

# Ford Favors Role for Congress

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By **MARJORIE HUNTER**

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WASHINGTON, Nov. 5— Representative Gerald R. Ford said today that he thought a President should be truthful, thoughtful, humble and able to exert moral and ethical leadership.

Mr. Ford's prescription for the Presidency came during a second and perhaps final round of questioning by the Senate Rules Committee on the House minority leader's confirmation for Vice President.

Today, as last week, the questioning focused on what kind of a President Mr. Ford would be if President Nixon does not serve out his term in office.

The Michigan Republican continued to defend Mr. Nixon against those critics who think he should resign or be impeached. But Mr. Ford also continued to differ with the President on a number of issues.

## Supports Richardson

Mr. Ford said that he "fully understood" the decision of Elliot L. Richardson to resign as Attorney General two weeks ago, rather than dismiss Archibald Cox as special prosecutor in the Watergate case, as requested by Mr. Nixon.

"He felt that a commitment had been made," the Vice-Presidential nominee said of Mr. Richardson. "I assume if I were in the same position, I would do the same."

Mr. Ford said that if he became President, he would favor a greater role for Congress in formulating foreign policy. "There has to be a two-way street" between Congress and the executive branch, he said.

Mr. Ford also said that, as



Mr. Ford answering the majority whip's question



President, he would seek the advice of members of Congress and department heads on thorny questions, rather than rely completely on White House advisers.

The mounting demands for the resignation of President Nixon were reflected in questioning by Republicans on the committee, as well as Democrats.

"Can Richard Nixon save his Presidency?" Senator Mark Hatfield, Republican of Oregon, asked.

"I think so," Mr. Ford replied. "It's going to take a lot of help from a lot of people. And I intend to devote myself to that."

#### Proof Wanted

Mr. Ford said he was fully convinced that the President was "completely innocent" of any wrongdoing or cover-up in the Watergate affair, but added that the "public wants the president to prove that, through documents and so forth."

"Whatever doubts there are must be cleared up," he said.

Asked by Senator Hatfield whether he felt it a sign of

weakness to admit one's mistakes, Mr. Ford replied, "No."

"Can a President make such a confession without it being equated with weakness?" Senator Hatfield persisted. Mr. Ford replied, "Yes."

Obviously hoping to allay criticism that Mr. Ford has only limited knowledge of world affairs, Senator Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania, the Senate minority leader, led Mr. Ford through a recitation of his background in foreign affairs.

#### Policy Toward Cuba

Mr. Ford told of conversations with Chinese Communist leaders on a visit to China last year, shortly after Mr. Nixon's historic trip there. Mr. Ford also told of his talks with leaders of other nations, as a member of the Interparliamentary Union.

Asked if he would favor an exploratory review of United States policy toward Cuba, Mr. Ford said there should be "a constant review, because circumstances do change." He also said he fa-

vored a review of American participation in the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, and he defended continued support of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

He indicated that, if he became President, he would retain Henry A. Kissinger as Secretary of State, describing him as "a superb" official.

In replying to other questions, Mr. Ford said he opposed forced busing of school children to achieve racial balance, but that he strongly favored "compensatory education" for the disadvantaged.

He also said that, while was an early critic of Federal aid to education, he now thought it was sound.

He said, too, that he would favor full disclosure of financial assets by President, Vice Presidents and the Federal judiciary, similar to that now required of members of Congress.

And he praised the press as one of the "most significant contributors" to disclosure of the Watergate scandal.

#### Criticizes Lobbyist

Mr. Ford's earlier association with a one-time Washington lobbyist, Robert Winter-Berger, continued to dog him throughout much of today's questioning. He denied contentions made by the lobbyist in a book, "The Washington Pay-Off," that he had received money from Mr. Winter-Berger.

"I've read his book, and I don't believe any of the things he said about me or any other person," Mr. Ford said. "Those are just a demagogic bunch of words that didn't deserve publication."

He said he did not file a libel suit against Mr. Winter-Berger because, under recent rulings of the Supreme Court, "it's virtually impossible for a person in public life to collect anything from those who write that kind of trash."

Mr. Ford also defended himself against criticism that he had profited from his service on the Warren Commission that investigated the assassination of President Kennedy by writing a book and contributing to a magazine article.

He admitted receiving \$10,000 for the book, "Portraits of an Assassin," and \$5,000 for the magazine article, but said the material was not classified and that he merely tried to make readable the information that later appeared in the commission's report.

Mr. Ford also denied allegations that he had exerted influence in obtaining a Government contract for a furniture manufacturer in Grand Rapids, Mich.