

Goldwater Backs Nixon, as Outcries Mount

By David S. Broder
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Sen. Barry M. Goldwater (R-Ariz.) backed President Nixon's decision to fire Watergate Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox last night, throwing his weight against a rising public demand that Mr. Nixon resign or be impeached for his action.

During the day, condemnation of Mr. Nixon came from leading Democratic officials, a liberal Republican organization, three major union leaders and a number of large newspapers that had supported Mr. Nixon for re-election.

An Oliver Quayle poll for NBC News, taken on Sunday, reported a narrow 44 to 43 per cent favoring impeachment and 48 to 43 per cent in favor of Mr. Nixon voluntarily stepping aside.

The poll, based on telephone questioning of 947 people, found only 16 per cent approved of Mr. Nixon's weekend actions and 58 per cent said he had acted "in a dictatorial manner." The percentage favoring impeachment had doubled since a similar poll in August.

Many of the editorials and comments yesterday called for resignation or impeachment, but Goldwater—whose attitude was considered vital in the public opinion battle by both the White House and congressional Democrats—said, "I can't see anything that's happened that would cause either body (the House or Senate) to vote for impeachment."

Goldwater said he was not certain that Mr. Nixon has the authority to abolish the special prosecutor's office and turn the Watergate case back to the Justice Department, in the face of a congressional mandate for an independent probe.

But he said that Cox "was getting a little far afield" in his investigation "and the whole operation was beginning to have a political undertone."

The Arizona Republican, who had previously criticized Mr. Nixon's reluctance to make available the evidence on the Watergate tapes, said the arrangement announced by the White House Saturday "is exactly what some of us have recommended right from the start."

Goldwater said he had been told by the White House yesterday that the summary of the tapes, to be authenticated by Sen. John Stennis (D-Miss), "would be ready in two weeks, so I think he (the President) has ducks in a row. I don't think there is any chance" of impeachment.

Goldwater thus joined such other influential conservative Republican figures as Sen. John G. Tower (R-Texas) and former Gov. John B. Connally of Texas in backing the President's stand.

But the split within the GOP that became apparent with the resignations of Attorney General Elliot L. Richardson and Deputy Attorney General William D. Ruckelshaus also gained force yesterday.

The Ripon Society, a spokesman for liberal Republicans, called for "immediate impeachment proceedings," saying Mr. Nixon's actions "constitute criminal contempt and obstruction of justice."

Thomas Milligan, Republican state chairman in Ruckelshaus's home state in Indiana, told a press conference, long a Nixon stronghold, that the President's actions had shaken his confidence. "Until Saturday," Milligan said, "the presumption was that the President was not involved in Watergate. I

don't think that that presumption can continue to hold."

From the Democratic opposition yesterday came a statement condemning Mr. Nixon's "authoritarian actions" but not recommending any specific remedy.

A joint statement from Democratic National Chairman Robert S. Strauss and Kentucky Gov. Wendell Ford, chairman of the Democratic governors' caucus, said there is "legitimate doubt as to whether he (Mr. Nixon) can continue to serve under these circumstances," but it did not call for impeachment.

Strauss said in an interview that he had discussed "the likelihood of impeachment" with party leaders, "but we have tried scrupulously to avoid getting into the business of Congress . . . I would say the Democrats with whom I've talked take a tough attitude — very tough."

The same attitude was reflected in impeachment-or-resignation demands from the AFL-CIO convention, Leonard Woodcock of the United Auto Workers and Arnold Miller of the United Mine Workers.

In addition to the NBC poll, a Minneapolis Star telephone survey found 52 per cent of 220 Minneapolis-area residents in favor of impeachment.

Western Union reported that some 71,000 telegrams flooded into Washington in the first 36 hours after Cox's firing. A company spokes-

man provided no breakdown of the sentiments but said "this is the biggest volume we know of from the past."

Among the newspapers criticizing Mr. Nixon's actions yesterday were many that had supported him in the past.

They included the Omaha World-Herald, the Atlanta

Constitution, the St. Paul Pioneer Press, the Albany Knickerbocker News-Union Star, the Baton Rouge State-Times, The Salt Lake Tribune, the Los Angeles Times, the Dallas Times-Herald, and the Columbia, S.C., State.

The Chicago Tribune, while calling the President's

action "the worst blunder in the history of the presidency," warned against the reaction becoming "hysterical, inflammatory and divisive."

The New York Daily News, one of the few major papers to editorialize in support of the President, said, "The wolves are in full cry,

accusing the President of flouting the constitutional principle of separation of powers and defiance of the courts. The first charge is strictly a phony . . . As to the second accusation, it might be well to reserve judgment until we hear whether the courts really feel affronted."