

Senate Hearing

Ford for Full Nixon Disclosure On Watergate

Washington

Vice presidential nominee Gerald R. Ford said yesterday that the President should produce "whatever documents" are needed to help clear up responsibility for the Watergate scandal.

Ford also said that although he considers the President "completely innocent" of any wrongdoing in the Watergate affair, he himself "probably" would have resigned had he been attorney general when the President fired special prosecutor Archibald Cox.

He said he could understand why Attorney General Elliot L. Richardson, who had made pledges to the Senate on Cox's independence, had felt forced to resign when Cox was fired. In the same situation, Ford said, he would have felt the same way as Richardson.

Ford made the statements as he wound up his second and final day of testimony before the Senate Rules Committee, which appears headed for rapid approval of his nomination.

OPINIONS

After the hearing, Chairman Howard Cannon (Dem.-Nev.) said of the nomination: "Personally, at this point, I do not see any problems." Senator Robert C. Byrd (Dem.-Va.) said: "His prospects are excellent. . . I think he made high marks in his appearance." A third committee member, Senator Robert P. Griffin (Rep. Mich.) said he believes the

Back Page Col. 1

From Page 1

nomination could reach the floor as early as next week.

Ford needs a majority vote of the House and Senate for confirmation. House Ju-

diciary Committee hearings tentatively are scheduled to start November 13.

Although Ford didn't make any direct criticisms of the President, the over-all tone of his testimony seemed to add his voice to those of the growing number of Republicans seeking complete Watergate disclosure from President Nixon as a way to restore public confidence in the White House.

Ford also told the committee that he doesn't believe a President can legally prevent or terminate a criminal prosecution involving the President, and that "I don't think the public would stand for it" if one President resigned and his successor sought to quash any criminal prosecutions against the resigned man.

In other statements bearing on the Watergate affair or his own philosophy of government, Ford asserted:

- The President shouldn't be able to fire the new Watergate prosecutor, Leon Jaworski, unless "seven out of eight" of the bipartisan leaders of the House and Senate and Judiciary committees concur.

- "You get a more equitable understanding by being open and frank with the news media . . . so I can't imagine me going out and making a hardline speech attacking" the media, or advocating use of the Internal Revenue Service or antitrust laws to try to bully the press. He said he doesn't

share condemnation of the media, which were "the most significant contributors to exposure of the Watergate scandal.

- "It shocked my sensibilities when I read how the FBI moved in" to surround the building holding Cox's files right after President Nixon sacked Cox.

- A President should be a "person of great truth and the American people have to believe he is truthful . . . a man of thought and not impetuous and people have to believe he is thoughtful and won't shoot from the hip."

- Richard Nixon can save his presidency and "the help he'll get from many, many others will enable him to finish the (term of) office with a fine record."

There are "thousands of inaccuracies" in the book "Washington Payoff," written by former lobbyist Robert Winter-Berger, who is to appear in closed session of the committee. Ford used his condemnation of the book as an occasion to repeat previous denials of various Winter-Berger charges, including: That he (Ford) accepted \$15,000 in unrepaid loans from Winter-Berger; that he sought campaign funds for helping out the dairy industry or helping Frank Kellogg seek an ambassadorship; or that he consulted New York psychiatrist Dr. Arnold Hutschnecker for professional reasons. He said that he had visited Hutschnecker once, socially, for about 15 minutes, at Winter-Berger's request, and had never received any psychotherapy from anyone.

He also is favorable to détente with Russia and China; strongly favors \$2.2 billion in arms aid to Israel; would be willing to study possible changes in present U.S. policy to Cuba and SEATO; hopes for eventual reopening of relations with Sweden; and likes the prevailing two-China stance.

Ford denied that he had worked with the White House in 1972 to block the House Banking Committee from initiating subpoenas for a probe of the Watergate affair. He also denied a newspaper story that he had helped an official named Jo-

seph Lawless obtain a specific General Services Administration job that let Lawless give a bid contract to the Steelcase Furniture Co. of Grand Rapids.

"I had nothing whatsoever to do with the award of the contract of Steelcase," said Ford, and nothing to do with putting Lawless in the job controlling the contract. He said he actually had sought to help Lawless shift to another job.

Washington Post