

Senate Probers May Invite Nixon

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Washington

President Nixon may be invited "to state his side of the case" to the Senate select committee investigating the Watergate affair, Senator Howard H. Baker Jr. (Rep-Tenn.), the vice chairman of the committee, said yesterday.

Baker, the ranking Republican member of the committee, said that the President may be invited to comment on the Watergate case "through counsel, by statement or otherwise," but that it is probably not legally possible to subpoena Mr. Nixon to appear in person before the committee.

Baker made the comments in the NBC program, "Meet the Press."

The Senate committee, which begins its public hearings Thursday, already has listed among the witnesses it intends to call some of the President's closest advisers, including former White House chief of staff H. R. Haldeman, former chief domestic adviser John D. Ehrlichman, former White House counsel John W. Dean III and former Attorney General John N. Mitchell.

The committee has not formally announced plans to seek a statement from Mr. Nixon himself.

In his television appearance, Senator Baker sidestepped direct answers to questions about President

Nixon's possible involvement in the Watergate case or an alleged White House coverup of the affair, saying it would not serve any public purpose to state who he thinks is or is not involved.

Asked whether the President is being investigated by the Senate committee, Baker said:

"There is no person in the United States who is not po-

tentally to be investigated in conjunction with this matter if it relates in a logical way to the scope and jurisdiction of this committee. We are going to examine every lead, we are going to examine every suggestion, and we are going to take into account every statement wherever that leads us."

Baker said repeatedly during the interview that he will pursue the facts of the case "wherever they lead me..". Asked if he is convinced he

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President did not know of the White House involvement in the Watergate affair until March, as Mr. Nixon has said, Baker said, "... I exclude no one from potential involvement."

In response to another question, however, Baker said he "has no reason to disbelieve" the President's public statements about the Watergate case.

Baker said that if the President is guilty of involvement in the Watergate affair "clearly he would be impeached." But Baker added, the issue of impeachment depends entirely on the facts that are discovered in the case.

Baker also called for reforms in campaign financing, saying that "money is the string upon which many of these pearls are strung."

On the CBS television program "Face the Nation," Representative John B. Anderson (Rep-Ill.) said talk of impeachment "has not reached serious proportions" on Capitol Hill and that such discussions do "a disservice to the system and are inappropriate at this time."

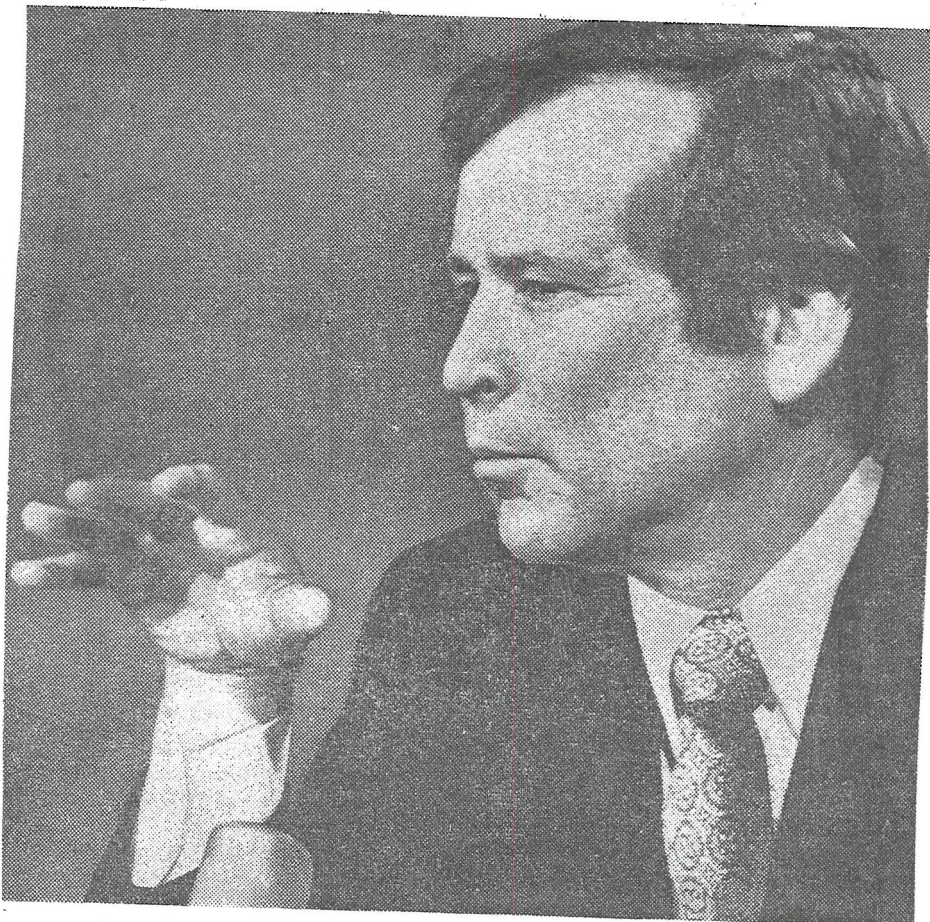
Both Anderson and Senator William Brock (Rep-Tenn.) said large, unreport-

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ed cash campaign contributions were one of the root causes of the Watergate scandal. They called for legislation requiring continual public disclosure of all campaign contributions.

In a related development, sources close to Senator George S. McGovern (Dem.-S.D.) said the 1972 democratic presidential nominee has asked the senate committee investigating the Watergate affair to probe an anti-McGovern letter writing campaign last year.

The sources said McGovern plans to give the committee a file that links the letters to the "Democrats for Nixon" organization set up by former Treasury secretary John B. Connally, who recently joined the GOP.



UPI Telephoto

Senator Baker said he had no reason to suspect Mr. Nixon of involvement