon's condition was "much worse than when I saw him two weeks ago. He just has no bounce, no responsiveness at all."

Dr. Tkach said he had not discussed Mr. Nixon's condition with Mrs. Nixon "for fear of frightening her," according to Newsweek, but added, "I guess guess that's good."

Report on Objection

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"I have had no other contact with Dr. Tkach since then," Dr. Lukash said. Dr. Lukash was Dr. Tkach's assistant during the Nixon Administration and had been a member of the team that treated Mr. Nixon when he had an attack of phlebitis in the left lower leg during trips to the Middle East and the Soviet Union.

Dr. Tkach, in an official statement Friday, said Mr. Nixon had rejected a recommendation

that he enter a hospital.

Dr. Tkach was later reported as saying that Mr. Nixon's rejection was based on the belief that "if I go into the hospital, I'll never come out alive."

In his interview with UPI, Dr. Tkach repeated the former President's fatalistic statement and said, "I stopped right there."

It was unclear why Dr. Tkach did not reflect this degree of concern in the official statement or whether his recommendation for hospitalization was based on the need for diagnostic tests or for more definitive medical treatment.

In his medical bulletin Friday, Dr. Tkach did not specify what medication Mr. Nixon was receiving.