

## 3 DOCTORS REACH OPINION ON NIXON

### Court-Appointed Unit Silent on Evaluation That Sirica Will Receive This Week

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LOS ANGELES, Nov. 26— Court-appointed physicians announced today that they had formulated a unanimous opinion on former President Richard M. Nixon's ability to testify at the Watergate cover-up trial but would not disclose it until they deliver their evaluation to Federal District Judge John J. Sirica this week.

"Our report is brief, specific and to the point," remarked Dr. Charles A. Hufnagel, chairman of the three-physician panel, before boarding a plane for Washington.

However, he said the contents of the report would remain confidential, and he refused to comment on any aspects of the case except to note that Mr. Nixon cooperated when the medical team examined him yesterday at his San Clemente estate.

Dr. Hufnagel turned aside all questions dealing with his observations — medical or otherwise — formed during the one-hour examination inside Mr. Nixon's seaside home.

#### A "Conclusive" Opinion

"Our opinion was conclusive and absolutely unanimous," remarked one of the other physicians, Dr. Richard Starr Ross, a cardiovascular disease specialist with Johns Hopkins University Hospital and Medical School in Baltimore.

The third member of the panel was Dr. John A. Spittel Jr., an internist with the Mayo Clin-

ic in Rochester, Minn.

The panel was selected by Judge Sirica from candidates submitted by both the prosecution and defense attorneys in the current trial of Mr. Nixon's former top aides.

Dr. Hufnagel, a heart specialist associated with Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, is an old friend of Mr. Nixon's personal physician, Dr. John C. Lungren. Both men attended the University of Notre Dame together, and both have been active in Notre Dame affairs since then. Dr. Hufnagel was graduated from Notre Dame in 1937, one year ahead of Dr. Lungren.

Dr. Lungren is on vacation, but he and Dr. Hufnagel conferred by telephone about Mr. Nixon's condition before the medical team arrived here.

Dr. Lungren has said that his patient's recovery from surgery last month, will prevent him from traveling for at least another month. The surgery was performed to prevent blood clots emanating from Mr. Nixon's left leg from traveling to his heart and lungs.

The Nixon doctor has also raised the possibility that the taking of Mr. Nixon's sworn deposition at home, or the alternative of videotaping his testimony, could create stressful situations that could be harmful to the former President's health.

Dr. Hufnagel indicated on Sunday that if the medical team's examination of Mr. Nixon was found to be causing stress detrimental to his health, it would be immediately terminated. The examination, described as "thorough," was carried out according to plan, however, leaving the implication that such concern had not occurred.

Before visiting Mr. Nixon at San Clemente, the team spent yesterday morning with other physicians who have attended Mr. Nixon and went over the patient's medical records, X-rays and results of laboratory tests.

The evaluation will be one of the factors that Judge Sirica weighs before ruling on Mr. Nixon's ability to testify at the Watergate trial.