

Haldeman Sure Of Nixon Victory

Acapulco

Former White House chief of staff H. R. Haldeman said yesterday he believes President Nixon will come out of the Watergate scandals "stronger than he was before, and stronger than he would have been had this not happened."

He said he is confident the President "will regain his credibility and will unify the people behind him."

For the first time since he resigned a year ago as the President's top staff assistant, Haldeman spelled out his general views on the entire presidential staff operations and on Mr. Nixon's problems — and his own — in a semi-public appearance before the Young Presidents Organization, a group of company presidents who reached that status by the age of 40.

To make his appearance, Haldeman had to get court approval to leave the United States. He is under indictment on charges of perjury, obstruction of justice and conspiracy to obstruct justice — all in connection with Watergate and related matters.

Haldeman talked for almost two hours to more than 500 YPO members and their wives. Newsmen were barred from the session, but details of his talk became available later.

Generally, Haldeman reasserted his contention that he is innocent of any crime and the judicial process will so determine.

"The one thing I ask," Haldeman told the businessmen, "reserve judgment until you are satisfied you do know the facts — because you don't know the facts yet."

He assailed what he said has been "a total breakdown of the grand jury system and the investigative process" regarding confidentiality of testimony and evidence.

Repeatedly, he expressed what he said was his total and unbounded admiration for Mr. Nixon and said he is convinced that his and the President's interests are in getting all the facts out.

Haldeman said, "an awful lot of information and knowledge is being made public that in my opinion — and I know in the President's opinion — should better not be made public in the interest of the nation."

When he asked if this meant he felt the American public "can't handle the truth," Haldeman said that some things interrelated with tapes and conversations from the White House are better kept secret because "the American people don't have the means by which to determine the entire truth in ample or adequate perspective."

He cited as examples, "the Bay of Pigs, the Cuban missile crisis, the Yalta conference, the bombing halt in 1968 (in Vietnam), the personal finances of other presidents and Chappaquiddick," a reference to the involvement of Senator Edward M. Kennedy (Dem-Mass.) in the drowning of Mary Jo Kopechne.

Los Angeles Times