

Doctors Silent on Nixon Tests

By Robert Meyers
Special to The Washington Post

LOS ANGELES, Nov. 26—
Three court-appointed physi-
cians said today they have
reached a unanimous decision
on whether former President
Nixon is fit enough to testify
in the Watergate cover-up
trial.

They said the decision
would be kept secret until
they give their written opinion
to U.S. District Court Judge
John J. Sirica in Washington
Friday.

Drs. Charles A. Hufnagel,
John A. Spittell Jr., and Rich-
ard Starr Ross, spent an hour
and 50 minutes at La Casa
Pacifica, Nixon's San Cle-
mente estate Monday. They
examined the former Presi-
dent for about an hour, Hufna-
gel said, declining to give any
details.

"We met with and examined
Richard Nixon with his consent
and cooperation," Hufnagel
said. He added that they had
received full cooperation from
Dr. Eldon Hickman, who is in
charge of Nixon's recovery,
and other doctors in the case.

Physicians not involved in
the case have suggested that
the three doctors principally
examined Nixon for signs of
stress, or a recurrence of phle-
bitis.

Nixon was hospitalized Sept.
23 for treatment of the dis-
ease. On Oct. 29, a hairpin-like
clip designed to prevent the
passage of clots from his leg
to the lungs, where they can
cause death, was placed on

one of the ex-president's veins.
Shortly after surgery, how-
ever, Nixon went into shock
for three hours, and remained
on the critical list for several
days. He left the hospital Nov.
14.

John D. Ehrlichman, Nixon's
former chief domestic adviser,
and a defendant in the six-
week-old trial, has indicated
that much of his defense rests
on Nixon's testimony.

The prosecution has also re-
quested his testimony.

Sirica listed seven specific
questions for the doctors to
answer. Their opinion, along
with other material, will ad-
vise the judge as to whether
Nixon is well enough to testify
in some manner.

If the doctors say he can,
they will further advise Sirica
whether Nixon can travel to
Washington, travel to a court-
house near his home for a de-
position or merely give a de-
position from his bed.

A deposition might be video-
taped. Sirica might also tem-
porarily move the trial to a
courtroom near Nixon's estate
in order to hear him.

He has not indicated when
he will make his decision
known.

WXPost NOV 27 1974 Tapes Order Is Postponed

U.S. District Judge William
B. Bryant yesterday postponed
indefinitely the effective date
of an order he issued earlier
directing the White House to
turn over certain presidential
tapes from the Nixon adminis-
tration.

The tapes were scheduled to
be turned over today to plain-
tiffs in a civil suit arising out
of antiwar demonstrations
here in May, 1971. It was the
first such order concerning
the production of White
House tapes in a civil suit, as
opposed to criminal trials.

Judge Bryant delayed the
compliance date after a three-
hour hearing yesterday pend-
ing his rulings on a claim of
presidential privilege that was
invoked by former President
Nixon, and on requests by the
government for a continuation
of the trial date. The trial is
scheduled to begin Monday.

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