

President And Ford Confer

Resignation Discussion Flatly Denied

By Jules Witcover
Washington Post Staff Writer

President Nixon met with Vice President Gerald R. Ford privately for an hour yesterday as pressure for Mr. Nixon to resign mounted and White House aides continued to insist he has no intention of doing so.

The meeting with Ford immediately fanned rumors that the President was contemplating some major step, but both the White House and the Vice President flatly denied that the resignation issue was even discussed.

Gerald L. Warren, deputy presidential press secretary, said Mr. Nixon did not have to raise the question because Ford "knows very well the President's intention and feeling on the matter, and that the President intends to complete his term."

For the second straight day, reports that Mr. Nixon would hold a sudden news conference or would make an unscheduled television address flooded the White House and were denied by Warren.

He also denied reports that the Cabinet was being assembled to hear from the President, or that Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger was flying back to Washington to receive the President's resignation, as stipulated by law.

Ford went from the meeting in Mr. Nixon's Executive Office Building office directly to Buffalo for a speaking engagement. At a press conference there, he, too, said the subject of resignation had not come up, "but I could infer that he has no intention of resigning. In my judgment President Nixon will continue in office."

The same assurances also came from an aide to Mrs.

Nixon and from White House political advisers Dean Burch and Anne Armstrong.

Mrs. Nixon's press secretary, Helen McCain Smith, speaking for her boss, said, "The decision has been made that he won't quit," and she said Mrs. Nixon "can't understand the Republican leadership" for failing to rally behind her husband.

Burch, on NBC's "Today" show (WRC) said: "I don't think the President has any intention of resigning. He's aware of the concern [but] (a) he was elected to a job, and (b) he is convinced he has not committed any impeachable offense." To quit now "would imply at least" that he was guilty of some wrongdoing, Burch said.

And Mrs. Armstrong, **See PRESIDENT, A17, Col. 1**

Ford was asked at the Buffalo press conference whether the President had talked to him about this and other critical remarks in the Illinois speech. Mr. Nixon, he said, had told him only "maybe I was working too hard and should do less traveling."

The Vice President is undertaking a speaking schedule totaling 34 appearances in 11 states in May. Today he is speaking at Texas A&M and to Republican groups in Houston and Dallas. On Monday he goes to Louisiana and Florida and then to Honolulu at the end of next week.

Ford said he knew of no area "where there is a sharp disagreement between me and the President." But he said, "I will continue to be my own man."

According to administra-

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fore speaking to the Ohio Association of Broadcasters in Willoughby, Ohio, said the President would "absolutely not" resign. To do so, she said, "would be a very bad thing for this country."

Ford said in Buffalo that he had discussed foreign and domestic policy matters with Mr. Nixon and "procedures that would be followed" in the impeachment inquiry under way against the President in the House Judiciary Committee.

The Vice President said he expects "a close vote" in the committee, but said if the full House based its decision on the facts a majority would not vote for impeachment.

Ford's visit with the President, not on either man's schedule as of late Thurs-

day, caused a tirade not only because of continued resignation rumors around Washington but in light of Ford's implied criticism of the edited White House transcripts on Watergate earlier Thursday in a speech at Charleston, Ill.

In that speech, the Vice President had seemed to suggest that deletions by the White House contributed to a "crisis of confidence" in the federal government.

"While it may be easy to delete characterization from the printed page," he said then, "we cannot delete characterization from people's minds with a wave of the hand." Later, Ford said he was not "obliquely referring" to the transcripts, which used the phrase "characterization omitted" for some deletions.

tion sources, the meeting between the President and the Vice President was tentatively arranged Thursday morning when Mr. Nixon, at a White House swearing in ceremony, suggested that Ford stay behind to talk after a Cabinet meeting tentatively planned for yesterday morning. The Cabinet meeting was not held, but Ford, who was in Illinois, did not know it would not be and told a reporter he would see Mr. Nixon yesterday morning. Thursday night, the President informed Ford's office the meeting was still on.

Mr. Nixon was described by Ford yesterday as being "in excellent shape, mentally and physically. He's relaxed."

After his press conference, the Vice President

spoke at a lunch given by the Buffalo Building and Construction Trades Council. Secretary of Labor Peter J. Brennan, introducing Ford, referred to him at one point as "the President," to him at one point as "the President," to laughter and applause from the audience. "There'll be a hell of a lot of talk about that," Brennan said, "It was just a Freudian slip."

Later this afternoon the President is to fly to Stillwater, Okla., to deliver the commencement address at Oklahoma State University. It was not determined last night whether he would return to Washington or perhaps go to his home in Key Biscayne for the rest of the weekend, but Warren said no other public appearances are planned.



President Nixon presented three faces during a photo session between meetings in the White House and Executive Office Building yesterday.

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