

president

Nixon Takes on TV News

SOMETIMES he gets very discouraged. Sometimes he doesn't even want to get up in the morning. But he is willing to go through any pain to do what he thinks right."

Julie Nixon Eisenhower spoke in her father's behalf last Sunday while dedicating the Dwight D. Eisenhower Junior High School in Chicago — at a time when seemingly few others were publicly rushing forward to support the beleaguered President,

Despite the fact that Mr. Nixon had agreed to surrender the long-fought-over Watergate tapes, impeachment talk was still prevalent around the country last week.

"I'd like to say it's just the normal reaction of the liberals and people who never liked Nixon anyway," said Clarke Reed, the mili-

'Anger? One only has anger with those he respects'

tantly conservative Mississippi state Republican chairman. "But I have to agree that there's real disenchantment among the people who are not normally disenchant-ed."

In a news conference last weekend, once postponed because of Middle East war developments, President Nixon, his face heavy with fatigue and displaying occasional hurt and anger, asserted that he would not be deterred by demands for his impeachment and said he had no intentioning of resigning.

A lot of his problems, he said, stemmed from press coverage — particularly by the TV networks: "I have never heard or seen such outrageous vicious, distorted reporting in 27 years of public life . . . When people are pounded night after night with that kind of frantic, hysterical reporting, it naturally shakes their confidence."

And in response to another question suggesting that the President was "angry" with the media, President Nixon said, "Don't get the impression that you arouse my anger . . . One can only be angry with those he respects."

The Nation

Network Response

It was the first Administration barrage at the press since the attacks last year by former Vice President Spiro Agnew.

Executives of the three major television networks promptly rejected the Presi-

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dent's charges. "I am very sorry it all started up again," said NBC News President Richard C. Wald. "I honestly feel the President is making a mistake — the old mistake of blaming the messenger for the message."

Then Presidential aide Patrick Buchanan, a speechwriter for President Nixon, followed up last Monday evening by calling for legislation to break up what he called "excessive power" of broadcast networks to dominate the flow of ideas to the American public.

Cox's Firing

But the main issue for the government and the public at large had been the firing of Special Watergate Prosecutor Archibald Cox.

The President said he would name a new prosecutor to take over the Watergate investigation, that the prosecutor would have "independence" and "total cooperation" from the White House but would be expected to refrain from suing the White House for information.

Sentiment in Congress, however, seemed to be overwhelming for the establishment of an independent Watergate prosecutor by the House and Senate (see Investigation).

Western Union reported that more than 250,000 telegrams had been sent to government officials following Cox' firing, with even Republican Congressmen reporting ratios running 12-to-1 against the President.

Gerald R. Ford, President Nixon's nominee for Vice President, agreed that the House should "carry on" with the inquiry into impeachment of the President, former Treasury Secretary John Connally said "the President owed the country a better explanation for his actions than we got" and Senator Daniel K. Inouye, a Democratic member of the Watergate committee, asked, "When will this nightmare end?"

Congressman John Rhodes (Rep.-Ariz.), one of the few officials to publicly stand behind the President, said Americans should "get down on their knees and thank God for President Nixon instead of trying to impeach him."

Campus Rallies

But the rallies around the nation last weekend were rallies for impeachment. Ten thousand people attended a "Convocation on Impeachment" on the Berkeley campus. Like rallies on other campuses (Michigan, Duke, Iowa, UCLA among them), the mood was moderate, in contrast to the rebellion and violence of the 1960s.

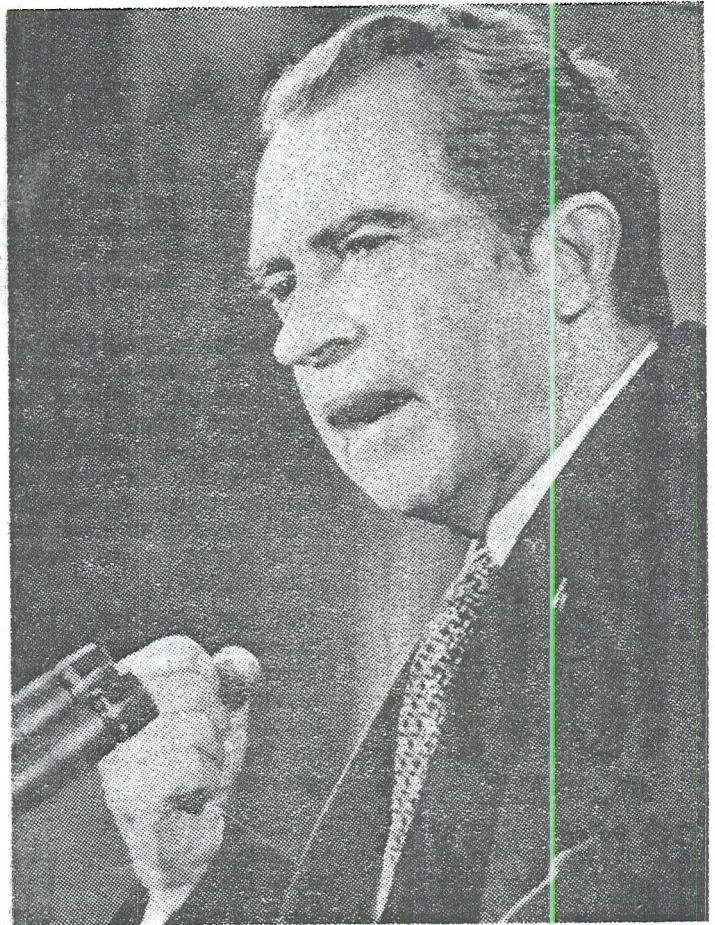
Some 1000 demonstrators paraded around the White House carrying signs reading: "Honk If You Want Him Impeached." Passing

motorists responded with their car horns and local police stopped a number of them and issued \$5 tickets for "unnecessary noise."

A survey conducted by Opinion Research Corp. of Princeton, N.J., for CBS, found that 46 per cent of the 747 people questioned nationwide were against impeachment, 42 per cent in favor with 11 having no opinion.

On the question of resignation, however, 48 per cent felt Mr. Nixon should resign, 39 per cent said he should stay in office and 12 per cent had no opinion.

In the House, where the responsibility for impeach-



AP Photo

MR. NIXON AT HIS PRESS CONFERENCE

ment lay, there was disagreement among Democratic and Republican members of the House Judiciary Committee.

The Democratic majority asserted that grounds for impeachment were not limited to violations of criminal law — "treason, bribery or other high crimes and misdemeanors" — while Republicans were sticking to the claim that the President could only be impeached for criminal wrongdoing.

Broad Scope

Judiciary committee chairman Peter W. Rodino Jr. (Dem.-N.J.), stated that the panel would undertake the "broadest possible area of inquiry." This would include securing records of a number of congressional committees which had investigated Administration controversies or scandals, including the Watergate, House Committee and Armed Services, Banking and Currency, Government Operations and Ways and Means.

At midweek, Rodino got power to issue — without House Judiciary Committee approval — subpoenas to obtain witnesses and documents both for impeachment inquiry and the committee's consideration of Ford to be Vice President.

But Rodino got the authority only by a committee vote of 21 to 17 with votes falling strictly along party lines. The Republicans, said Representative Thomas Railsback (Rep.-Ill.), were only "trying . . . to make clear" that the impeachment inquiry "must be judicious, careful and non-partisan or bipartisan."