

Nixon Aides /
Had Hand in
Ford Speech

Washington

The White House acknowledged yesterday that President Nixon's speechwriters helped Vice President Gerald Ford prepare a speech delivered Tuesday accusing Watergate critics of plotting Mr. Nixon's downfall.

"Our White House speechwriters did assist the vice president's staff in formulating ideas he wanted to put across in his speech," deputy press secretary Gerald Warren said.

Warren had told newsmen Tuesday that the speech, delivered before the American Farm Bureau Federation in Atlantic City, N.J., was entirely Ford's work. But after checking further, he volunteered the information that Ford had received White House help.

Ford's remarks were interpreted widely as signaling a new White House counter-offensive on Watergate.

The vice president charged that a "coalition of groups like the AFL-CIO, the Americans for Democratic Action and other powerful pressure organizations" were waging a massive propaganda campaign against Mr. Nixon aimed at supplanting the policies endorsed overwhelmingly by the voters in 1972.

Referring to the help provided by Mr. Nixon's speechwriters, Warren said, "We only do it at the request of the vice president."

He said the White House has never attempted to dictate Ford's public utterances and his speeches do not have to be cleared by the White House.

Drafts of speeches have been submitted to Ford's staff and then given to the vice president for his own editing, Warren said.

"After the vice president finishes his work on them he goes ahead and makes them," he added. "In every case, he always shaped the draft in his own words."

United Press