

Post 9-14-74

Haig Appointment Inquiry Sought

United Press International

Sen. Robert C. Byrd (D-W. Va.) called yesterday for a Senate hearing into President Ford's appointment of Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., White House chief of staff, as commander of NATO and U.S. military forces in Europe.

Byrd joined an earlier demand by Sen. William Proxmire (D-Wis.) for an inquiry by the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Byrd said in a Senate speech that Haig, "could not

escape being involved in the Watergate matter" during President Nixon's final months in office.

"He cannot dissociate himself from the political tag that will surely follow him—the impression that he is a political general," Byrd said.

"His elevation may impair military morale. It would do the military and our NATO commitments no good.

"I do not question Gen. Haig's abilities as a military man . . . [but] I have serious

misgivings about the wisdom" of the appointment.

Mr. Ford announced earlier this week that Haig, who served as White House staff chief under Mr. Nixon, would become supreme commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and head of all U.S. military forces on the continent.

Proxmire said that the move might suggest to young officers that the path to the top was through political jobs.