

# Ford Says Government Won't Sink

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COLLEGE STATION, Tex., May 11 — Vice President Ford declared today that the government in Washington "isn't about to sink."

Ford also made clear, as he has in the past two days, that he has not been attacking President Nixon during Mr. Nixon's troubles arising from the Watergate scandal and release of the edited White House tape transcripts.

Instead, the Vice President suggested that Congress should be sure of the facts before it takes any action against Mr. Nixon.

Meanwhile, the President steered his anti-impeachment campaign to another Southwestern state and was scheduled to deliver the commencement address tonight at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater.

Ford, speaking at commencement exercises for nearly 2,000 graduating students at Texas A & M University, used an anecdote about Texas frontiersman Davy Crockett to convey an apparent warning to Congress.

"I leave you with the words of a well-known congressman who left Washington and came to Texas a long time ago," Ford told an audience of 10,000.

"Be sure you're right," Ford quoted Crockett as saying. "And then go ahead."

"As a matter of fact," Ford said pointedly, "I think I'll take Davy Crockett's words with me back to Washington: 'Be sure you're right, and then go ahead.'"

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## FORD, From A1

Ford took advantage of the presence of Rep. Olin Teague, popular congressman from the College Station District, to appeal for a nonpartisan spirit of devotion to the national interest during the impeachment proceedings.

He linked Teague, a Democrat, with Mr. Nixon by saying the two men, both then in Congress, helped him greatly when he arrived on the Washington scene as a freshman Representative in 1949.

"I can't think of any two

Americans who have done more in my lifetime to further the bipartisan, or rather nonpartisan, spirit of sustaining America's position of strength and leadership in the free world, whether the White House or the Congress was Republican or Democratic, or from whatever quarter the threats appeared," Ford said.

"I hope and pray that we can continue to sustain that kind of devotion to the national interest through any political storms and struggles that might lie ahead."

The crowd, jammed into the coliseum at this military-oriented, 98-year-old university, gave Ford frequent applause, cheers and laughter.

One of the heartiest responses came when he referred to his speech of last Thursday at Eastern Illinois University. Ford had said there that Watergate has caused "an erosion of confidence in our federal government that I believe has reached crisis proportions." The crowd applauded and laughed today when Ford said his Illinois speech was about corruption in government, "which happens in

Cook County as well as in Washington."

Cook County, long dominated by Democrats, has been repeatedly involved in scandals and corruption.

Ford said news stories about his Illinois speech "said I was making my sharpest attack to date on the President and trying to line myself up with those who are trying to jump off his ship of state without exactly saying so."

The Vice President did not directly declare that interpretation erroneous, but he implied it was inaccurate.

He said he told President Nixon during their long talk Friday morning, "I've been telling as many members of the class of 1974 as I can reach that the government in Washington isn't about to sink, that it is and will continue to be about as good as concerned and conscientious citizens make it, that the constitutional processes are working as the Founding Fathers intended, without any riot or repression and, most importantly, without as yet seriously weakening our strength at home and abroad."

"I also told the President I was going to try again at Texas A&M, where I'm confident there are more doers than boopers," said Ford, drawing appreciative whistles from Aggie cadets.

Ford took a slap at the Democratic-controlled Congress for restricting military aid to South Vietnam.

"This Congress, by majority of both houses, has forced our country to let down a small, brave ally, fighting alone now for survival," Ford said.

He added that while this was only a single straw in the wind, he is "very fearful that it may well be a sign of the times."

Later the Vice President addressed the 17th state senatorial district Republican convention in Houston and stressed that while Watergate is "unbelievable," it "is not the issue in 1974. No person involved in Watergate is on the ballot in any state on the Republican ticket.

"We can be proud of the fact that those being charged are being handled in the courts and some already have been convicted. We are going through a sim-

ilar process in the Congress concerning the President."

Ford warned, "I don't think we should let public moral indignation overtake the political process."

Most of the Vice President's speech was devoted to praising Mr. Nixon's foreign policy, which he said is "better than [that of] any President of the United States," and his New Federalism domestic policy. He again said he believes the President is innocent of any wrongdoing in the Watergate break-in or cover-up. He said also that if Democrats win 50 to 100 additional seats in the House this year, they will have a "legislative dictatorship."