

SF Examiner

Full truth still coming on pardon

By John Hall
Examiner Correspondent

WASHINGTON — President Ford has told Republican congressional leaders Americans do not yet have the full truth about his pardon of Richard M. Nixon — strongly implying that undisclosed information from Watergate prosecutors motivated the decision.

"When all the facts are known, there will be a better understanding of the decision concerning the pardon," Ford was quoted as telling the leaders at the White House.

The statement yesterday confirmed what some of Nixon's supporters have suspected — that his announcement of an unconditional pardon for the ex-President was not complete and there was more to tell.

Stunned by the public outcry against the pardon, Ford's supporters in Congress, White House officials and even a member of the ex-President's family sought to emplant the idea that Nixon was suffering from severe depression because of his financial worries and the threat of criminal prosecution.

One associate who saw Nixon in the final hour before he announced his resignation last month discounted claims by those who have met with him recently that he appears to be composed and in good health.

"There are two Nixons," he said. "I saw him break down and sob just a half hour before he went on television as cool as a cucumber."

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ber. Only those who have been with him out there (in San Clemente) all the time know how he's been affected."

One of Ford's friends noted that the President was especially close to Nixon's daughter, Julie Eisenhower, and said it would have been characteristic if she had kept him advised of her father's problems.

Another congressional source agreed, and also noted that Watergate Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski supplied information to Ford about Nixon's possible criminal liabilities that have not been disclosed. These sources said the impression at the White House was that Jaworski did not want to prosecute Nixon and — if he did not invite the pardon — appeared to have welcomed it.

Ford, meanwhile, rolled back on a White House announcement Tuesday that pardons were under consideration for all the Watergate defendants.

Congressional sources said the announcement was simply in error and that Ford had never meant to imply that pardons for the 48 jailed or indicted Watergate defendants were being studied. In fact, one GOP leader came away from the meeting satisfied that Ford will not pardon anybody else, including John Dean, the President's principal accuser.

Congressional critics of the Nixon pardon, however,

seemed to be inviting a pardon for Dean, former Nixon lawyer Herbert Kalmbach and others who pleaded guilty and were sent to jail after cooperating with the prosecutors.

Sens. Edward Brooke, R-Mass., Alan Cranston, D-Calif., and Robert C. Byrd, D-W Va., have introduced resolutions urging Ford not to grant pardons to anyone until their trials and appeals been completed.

The non-binding measures, expected to be approved by the Senate, would urge Ford to forego for now the pardon process for H. R. Haldeman, John Mitchell, John Ehrlichman and the three others scheduled to go on trial Sept. 30 for the Watergate cover-up conspiracy. But it says consideration of pardons for Dean, Kalmbach and others who have been through the judicial process might not be inappropriate.

Brooke said he personally favored a pardon for Dean because he had turned state's evidence. But Cranston and Byrd said there was nothing Ford could do not to correct the inequities of the Nixon pardon. Byrd said he opposed executive clemency for any Watergate defendant including Dean.

White House sources said panic had set in at the White House because of the unexpectedly severe reaction to the Nixon pardon, and that was largely responsible for Tuesday's mixup about the consideration of pardons for all.