

House Panel Ends Investigation Into Ford's Reasons for Pardon

NYTimes

NOV 23 1974

WASHINGTON, Nov. 22 (AP)—A House Judiciary subcommittee decided today that it would make no further effort to get an explanation from President Ford or his aides of the reasons for his pardon of former President Richard M. Nixon.

By a vote of 6 to 3 the subcommittee, headed by Representative William L. Hungate, Democrat of Missouri recommended rejection of two resolutions requesting answers to a series of questions about the pardon.

Mr. Ford appeared before the subcommittee Oct. 17 and submitted to questioning on the subject. However, some panel members and Representative Bella S. Abzug, Democrat of Manhattan; sponsor of one of the resolutions, said they felt he raised more questions than he answered.

The three subcommittee members, all Democrats, who voted against rejection of the resolutions were Representatives Robert W. Kastenmeier of Wisconsin, Don Edwards of California, and Elizabeth Holtzman of Brooklyn. They wanted to call additional witnesses, including Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., former White House chief of staff.

In his testimony, President Ford said General Haig first raised the subject of a pardon with him on Aug. 1, the week before Mr. Nixon resigned. Mrs. Abzug, in a letter to Mr. Hungate continuing the inquiry, said Mr. Ford's testimony contradicted an earlier White House statement that Mr. Ford first discussed a pardon for Mr. Nixon on Aug. 28.

"In view of President Ford's incomplete and often contradictory testimony," said Mrs. Abzug, who is not a member of the Judiciary's committee, "it is imperative that the other principals involved in the Nixon pardon be called to testify."

Besides General Haig, she suggested that the subcommittee call the White House cour-

sel, Philip W. Buchen, and Benton Becker, a lawyer who negotiated terms of the pardon with Mr. Nixon and his aides in San Clemente, Calif.

The four Republican members of the subcommittee said President Ford's appearance and responses satisfied the terms of the resolutions, which require only answers, not that the answers be satisfactory to all concerned.

Mr. Hungate and Representatives James R. Mann, Democrat of South Carolina, sided with the four Republicans in the vote to recommend to the full Judiciary Committee that the resolutions be laid aside. The Judiciary Committee will take up the matter after Thanksgiving, Mr. Hungate said.