

GAO Report on Nixon Pension

Washington

President Nixon would be eligible for the \$60,000 pension paid former Presidents if he resigned, but would lose it if he were impeached and removed from office, a report of the General Accounting Office indicates.

The report, written in impersonal terms without specific mention of Mr. Nixon, was prepared at the request of Senator Philip A. Hart (Dem-Mich.).

"Clearly, if a President is impeached by the House of Representatives, and convicted and removed from office by the Senate, he would not be entitled to receive any of the benefits granted to former Presidents by (the presidential pension law)," GAO wrote.

This law provides for former Presidents a pension equivalent to the salary of a cabinet officer. Currently, this is \$60,000.

"The legislative history of all of the pertinent statutes appears that a President who resigns from office at any time prior to a conviction in the Senate, would be entitled to the presidential pension."

The GAO further noted that a President who previously served as vice president, representative, senator, or as a federal employee or a member of the military might have other pension rights. Mr. Nixon served in all these capacities.

"If a President is impeached and removed from office, it would be for the Civil Service Commission and the courts to decide what effect, if any, this action would have on his civil service annuity," the GAO said.

Secret Service protection for former Presidents is pro-

vided by a different law which does not go into the circumstances under which a President leaves office, the GAO said. It provides that, at the direction of the secretary of the treasury, a former President and his wife are entitled to lifetime protection.

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