

Goldwater Won't Play 'Executioner'

Washington

Senator Barry Goldwater (Rep-Ariz.) says liberal columnists are "trying to set me up" as President Nixon's political executioner.

Goldwater said he won't play that role.

At the same time, the 1964 Republican presidential candidate says he has private polls showing that Nixon and Watergate unpopularity will

cause a 10 per cent loss of votes to Republican candidates this fall.

And he said should Mr. Nixon step aside for any reason, "I can see nothing wrong with Jerry Ford becoming President."

"I don't say that to urge the President to resign or to urge his impeachment," he said in an interview.

"It's just that we have a good man in the vice presi-

dent and there would be no transition problems at all."

Goldwater was asked to assess the change that some perceive in him from the humiliated loser of the Republican right wing ten years ago to a respected spokesman of his party today.

"I don't sense the same thing that some of the press seem to sense, that the Republican party is looking at me as an elder statesman or one of their patriarchs . . .," he said and added: "I think there's just a lot of the press trying to egg me into saying, 'Resign Mr. President,' and I'm not about to do it."

"I think they're trying to set me up," Goldwater said of press predictions that his outspoken criticism of Mr. Nixon's handling of Watergate will cause him in the end to head a delegation of party and business leaders calling for the President's resignation.

"The liberal columnists who are figuring I might fall for this, saying, 'damn it, I can go down in history,'" he said. "Well, I don't want to go down in history that way."

"I wouldn't do it without



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BARRY GOLDWATER
'Trying to set me up'

some concrete evidence," he said. "I have not seen anything yet that would force me to say, 'I think this man has to go.'"

"And I say that," Goldwater said, "even though I can sense a very strong feeling right here on the hill and you're going to see it more and more, that many Republicans would like to run this year without Mr. Nixon."

"But I believe my loyalty is first to the country and not to the Republican Party and I think that it is best served by helping this man as long as there is any indication that he deserves it."

Goldwater has urged the White House to be completely candid about Watergate involvements.

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