

Vows 'Continuity' On Foreign Policy In Hill Address

Bars Illegal Taps, Bugging

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President Ford told a joint session of Congress last night that he would convene a domestic "summit meeting" to explore ways to deal with the problems of inflation and he pledged "continuity" in the field of foreign policy.

The new President, in his first address to Congress, also promised that there will be no illegal wiretaps, buggings or break-ins in his administration.

In a moving peroration that drew heavy applause, the President promised to be the President "of all the people."

"To the limits of my strength and ability, I will be the President of the black, brown, red and white Americans, of old and young, of women's liberationists and male chauvinists and all the rest of us in between, of the poor and the rich, of native sons and new refugees, of those who work at lathes or at desks or in mines or in the fields, and of Christians, Jews, Moslems, Buddhists and atheists, if there really are any atheists after what we have been through," the President said.

Calling for national unity after the period of the Watergate scandals, Mr. Ford said: "Now I ask you to join with me in getting this country revved up and moving."

"My instinctive judgment is that the state of the union is excellent. But the state of our economy is not so good."

In a bid for Democratic support, he said he was happy to accept the proposal of Senate Democratic Leader Mike Mansfield (Mont.) for an economic summit meeting to consider the problems of inflation.

"I accept your suggestions and I will personally preside," the President said.

He said that he intended to listen to the people and that his office door would always be open.

"Yes, congressmen will be welcomed — if you don't overdo it," he said to a round of laughter and applause from his former colleagues.

"My administration starts off by seeking unity in diversity," he said.

In discussing foreign policy, he accepted virtually intact the Nixon program. But he added that in dealing

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with other nations, as in dealing with the American people, he would "deal openly with allies and adversaries."

The President also borrowed a sentence from President Kennedy's 1961 inaugural address: "I say to you in words that cannot be improved upon: Let us never fear to negotiate."

In pledging "continuity" of the Nixon foreign policy, which he called "outstanding," Mr. Ford said "there will be no change of course — no relaxation of vigilance, no abandonment of the helm of our ship of state as the watch changes."

"We stand by our commitments and will live up to our responsibilities, in our formal alliances, in our friendships and in our improving relations with any potential adversaries."

He said that a strong defense "is the surest way to peace" and to detente.

While applauding the Nixon foreign policy, Mr. Ford left no doubt that he would not tolerate domestic abuses disclosed in the long Watergate crisis.

"There will be hot pursuit of tough laws to prevent illegal invasions of privacy in both government and private activities," he said.

He also emphasized his open-door policy as an obvious break from the Nixon

practice. And he asserted his belief in the First Amendment that guarantees a free press and said that he believed in the "absolute necessity of a free press."

Similarly, he promised "to listen" to the people.

While he offered no specific economic proposal except to endorse the Nixon call for a Cost of Living Council to monitor wages and prices to expose abuses, he said that he would propose sharp restrictions on federal spending.

The President did not present a full list of legislation he wants the current Congress to pass, but he did urge prompt passage of the trade relations bill, and a comprehensive health insurance bill President Nixon urged earlier in the year.

He promised to sign the elementary and secondary education bill now on his desk, but he said he "opposes excessive funding" of the measure "during this inflationary crisis."

He did not promise vetoes of spending bills beyond the budget proposals, as his predecessor did, but he said "I do have that recourse and am a veteran of many a veto fight in this very chamber." But he asked: "Can't we do the job better by reasonable compromise?"

The President's relatively short address, interrupted frequently by applause, was warmly received in the House chamber.