

Ford to Testify Oct. 10 on Pardon

Washington

President Ford will appear before a congressional subcommittee October 10 to answer questions on how and why he pardoned Richard Nixon, the subcommittee chairman announced yesterday.

Congressional researchers said Mr. Ford's appearance, which will be carried live on national television and radio, may mark the first time an incumbent president has ever consented to testify at a congressional hearing. Reports that Abraham Lincoln appeared in a similar capacity have not been substantiated, researchers said.

Representative William L. Hungate (Dem-Mo.), chairman of the House Judiciary subcommittee on criminal justice, said Mr. Ford has agreed to appear before the committee at 10 a.m. (EDT) October 10 to answer questions concerning his full pardon of the former president, including whether a "deal" was involved.

Hungate said a majority of his nine-member panel agreed to open the Ford appearance to live television cameras.

The questioning of Mr. Ford will be limited to the "parameters" of 14 questions listed in two resolutions of inquiry introduced earlier by Representatives Bella Abzug (Dem-N.Y.) and John Conyers (Dem-Mich.), Hungate said.

Those questions generally concern what Mr. Ford may have known about Mr. Nixon's mental or physical condition and about possible charges pending against

him, whether the September 8 pardon was part of a deal arranged with Mr. Nixon before he resigned and with whom Mr. Ford discussed the matter before making his decision.

Representative Elizabeth Holtzman (Dem-N.Y.), a subcommittee member, said she believes the ground rules mean she can ask Mr. Ford whether he had made a deal with Mr. Nixon to allow him to retain and eventually destroy his Watergate tapes and documents.

Hungate said he is not sure that line of questioning will be allowed.

At the time of the pardon, the White House announced the remaining tapes and documents would be transferred to Mr. Nixon's custody in California and could be destroyed after a stipulated period — a provision that has been opposed in many quarters and has not yet been carried out.

Hungate said he will extend the courtesy of participation in the Ford hearing to representative Peter W. Rodino Jr. (Dem-N.J.) and Edward Hutchinson (Rep-Mich.), the chairman and ranking Republican member of the Judiciary Committee.

But Rodino said he does not intend to participate.

United Press