

Richardson's Threats To Resign

Washington

Elliot L. Richardson said last night that he had threatened to resign twice as attorney general before actually doing so, and that he suggested back in August that President Nixon submit to detailed questioning about Watergate.

"On two different occasions before Mr. Cox's firing I made it clear that if he were fired I would be forced to resign," Richardson said.

Richardson said he proposed to the White House in August that Mr. Nixon undergo questioning by persons familiar with the Watergate scandal — specifically Cox and Senators Sam J. Ervin Jr., (Dem-N.C.) and Howard H. Baker Jr., (Rep-Tenn.), the chairman and vice chairman of the Senate Watergate committee. He said he suggested a neutral moderator — perhaps Senator John C. Stennis (Dem-Miss.).

Richardson made the comments on the Dick Cavett television show, which was taped in Washington about

three hours before its airing over the ABC network.

In reply to questions after the program, he told newsmen he had never made the suggestion to Mr. Nixon directly, but rather to General Alexander M. Haig Jr., White House chief of staff, counsel J. Fred Buzhart and Presidential aide Melvin R. Laird.

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