

17 Oct 74 ①

Ford testifies before Subcommittee on Criminal Justice of the House Committee on the Judiciary, on, in Ford's words, "the facts and the circumstances that were the basis" of his pardon of Nixon. Ford's appearance is the result of two House resolutions of inquiry (entries 16, 17 Sep).

Ford says that he granted the pardon solely "out of my concern to serve the best interests of my country," and that "There was no deal, period."

In his opening statement Ford gives his view of the pardoning power; his reasons for pardoning Nixon; a chronology of events before the pardon was granted; the eight options presented to him by Haig 1 Aug 74. [^] In the opening statement he deals with each of the points raised in the two resolutions of inquiry. Following this he answers the questions of committee members, each of whom was allotted five minutes.

Rep. Elizabeth Holtzman, saying five minutes would not provide enough time to deal with all of the many questions she wanted to ask, used the time simply to list them, and asked for an answer only to the last one: "And that is, that suspicions have been raised that the reason for the pardon and the simultaneous tapes agreement was to ensure that the tape-recordings between yourself and Richard Nixon never came out in public. To alleviate this suspicion once and for all, would you be willing to turn over to this subcommittee all tape-recordings of conversation between yourself and Richard Nixon?" Ford responds to the question but does not answer it. [^] (NYT, p. 20 cols. 2 and 3.) In his prepared statement Ford had handled in much the same way a specific point raised in the Abzug resolution: when was a pardon first referred to or discussed with Nixon or his representatives, by Ford or his representatives, including the period "when you were a member of Congress" or Vice President. (NYT p. 19, col. 2, on Questions 3 and 4.) Ford deals with this by saying he had already described his talks with Haig 1 and 2 Aug and with St. Clair 2 Aug, and that these were the only discussions of a pardon "before I became President." By using these dates as a starting point, does Ford exclude the time he was a congressman?

For details of Ford's testimony see clippings 18 Oct 74,
(Cont'd) ②

17 Oct 74 (2)

[from previous page]
and Congressional Quarterly p. 807. NYT carries text of Ford's opening statement and what appears to be an incomplete transcript of the questions and answers which followed.

SFC, WXP, NYT, 18 Oct 75

Congressional Quarterly (Watergate), p. 807

- See article by Philip Shabecoff, on contradictions between statements made by Ford in his testimony and those made by Haig, Kissinger and Eisenhower.

Shabecoff says Rep. Lawrence Hogan, in one of his questions to Ford, mentioned reports that Kissinger had allegedly told Ford Nixon might commit suicide. (This question is not included in NYT transcript.) Shabecoff says the only reference to this story seems to have appeared in a column by Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, 9 Sep. (This Evans and Novak column, frequently carried by WXP, is not in file.)

NYT 18 Oct 74, Philip Shabecoff

Nixon-Ford tapes? - See entry, Ford testifies

Pardon - " "

Nixon (suicide?) - " " last paragraph

Nixon (suit, custody of tapes and documents) - Nixon asks Federal District Court, WX, to enforce the agreement of 6 Sep giving him personal control over WH tapes and papers; Miller asks the court for a temporary injunction to bar giving anyone but Nixon access to the material and bar permanently any action which does not follow the terms of the agreement. The suit is filed against Sampson, Buchen and H. Stuart Knight, director of the Secret Service. It is unclear from story whether the request for a temporary injunction and the suit are part of the same legal action.

"The suit contends that the agreement was legal, the Government has failed to enforce it, the documents are the property of Mr. Nixon, the Ford White House intends to release some of them without Mr. Nixon's approval and the former President's rights to the papers are in jeopardy."

(Cont'd

(3)

17 Oct 74 (3)

[from previous page]

A hearing on the temporary injunction is set for 21 Oct before Judge Charles R. Richey.

NYT 18 Oct 74, Anthony Ripley

Vesco - UPI, datelined Los Angeles, says Government attorneys, "without giving a reason," postpone indefinitely the appearance of Alex Fleming before a Federal grand jury investigating charges that she supplied call girls to Vesco in Costa Rica. She is also known as Betty Alexander and Betty Anderson.

Story says that last month she was booked on charges of pimping and pandering following a local investigation into prostitution, "but that arrest was not connected with Mr. Vesco."

NYT 18 Oct 74 [UPI]

(17 Oct 74) AMP

Ⓐ - See entry 21 Oct 75, "The Ford-Nixon Connection."

Ⓑ - One of these options was "The question of whether the President could pardon himself." (NYT 18 Oct 74, p. 18, col. 6.) On this point see entry 26 Sep 74, Nixon (self-pardon?).

Ⓒ - From description of memo drafted by Leonard Garment 27 Aug 74, in which he urged that a pardon be given Nixon: "The memo, according to sources, indicated that Nixon's mental and physical condition could not withstand the continued threat of criminal prosecution. It implied that, unless he was pardoned, Nixon might take his own life, the sources said."

WXP 18 Dec 75, Woodward and Bernstein