

Ford Agrees Tapes Could Leave Doubt

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., July 18—Vice President Gerald Ford revealed for the first time tonight that he had listened to some of the White House Watergate tapes and said he now understands why there is disagreement over what they say.

In a news conference, Ford said he reversed his earlier stand and asked to listen to some tapes after disputes arose over differing versions by the White House, the House Judiciary Committee and the Special Prosecutor's office.

"I asked to hear several of them," Ford said. "And as a result I have."

The vice president said that on one occasion he listened to tapes at the White House and another time he listened elsewhere, but he would not say where.

"I have, I think, read, heard or otherwise absorbed the various material that has been submitted to the Judiciary Committee. There are some differences in the transcripts," said Ford.

"But I've also listened to several of those tapes where there are these alleged discrepancies. If anybody can be 100 per cent certain that their version is any more accurate than any other version, you would have to be a genius."