

Opposition Stiffening To Bush as CIA Chief

Washington

The nomination of George Bush to be director of the Central Intelligence Agency appears to be in serious trouble in the Senate.

The Senate Armed Services Committee, which is considering Bush's nomination, scheduled a meeting for this morning, and Senate sources predicted that as many as half the committee's members might vote against the 51-year-old former Texas congressman.

Meanwhile, Bush met late yesterday with President Ford. During two days of hearings before the committee, Bush was asked to give up any chance to be chosen for the Republican vice president nomination in 1976, as a prerequisite to Senate confirmation. He has steadfastly refused to do so.

White House sources would not comment on the Ford meeting, but one of them noted: "This is a crucial time for the CIA and President Ford wants the man of his choice to head the agency."

The implication was that Bush may declare himself unavailable for the vice presidency.

The President could also choose to rule Bush out of the race.

Administration sources said they believe seven of the committee's 16 members plan to vote against Bush. Senate sources said that as many as eight might reject the nomination.

In either event, the close split in the committee indicates that when the nomination reaches the floor it would face heavy opposition.

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