

Weicker Hint sNixon May Have

By DAVID E. ROSENBAUM

WASHINGTON, Feb. 6—Senator Lowell P. Weicker Jr. suggested today that President Nixon may have committed a criminal offense when he did not immediately report to the proper officials his information about the Watergate burglary.

Mr. Weicker, a Connecticut Republican who sits on the Senate Watergate committee, made the suggestion in a list of 11 questions that he posed to Mr. Nixon and sent to the White House.

In light of the President's repeated refusals to meet with the committee, the panel voted unanimously last month to permit any member of the committee to submit written questions to the President.

Mr. Weicker is the only Senator who has done so. Two other senators, who asked not to be identified, said today that they had not submitted questions because they were sure that Mr. Nixon would not answer them and that, therefore, such questions could be construed only as an effort to gain publicity.

A White House spokesman said tonight that Senator Weicker's questions were under consideration in the counsel's office.

In one question, Senator Weicker cited the United States Code's definition of misprision of felony:

"Whoever, having knowledge of the actual commission of a felony cognizable by a court of the United States, conceals and does not as soon as possible make known the same to some judge or other person in civil or military authority under the United States, shall be fined not more than \$500 or imprisoned not more than three years, or both."

Mr. Weicker noted that the President has said that he learned the details of the Watergate burglary and cover-up last March 21 from John W. Dean 3d, then the White House counsel. The Senator asked, "Which judge or law enforcement official did you contact?"

Mr. Weicker said that the same charge might apply to the President's delay in notifying the authorities about the burglary at the office of Dr. Daniel Ellsberg's former psychiatrist.

'Old Fashioned' Charge

Legal experts said today it was possible that the President might technically be guilty of misprision of felony, but they said it was an "old-fashioned" charge, rarely used today.

Most of Mr. Weicker's questions to the President sought to resolve contradictions between Mr. Nixon's public statements and evidence and testimony that the Watergate committee has obtained.

For example, the Senator noted Mr. Nixon's repeated statements that he was ignorant of many of the activities of his aides because he was concentrating so heavily on foreign affairs.

The Senator asked the President to explain those statements in view of the fact that the logs of his meetings with aides in the six weeks after the Watergate burglary showed hundreds of meetings with aides who were involved in Watergate-related scandals and only a few brief meetings with his principal foreign affairs adviser, Henry A. Kissinger.

Among the other questions were the following:

¶How could the President reconcile the statement by his press secretary, Ronald L. Ziegler, that the Watergate break-in was a "third-rate burglary"

with the fact that John D. Ehrlichman, his domestic counselor, discussed at a meeting with the President whether executive clemency should be granted the burglars.

¶Whom did the President order on March 21, 1973, to "get all the facts and report directly to me"? Numerous former aides

Committed Criminal Offense

have testified that they were never given such orders.

¶Why did the President not demand the resignation of L. Patrick Gray 3d, who was then acting director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, after he learned that Mr. Gray had burned evidence?

¶Mr. Nixon has said several

times that he ordered Mr. Dean to obtain F.B.I. reports on the Watergate investigation. One of the acts of conspiracy to which Mr. Dean has pleaded guilty was asking for these reports. What was the difference in the President's "measure of responsibility from that of John Dean"?