

Nixon a Little Better, Works in Hospital

By Stuart Auerbach

Washington Post Staff Writer

President Nixon made policy decisions yesterday on his Phase IV economic program from his bed at Bethesda Naval Hospital, where doctors said he shows "very slight improvement" in his fight against viral pneumonia.

Presidential press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler said that Mr. Nixon reviewed "policy elements" of the Phase IV program with Alexander M. Haig Jr., the White House chief of staff, and made decisions on some parts of his new economic policy.

Ziegler said the full package of new wage and price control efforts is to be given to the President next week, when final decisions will be made both on the policy and how it will be announced. The President's hospitalization will not delay the Phase IV announcement, Ziegler said.

Meanwhile, the President's chief physician, Dr. Walter R. Tkach, continued to insist that Mr. Nixon has to slow down his work pace for at least two more weeks.

Tkach said he hopes to keep the President in the hospital for at least another five days, but if the doctor had his way, he said, Mr. Nixon would remain at Bethesda for between 7 and 10 days more. After that, Tkach said, the President needs a week to 10 days of recuperation at one of the presidential retreats—Camp David, Key Biscayne, or San Clemente.

Tkach said he prefers the California White House because of the sunshine there, but added that the President wants "to be near the scene and as you know he wants to be in the thick of it." Ziegler said the President may remain in the White House to recuperate.

During the recuperative period, the President's work load will be cut in half, Tkach said. While he is in the hospital, the doctor said, the President is carrying only one-fourth of his normal work load.

Although Mr. Nixon's chest pains lessened, his temperature decreased and he had a good night's sleep, Tkach said yesterday that "the President is still a sick man. We do

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not want to take a chance that there will be a relapse and we are keeping him in bed. . . . I do not want him to become mentally fatigued or physically fatigued."

The doctor said Mr. Nixon is mentally alert. "His mind is very active and clear," Tkach said.

Tkach described the President's improvement as "very slight." His temperature dropped from between 101 degrees and 102 degrees Friday to 100 degrees yesterday.

"He had a lessening of his chest pain, but at midnight we had to give him an injection to insure complete freedom from pain and in order for him to get a good night's rest," Tkach said.

Ziegler characterized Mr. Nixon as looking "better than he did Thursday night (when he entered the hospital) or yesterday (Friday)."

To ease the congestion in the President's lungs, Tkach and the other physicians caring for Mr. Nixon—Dr. William Lukash, assistant White House physician; Dr. Robert Elliott, chief of the pulmonary division at Bethesda Naval Hospital, and Dr. Sol Katz of the Georgetown University medical school, an outside consultant—prescribed inhalation therapy four times a day.

In these treatments droplets of salt water are pushed into the President's lungs to loosen the congestion there. Later his chest and back are vibrated and massaged to help drain the accumulated mucus.

The treatments appear to be working. Yesterday afternoon the doctors reported that a chest X ray taken at 1:30 p.m. showed "some clearing of the pneumonia in the lower right lung."

But the "minimal area of pneumonia" that doctors identified on the left lung Friday through their physical examination showed up yesterday on the X-rays.

The doctors explained that this is not a spread of the disease. It is merely showing up on the X-ray now because the President is able to breathe more deeply, which allows for a clear picture of both lungs.

Once again his only visitors yesterday were Ziegler and Haig on the staff level, and his wife, Pat, and daughter and son-in-law, Julie and David Eisenhower.



Associated Press

Chief presidential physician Walter Tkach: "We do not want to take a chance that there will be a relapse . . ."

The family members stayed at the hospital for slightly more than an hour yesterday afternoon. As they left, Julie Eisenhower told reporters her father was "better." David said the President is "coming along."

Tkach said he will know by midweek whether the President will be able to go through with three official visits scheduled for later this month—by the shah of Iran, Australian Prime Minister Gough Whitlam and Japanese Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka.

The White House announced that President Nixon yesterday declared Mississippi a major disaster area because of heavy rains and flooding there. He also signed a proclamation designating next week as Captive Nations Week and named Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger to the board of governors of the American Red Cross.

Scott Hits Questioning Of President's Illness

WAUKEGAN, Ill., July 14 (AP)—Senate Minority Leader

Hugh Scott says television network newsmen acted reprehensibly in questioning the authenticity of President Nixon's illness.

Scott, speaking Friday night at a dinner in honor of Rep. Robert McClory (R-Ill.), said: "One of the most contemptuous, despicable actions I have ever seen on the part of otherwise responsible people occurred just this morning."

Scott said reporters from the networks approached a Senate Watergate committee member Friday morning to ask if Mr. Nixon were really sick. He did not identify the newsmen or the committee member.

"Just savor the barnyard smell of that tactic," the Pennsylvania Republican said. "Just savor that and you'll have some idea of the venom and of the vengeance that is running wild in Washington."

In New York, ABC, CBS and NBC all said they had aired no report questioning the reality of the President's illness.