

## FORD CONCEDES AID OF JUSTICE AGENCY

Says He Was Given 'Leads'  
for Impeachment Inquiry  
on Justice Douglas

By MARJORIE HUNTER

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WASHINGTON, Nov. 21. — Gerald R. Ford acknowledged today that the Justice Department provided him with "some leads" that he used three years ago in preparing his request for an inquiry into possible impeachment of Associate Justice William O. Douglas.

But Mr. Ford, now the nominee for Vice President, insisted that his call for an impeachment inquiry had not been instigated by President Nixon or anyone else in his Administration in retaliation for Senate rejection of two Nixon nominees to the Supreme Court.

The previously undisclosed assistance from the Justice Department in the Douglas matter was made public as Representative Ford, the House Republican leader, underwent his third and sharpest round of questioning by the House Judiciary Committee, which is considering his nomination for Vice President.

Both the nominee and the committee questioners showed occasional signs of testiness during the day-long session. The committee will resume its inquiry on Monday.

### "Poor Judgment" Charged

While Republican members pushed for quick confirmation, Democratic liberals explored deeply Mr. Ford's role in the unsuccessful attempt to impeach Justice Douglas and what they termed the nominee's "poor judgment" in selection of aides and associates.

The liberals also continued to protest the Justice Department's refusal to allow the full committee access to 1,700 pages of Federal Bureau of Investigation data on Mr. Ford.

And the liberals chided the Michigan Republican repeatedly for holding up before the committee and television cameras several pages of erotically nude pictures in a magazine containing an article by Justice Douglas.

"That's an incredibly insensitive thing to do, displaying those pictures on nationwide television," Representative Jerome R. Waldie, Democrat of California, said in reprimanding the nominee.

Mr. Ford appeared to be mo-

mentarily flustered as he snapped shut the magazine.

"I wasn't trying to show them to the cameras," he said hastily. "I was trying to show the committee what kind of magazine this is."

It was Mr. Waldie, too, in persistent questioning, who elicited the information that Mr. Ford had sought and received help from the Justice Department in the Douglas matter.

Mr. Ford said that sometime after he began making an investigation into a possible impeachment inquiry into Justice Douglas in 1970, he went to the Justice Department and talked to John N. Mitchell, then the Attorney General.

"I told him I could have cooperation from the department on information it might have on Justice Douglas," Mr. Ford said. He said that Mr. Mitchell replied that he would have "someone contact me."

### "Leads" But No Facts

Sometime later, Mr. Ford said, Will Wilson, the Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Criminal Division, came to his office and gave him "eight or nine" pieces of otherwise unmarked paper containing "some leads" but no hard facts.

Mr. Ford acknowledged, under questioning, that he had thought at the time that it was "unusual" that the Justice Department had given him the information on unidentifiable pieces of paper.

"But we were conducting a low-level, low-key, low-exposure investigation in my office, so I didn't question it any further," Mr. Ford said. He said that the information was "insufficient" and that no further help was sought from the department.

Mr. Waldie disputed the statement that the information was "insufficient." He said that a two-page typewritten statement from the Justice Department concerning affairs in the Dominican Republic appeared "almost verbatim" in the House floor speech Mr. Ford made in calling for the Douglas inquiry.

The Justice Department had originally stipulated that the F.B.I.'s raw data on Mr. Ford could be read only by the committee chairman, Peter W. Rodino Jr., Democrat of New Jersey, and the ranking Republi-

can, Edward Hutchinson of Michigan. Acting Attorney General Robert H. Bork later agreed to include three other Democrats and three other Republicans on the 37-member committee.

Representative John Conyers Jr., Democrat of Michigan, who is black, said today that his only recourse in getting to see the file "may lie in Federal court." Other members also protested what they termed being "placed in a position subservient to the F.B.I."

Democratic liberals also questioned Mr. Ford's judgment in his selection of some aides and associates, including Benton L. Becker, a Washington lawyer who is assisting the nominee

in the confirmation hearings.

Letters introduced at the hearings earlier showed that Mr. Becker had also represented Mr. Ford and two House colleagues on a voluntary basis during the Douglas impeachment inquiry.

The letters appeared to indicate that Mr. Becker had suggested to another Washington lawyer, William O. Bittman, that Mr. Ford and his colleague might be able to assist a Bittman client, Louis C. Wolfson, who was at that time involved in a securities fraud case, if Mr. Wolfson helped them in the Douglas inquiry.