

Ford Pardon Testimony Set in

By Richard L. Lyons
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President Ford's historic appearance before a congressional subcommittee Thursday will take place in a room that has seen a lot of history this past year.

It is Room 2141 of the Rayburn House Office Building, the meeting room of the House Judiciary Committee.

It was in this room that Mr. Ford appeared nearly a year ago at the first confirmation hearing for a Vice President.

And it was in this room that the Judiciary Committee met for three months for deliberations that led to recommendations that President Nixon be impeached.

It is not a large room. There is space for about 200 chairs, tightly squeezed together after the television cameras have been put in place. Judiciary Chairman Peter Rodino (D-N.J.) refuses to move to a larger room.

Television will be there to record the event live. The President is scheduled to appear before the subcommittee at 10 a.m., and is expected to spend two or three hours reading a statement and answering questions on the factors that went into his decision to pardon Mr. Nixon for any crime he may have committed while President.

A spokesman said the subcommittee, headed by Rep. William L. Hungate (D-Mo.), is trying hard to keep the event just like any other subcommittee hearing. But the fact is it will be the first time in at least a century—and some authorities believe the first time ever—that a sitting President has testified before a congressional committee.

The President will sit at a witness table before the two-tiered committee bench and look up at 11 congressmen, two staff members and two television cameras—one directly in front of him and one to the side rear.

Witnesses usually are provided with a pitcher of water and a stack of paper cups. Mr. Ford may get a glass.

Hungate's nine-member subcommittee will be joined by Committee Chairman Rodino and the senior Republican, Edward Hutchinson (R-Mich.). The 11 members will be permitted to question the President. Subcommittee counsel, who usually questions, will not.

The President is testifying because Rep. Bella Abzug (D-N.Y.), in her efforts to end the Indochina war, re-



By Bob Burchette—The Washington Post

Rep. Bella Abzug (D-N.Y.), who discovered the old procedure to get Mr. Ford to testify, has 10 questions for him.

discovered an ancient means of obtaining information called the resolution of inquiry.

A resolution of inquiry directs questions to an official of the executive branch. It is referred to a committee, which may invite the official to come up and answer the questions. If the committee takes no action, (the House Armed Services Committee did not act on Rep. Abzug's resolutions) the author may after seven days call for a House vote on the resolution. House approval would direct the official to reply.

Rep. Abzug's resolution asking 10 questions of Mr. Ford, and another by Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich.) asking four more, are before Hungate's subcommittee. Mr. Ford offered to appear in person to answer them. He will not be under oath, just as members of Congress are not sworn in when testifying on Capitol Hill.

The text of the resolution submitted by Rep. Abzug and co-signed by 13 other House members:

Resolved, that the Presi-

dent of the United States is hereby requested to furnish the House, within 10 days, with the following information:

1. Did you or your representatives have specific knowledge of any formal criminal charges pending against Richard M. Nixon prior to issuance of the pardon? If so, what were these charges?

2. Did Alexander Haig refer to or discuss a pardon for Mr. Nixon with Mr. Nixon or his representatives at any time during the week of Aug. 4 or at any subsequent time? If so, what promises were made or conditions set for a pardon, if any? If so, were tapes or transcriptions of any kind made of these conversations or were any notes taken? If so, please provide such tapes, transcriptions or notes.

3. When was a pardon for Mr. Nixon first referred to or discussed with Mr. Nixon, or Nixon representatives, by you or your representatives or aides, including the period when you were a mem-

ber of Congress or Vice President?

4. Who participated in these and subsequent discussions or negotiations with Mr. Nixon or his representatives regarding a pardon, and at what specific times and locations?

5. Did you consult with Attorney General William Saxbe or Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski before making the decision to pardon Mr. Nixon and, if so, what facts and legal authorities did they give to you?

6. Did you consult with the vice-presidential nominee, Nelson Rockefeller, before making the decision and, if so, what facts and legal authorities did he give to you?

7. Did you consult with any other attorneys or professors of law before making the decision and, if so, what facts or legal authorities did they give to you?

8. Did you or your representatives ask Mr. Nixon to make a confession or statement of criminal guilt, and, if so, what language was suggested or requested by you, your representatives, Mr. Nixon, or his representatives? Was any statement of any kind requested from Mr. Nixon in exchange for the pardon, and, if so, please provide the suggested or requested language.

9. Was the statement issued by Mr. Nixon immediately subsequent to an-

complete information and facts on which was based the decision to grant a pardon to Mr. Nixon, including:

1. Any representations made by or on behalf of Mr. Nixon to the President.

2. Any information or facts presented to the President with respect to the mental or physical health of Mr. Nixon.

3. Any information in possession or control of the President with respect to the offenses which were allegedly committed by Mr. Nixon and for which a pardon was granted.

4. Any representations made by or on behalf of the President to Mr. Nixon in connection with a pardon for alleged offenses against the United States.

The President is further directed to furnish to the House the full and complete information and facts in his

possession or control relating to any pardon which may be granted to any person who is or may be charged or convicted of any offense against the United States within the prosecutorial jurisdiction of the Office of Watergate Special Prosecution Force.

Historic Room

nouncement of the pardon made known to you or your representatives prior to its announcement, and was it approved by you or your representatives?

10. Did you receive any report from a psychiatrist or other physician stating that Mr. Nixon was in other than good health? If so, please provide such reports.

Here is the text of the resolution submitted by Conyers:

Resolved, that the President is directed to furnish to the House the full and