

A Strong GOP Blast at Nixon

Washington

In one of the strongest public statements yet by a Republican, Senator Edward M. Brooke said yesterday President Nixon cannot escape responsibility for the Watergate affair "under any circumstances" without an explanation of why he didn't know what was going on.

The Republican from Massachusetts said he could not understand how aides could have kept the information from the President, that the office of the presidency has been "harmed," that Mr. Nixon took "a long time" reaching a decision to fully

investigate it, and that there was a need for a "restoration of confidence in the integrity of government."

Brooke, appearing on NBC's "Meet the Press," called the bugging of the Democratic party headquarters in the Watergate complex "an act of stupidity," and he 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 it was "conceivable" the matter might have been hidden purposely from presidential view.

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