

# Ervin Won't Run Again

Washington

Bible - quoting Sam J. Ervin Jr., the chairman of the Senate Watergate committee, announced yesterday that he will not be a candidate for re-election in 1974.

Ervin the North Carolina Democrat who has served in the Senate for 19 years, said that at 77 he is too old to complete another term.

"Since time takes a constantly accelerating toll of those of us who live for many years, it is simply not responsible for me to assume that my eyes will remain undimmed and my

natural force stays unabated for so long a time," Ervin said.

Ervin, long considered the foremost constitutional expert in the Senate, this year combined his legal knowledge with a homespun manner and an extraordinary pair of eyebrows to become an overnight national television hero during the Senate Watergate hearings.

He also became a favorite target of the White House, which had been encouraging opposition to him in next year's election.

North Carolina Governor James E. Holshouser, an up-

set Republican winner in 1972, claimed recently that GOP polls showed Ervin vulnerable if he sought re-election.

Ervin said his decision was not based either on Watergate or the probability of serious opposition next year. He said that age was the main consideration and that he was announcing his retirement now as "a Christmas present" to his wife, "Miss Margaret." He also said the "first thing I'm going to do is go fishing."

Characteristically, Ervin announced his decision at a

small press conference in his office to which only North Carolina reporters were invited. Afterward he put out a statement in which Ervin said that he and his wife would return to his native Morgantown when his present term expires.

"Here we hope to dwell for a time among the people who have known us best and loved us most and to watch the sun set in indescribable glory," Ervin said.

Ervin served one term in the House from 1946 to 1948 and was a member of the North Carolina supreme court when he was named

senator.

He became a hero to liberals for his civil libertarian stands against "no knock" search and preventive detention laws and for his investigation of army spying on civilians.

But Ervin was looked upon in a different way by those who came to praise him during the civil rights battles of the late 1950s and early 1960s. His biblical and Shakespearean quotations and flowing southern rhetoric were invoked then in behalf of states' rights and against most civil rights proposals.