

JAN 17 1974

SEChronicle

# Ford Denies Gap Is Reason to Impeach

Washington

Vice President Gerald Ford said yesterday that "even if you take the worst side" of the latest Watergate tape disclosure "it doesn't justify impeachment."

The vice president told reporters he believes the public will not make a final judgment on disclosure of the tape erasures causing an 18.5 - minute gap on one tape until it hears more.

"Premature judgments

can sometimes get you in trouble," Ford said. "I think the American people are going to reserve judgment until they get the full benefit of the hearing Friday."

White House lawyers have said they will cross-examine tomorrow the panel of experts who reported to U.S. Judge John J. Sirica Tuesday that the gap was caused by at least five separate erasures and perhaps as many as nine.

*Associated Press*