

BROOKE CRITICAL ON NIXON'S ROLE

Says President Must Tell
Why He Didn't Know

By ANTHONY RIPLEY

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In one of the strongest public statements yet by a member of the President's own political party, Senator Edward W. Brooke said today that Mr. Nixon

could not escape responsibility for the Watergate affair "under any circumstances" without an explanation of why he had not known what was going on.

The Massachusetts Republican said that he could not understand how aides could have kept the information from the President. He said that the office of the Presidency had been "harmed," that the President had taken "a long time" reaching a decision to investigate the affair fully and that there was a need for a "restoration of confidence in the integrity of government."

Mr. Brooke, appearing on the National Broadcasting Company's "Meet the Press" program, termed the bugging of the Democratic party headquarters in the Watergate complex "an act of stupidity" and said:

"The President is at least responsible for the persons that he hires that work with him. He certainly is responsible for his campaign manager, for his high-level assistants, and even some of his lower level assistants, so he can't escape it under any circumstances, and if he has any information which should be made known to the American people, I think he should do it forthwith."

He added, "It is difficult to understand how persons working with the President would not make known to him an enterprise of this magnitude involving hundreds of thousands of dollars and involving such potential risk as the Watergate incident involved."

"It is inconceivable to me that they would not have told the President about this matter. In fact, that they wouldn't have asked for his approval or disapproval."

He said "though I think the President took a long time in reaching a decision, I am yet very pleased" that he is taking firm action.