

Ford Won't Lobby For the President

By Jules Witcover
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RENO, July 30—Vice President Gerald R. Ford made clear today that he does not intend to lobby aggressively among House members to vote against the President's impeachment—unless they solicit his views.

Ford said his position as Vice President puts him in a different situation from that in which he was as House minority leader with obligations to rally party support for Republican positions.

"I have indicated in the past, and I will reiterate now, that I am not going out as I used to when I was minority leader and affirmatively and aggressively try to convince members that they ought to vote this way or that way. I think this is a different situation.

"I intend to, when the proper opportunity arises, to discuss with members of Congress, both Republican and Democrat, my views and why I hold them." But he did not elaborate on when this opportunity might come.

Ford's intention to take a back seat on anti-impeachment lobbying is underlined by his travel schedule, which will keep him on the go almost continuously through August. He is to be in the South, on the West Coast, and in Hawaii during this critical period. The

House is tentatively due to travel during the impeachment Aug. 15.

Ford defended his broad travels during the impeachment crisis today as necessary to advance Republican chances in the fall elections. He denied flatly he is trying to build a 1976 candidacy, and reiterated that he has no intention of being a candidate two years hence.

Asked if that meant he would not run, he replied: "I guess you can translate that into 'I won't run.'"

Ford attributed the fact that he has become a lonely voice among Republican leaders in support of President Nixon to his own candor and conviction that Mr. Nixon is innocent, rather than to any new pressure from the President or other source.

Ford denied that he has stepped up his defense of Mr. Nixon in recent days as the prospects against the President in House impeachment proceedings, in Ford's own words, "have narrowed."

"I've always been a forthcoming, candid individual," he said in a press conference here after a swing to the West Coast. "If I have deep convictions, which I do in this one, I feel, based on my convictions, the need to speak out."