

By EVERETT R. HOLLES
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SAN DIEGO, Dec. 31—The Richard M. Nixon Foundation is preparing to disband and abandon its ambitious plan, introduced in 1969, to build a library and museum costing \$8-million to \$12-million as a memorial to the former President's "historic achievements."

The foundation's dwindled assets, which now include less than \$2,000 in cash, will be turned over to Mr. Nixon's Quaker alma mater, Whittier College on the eastern outskirts of Los Angeles, from which he was graduated in 1934.

The Whittier College board of trustees, at a special meeting on Dec. 2, agreed to accept and administer the foundation's assets "and perhaps revive the library project at some future date," a college official said.

Mrs. Patricia Riley Hitt of Laguna Beach who is vice chairman of the foundation's executive board and a former member of the Nixon Administration, said a prime reason for dissolving the foundation was the Government's withholding of certain of Mr. Nixon's Presidential papers and records.

Availability in Doubt

"Many of those records would be absolutely essential to the library and museum we had planned, but we do not know when, if ever, they will be available to Mr. Nixon and to us," she said. "Also, it is quite evident that this is not the proper time, and may not be for several years, to seek public donations for such a library."

A mail poll of the foundation's 25 trustees, all of whom were selected by Mr. Nixon in May, 1969, from among friends,

financial supporters, White House aides and members of his family, is under way to obtain their formal approval for disbanding the foundation.

The poll was begun by Mrs. Hitt after consultations with Mr. Nixon at his San Clemente estate, where he is recuperating from his recent hospitalization, and in agreement with the foundation's president, Leonard K. Firestone, Ambassador to Belgium.

Mrs. Hitt said Mr. Nixon had agreed to the proposal to abandon plans for building the library; at least for the foreseeable future, "but naturally with the same regret we all feel."

Endorsement Expected

"We have thus far received responses from slightly less than half of the foundation trustees, but there have been none who objected to the proposal and we anticipate early endorsement, either unanimous or near unanimous," said Mrs. Hitt, who served in the Nixon Administration as Assistant Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare under Robert H. Finch, who is also a foundation trustee.

The Nixon Foundation's activities have been in limbo for more than two years since four of its seven executive trustees were implicated and later indicted in the Watergate scandal. They include former Attorney General John N. Mitchell, John D. Ehrlichman, former Presidential domestic affairs adviser, and H. R. Haldeman, former White House chief of staff.

The other executive trustee enshared in Watergate was Mr. Nixon's former attorney, Herbert W. Kalmbach, who is serv-

ing a 6-to-18-month sentence in Lompoc Federal Prison.

The poll of the Nixon Foundation's 26 trustees was undertaken after several key members agreed with Mr. Firestone and Mrs. Hitt that the group should be dissolved. These included Jack Drown, the foundation's treasurer who is a periodicals distributor in Long Beach and whose wife is a long-time friend of Mrs. Nixon; Taft Schreiber, vice president of the Music Corporation of America; Earl Adams, Mr. Finch, Clinton Harris and Hubert Perry.

In her letter to the trustees, Mrs. Hitt stressed that Mr. Nixon was in agreement with the proposal and indicated that the move to dissolve the nonprofit organization would not have been taken if he had objected.

Last August, shortly after Mr. Nixon resigned from the Presidency, Mr. Firestone, Mr. Schreiber and several other members of the group informed the former President that they were still prepared to go ahead with the library project despite the many complications that had arisen.

At that time Mr. Firestone—he submitted his resignation as Ambassador to President Ford four months ago but it has not yet been accepted—said that a large segment of the American people, "although they do not condone the illegal and immoral acts of Watergate, still feel a great compassion for Mr. Nixon and are grateful for his historic achievements in domestic and foreign affairs."

Mrs. Hitt, interviewed by telephone at her Laguna Beach home, said, "There is nothing in our proposal to disband the foundation that precludes reforming the trustees at some later time."