

# Nixon-Ford Friendship Seems Strained

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There are strong indications that the 25-year personal and political friendship between President Nixon and Vice President Ford has begun to unravel.

Neither Mr. Nixon nor Mr. Ford will say publicly that their relations are strained, but it is now a matter of public record that the two men are at odds over the White House's refusal to turn over additional tapes and other material to the House Judiciary Committee.

The Vice President made this clear in a series of interviews and news conferences following the White House announcement last Wednesday that Mr. Nixon would give the committee no

further Watergate materials for its inquiry into whether he should be impeached.

President Nixon's letter of refusal had scarcely reached the committee before Mr. Ford told a gathering in Wilmington, Del., that night that he hoped Mr. Nixon would give the impeachment panel "any relevant material and the sooner the better."

The following morning, the President called Mr. Ford to

the White House, and the two men conferred privately for 45 minutes. A few hours later, Mr. Ford said in a taped interview with the American Broadcasting Company—an interview broadcast the following night—that the White House's "stonewall attitude" in refusing to divulge further Watergate-related tapes or materials "isn't necessarily the wisest policy."

Until yesterday, neither the White House nor Mr. Ford had discussed what went on at that 45-minute private meeting, although it was widely assumed that the two men did voice their differences on the tapes issue.

Mr. Ford, during a news conference last night at Danbury, Conn., conceded that he had

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