

Nixon still won't release files

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Nixon says he'll permit the appointment of a new Watergate special prosecutor next week, but one who will be under the same restraints defied by the ousted Archibald Cox.

"We will not provide presidential documents to a special prosecutor," Nixon told a television news conference last night. It was that issue that triggered Nixon's firing of Cox just a week ago.

Nixon, in a wide-ranging news conference, also said detente with the Soviet Union offers a promise of peace in the Mideast but said finding a "cease-fire" domestically may be more difficult.

In the 40-minute session with newsmen in the East Room of the White House, Nixon also got in a blast at the news media and took an opportunity to praise his close friend Charles G. "Bebe" Rebozo.

In announcing his decision to let Acting Attorney General Robert H. Bork name a new Watergate prosecutor, the President said:

"It is time for those who are guilty to be prosecuted, and for those who are innocent to be cleared . . . I have no greater interest than to see that the special prosecutor has the cooperation from the executive branch and the independence that he needs to bring about that conclusion."

Bork, in an interview yesterday with a small group of newsmen, suggested that Nixon's insistence that the new prosecutor avoid any court battle for additional presidential tapes or documents could lead to another blow-up like the one that led to the Cox firing.

On the Mideast, Nixon said it was his closeness with Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev that averted a confrontation between the two superpowers and offered a promise of peace between Arabs and Israelis.

"I do not mean to suggest that it is going to come quickly because the parties involved are still rather far apart, but I do say that now there are greater incentives within the area to find a peaceful solution."

The President said the United States and the Soviet had agreed to use their influence more than ever to bring about negotiations in the Mideast.

Nixon said he ordered an alert of U.S. armed forces because the United States had reason to believe the Soviet Union was planning to send "a very substantial force into the Mideast, a military force."

But he said that situation has eased and the outlook for peace is the best it has been in 20 years.

Nixon said the new Watergate prosecutor would be independent and "will have total cooperation from the executive branch . . ."

But the President said the White House would not provide "presidential documents to a special prosecutor. We will provide . . . information that is needed from such documents."

As for the firing of Cox, Nixon said, "As far as I am concerned, we had cooperated with the special prosecutor . . . He seemed to be more interested in the issue than he was in a settlement."

Nixon used some of the strongest language of his presidency to bitterly assail the reporting of his administration.

"I have never seen such outrageous, vicious, distorted

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reporting in 27 years of public life," he said.

After he bluntly singled out television news and commentary for criticism, a network correspondent asked: "What is it about the television of these past weeks and months that has so aroused your anger?"

"Don't get the impression that you arouse my anger," Nixon replied. "One can only be angry about those he respects."

But later in the news conference, Nixon said he didn't want to leave the impression "that I don't respect the reporters."

"What I was simply saying was this: that when a commentator takes a bit of news and then, with knowledge of what the facts are, distorts it viciously, I have no respect for the individual."

Asked about a \$100,000 campaign contribution from billionaire Howard Hughes which his friend Rebozo held onto for three years, Nixon said his friend is a totally "honest man."

But a federal agency is considering whether to suspend him as president of a Florida bank in connection with the bank's acceptance of stolen stock as collateral for a \$195,000 loan. Bank officials have denied they knew the stock was stolen.

As for his emotional state, Nixon said: "Well, those who saw me during the Middle East crisis thought I bore up rather well . . ."

"I have a quality which is — I guess I must have inherited it from my Midwestern mother and father — which is that the tougher it gets, the cooler I get. Of course, it isn't pleasant to find your honesty questioned . . . but as far as I'm concerned, I have learned to expect it, it has been my lot throughout my political life. And I suppose because I have been through so much, that may be one of the reasons that when I have to face an international crisis, I have what it takes."