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Hill Eyes Full Nixon Tax Audit

More Data Promised

By Carroll Kilpatrick
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The Joint Committee on Internal Revenue Taxation may go beyond the two areas President Nixon asked it to study and conduct a complete audit of his tax returns, Sen. Russell B. Long (D-La.) said yesterday.

Long's statement came as the White House announced that the President hoped before Christmas to supply Congress with three more packets of information designed to defend his name against charges of scandal.

Long, who is vice chairman of the committee and chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, said the joint committee will meet Wednesday with its staff to decide on the course of its investigation.

"It probably will take a month or more for our able staff of tax lawyers and accountants to conduct this inquiry, question various persons and determine the facts," Long said. "It has not been decided yet whether to hold hearings."

Declaring that the committee did not want to keep anything confidential, Long said that "when we have the facts in hand, we will make them available to the American public."

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In making his tax returns public last weekend, Mr. Nixon said he was asking the joint committee to look into the question of his claimed deduction of \$576,000 for the gift of his vice presidential papers and the non-payment of a capital gains tax on the sale of property adjoining his San Clemente home.

Rep. Wilbur D. Mills (D-Ark.) chairman of the joint committee and of the House Ways and Means Committee said the committee had no choice but to accede to the President's request.

"If any individual taxpayer asks us to look into his return, we will," Mills said.

At the White House, deputy press secretary Gerald L. Warren said Mr. Nixon wanted to present Congress and the public with reports on the ITT case, the milk fund and the so-called plumbers operation before members go home for the Christmas holidays.

The President has scheduled a meeting today on the 1974 campaign with Vice President Ford, GOP national chairman George Bush, Sen. Bill Brock (Tenn.) and Rep. Robert H. Michel (Ill.), chairmen, respectively, of the Senate and House Republican campaign committees.

The President's desire to supply Congress with additional material on Watergate-related matters and to meet with GOP campaign leaders was believed to reflect his recognition that the month-long congressional adjournment could decisively influence the congressional attitude toward impeachment.

Some members have said that they will test sentiment

while in their districts for Christmas to determine the public attitude for or against impeachment.

The mixed reception which the President's release of his tax returns brought was reflected in comments on Capitol Hill.

Senate Whip Robert P. Griffin (R-Mich.) said he hoped the nation would credit the President with an "unprecedented step" in disclosing his financial transactions and not engage in "nitpicking."

But Rep. Charles Vanik (R-Ohio), a member of the Ways and Means Committee, said "there is something awfully wrong with a tax system that lets anyone making \$200,000 a year or more pay a tax rate of 4 per cent to 7.5 per cent. The President's case presents the best evidence yet of the need for long-overdue tax reform."

Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.) said: "It is my belief that what he (the President) has done is legal, but it still raises questions of appearances."

In the House, responding to the report that Mr. Nixon

paid no state income taxes, Speaker Carl Albert (D-Okla.) said he paid \$875 per quarter in Oklahoma and Democratic Majority Leader Thomas P. O'Neill said he paid \$2,000 a year in Massachusetts.

The White House has insisted that its voluminous report on the President's finances showed he did nothing illegal, and it issued a separate 12-page statement listing published allegations and White House answers to them.

It said that Mr. Nixon spent "up to \$25,000" of his own money to employ Coopers & Lybrand, certified public accountants, to audit the President's returns.

Among the allegations, the White House cited a Washington Post headline of Aug. 7, 1973, which said: "\$10 Million Spent On Nixon Homes."

The facts, said the White House, show that "only 2 per cent — or about \$200,000 — has actually been spent on the President's homes in San Clemente and Key Biscayne."

The Post story was based on a General Services Administration report issued at

White House instructions that said a total of ~~near~~ \$10 million was spent for new construction, repairs, security installations and communications at the presidential compounds in California and Florida.

The second paragraph of the story went on to say that "the White House revealed that \$5.9 million was spent for military facilities — mainly communications installations — at Mr. Nixon's homes in San Clemente and Key Biscayne and at the island resort in the Bahamas owned by the President's close friend, New York industrialist Robert H. Abplanalp."