

Jury's Recommendation to Sirica

Secret Report Aimed at Hill

3/3/74
By David S. Broder
and George Lardner Jr.
Washington Post Staff Writers

The Watergate grand jury has recommended that its secret report about President Nixon be sent to the House Judiciary Committee for its impeachment inquiry, according to informed sources.

The decision is up to U.S. District Court Judge John J. Sirica, but there was no indication of when he might rule on the issue. The Washington Post reported Saturday that the report expresses the grand jurors' belief that Mr. Nixon was involved in the conspiracy to cover up the Watergate scandal.

Republican Gov. Tom McCall of Oregon called for the President to resign now and spare the country the anguish of an impeachment trial.

"The President is almost certain to be impeached and tried," McCall said at a Republican conference in Seaside, Ore., "and regardless of the outcome of the trial, both he and the country will lose."

Taking an opposite stand at the same GOP conference, two other speakers, Sen. Bob Packwood (R-Ore.) and former New York Gov. Nelson Rockefeller, said that impeachment, not resignation, was the proper course to determine the Presi-



JUDGE JOHN J. SIRICA
... weighing request

dent's responsibility for the alleged Watergate coverup. Rockefeller said he believed that "most people are pleased that the legal and constitutional processes are going forward."

In addition to delivering the secret report to Judge Sirica Friday, the Watergate grand jury indicted seven of Mr. Nixon's former White House and campaign aides for conspiring to block the Watergate investigation ever since it began on June 17, 1972. The defendants include H. R. (Bob) Haldeman,

John D. Ehrlichman and John N. Mitchell, the inner circle of the President's first administration.

The grand jury charged that their conspiracy with others "known and unknown" is still going on.

The grand jury did not name the "others" known to it, but knowledgeable lawyers said that Watergate prosecutors will almost certainly have to identify them in response to defense motions that can be expected in the case.

The White House gave no indication of its next step, but the President's lawyers could move into court to keep the secret report—and the bulging briefcase submitted with it—from going to the Judiciary Committee.

The President met with his top aides, chief of staff Alexander M. Haig Jr. and press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler, at the White House yesterday, but then left with Mrs. Nixon to spend the rest of the weekend at Camp David, Md.

The next scheduled step in the unraveling of the Watergate case is the arraignment here next Saturday of the seven new defendants.

In addition to Haldeman, Ehrlichman and Mitchell, those indicted are former

See REPORT, A10, Col. 1

REPORT, From A1

White House special counsel Charles W. Colson; former White House aide Gordon Strachan; former Assistant Attorney General Robert C. Mar-dian and Kenneth W. Parkin-son, an attorney for the Com-mittee for the Re-Election of the President.

All will enter their pleas be-

fore Sirica, who assigned the case to himself under his au-thority as chief judge of the U. S. District Court here.

Sirica is stepping down as chief judge March 19, when he reaches the mandatory retire-ment age of 70. It seemed likely that he would rule be-fore then on the grand jury's secret report, which, like the indictment, was submitted to him because of his standing as chief judge.

Watergate grand jurors are expected to be called back into session in about two weeks, but apparently for other work unrelated to the report dealing with Mr. Nixon.

Watergate Special Prosecu-tor Leon Jaworski told Sirica Friday that he had "something further" for the grand jury to consider.

On the political front, Mc-Call's statement was by far the most outspoken reaction, as most Republican officehold-ers and officials confined their public remarks to expressions of confidence in the system of justice.

There was apprehension among GOP officials that the news might create additional problems for Republican con-tenders in two special congres-sional elections coming up Tuesday in Ohio and Califor-nia.

But some took solace in the thought expressed by Ody Fish, the veteran Wisconsin Republican national commit-tee man, who said, "The major-ity of the people were pretty much expecting this, and I don't know how much more of a bad effect anything can have on us."

McCall put only one condi-tion on his demand for the President's resignation. "The one last opportunity," he said, "is to give up all the informa-tion he has, all the tapes, all the memoranda. He must tell, if he knows, about gaps in tapes and missing tapes. He must pay taxes representative of his income, regardless of the challenged deductions."

"If he is not going to open up," McCall said, "he should resign."

Challenging McCall's views in a telephone interview, Iowa's Republican Gov. Robert D. Ray said: "I've always felt the President should dis-close whatever information he

has available, but I don't know what there is that hasn't been given to the courts."

Illinois Democratic chair-man John P. Touhy, while pre-dicting a sweep for his party in November that will give it control of both houses of the legislature and the majority of the congressional delegation, said he did not see the indict-ments as a major political fac-tor in themselves.

"The impact of Watergate had been written off some-what earlier," Touhy said. "Everyone expected these in-dictments. People had lost their faith in anything Mr. Nixon said, before this."

But Ray said he thought that "what happens hereafter might change" the President's standing with the public, weak as it already is.

"As people understand the indictments more," Ray said, "there will be more questions . . . particularly about the con-flict between [John W.] Dean's testimony and [H. R.] Halde-man's. Apparently, the grand jury found some reason to put credence in what Dean said."

Ray and Rockefeller used al-most identical language in suggesting that voters were "sophisticated" enough not to take out their suspicions of the President on Republican candidates for state and local office.

When Rockefeller was asked in Oregon whether he feared a Democratic "tidal wave," he said, "No, I don't. The Ameri-can people are very sophisti-cated, and they want two strong parties represented in Congress. Where they have a good Republican in Congress, they'll send him back."

But, in a Phoenix, Ariz., speech, Vice President Gerald R. Ford arned that "a smash-ing Democratic victory" in the November elections could mean a "return to the rubber stamp Congress that Lyndon Johnson controlled in the 1960s, when spending and waste knew no bounds."

California Gov. Ronald Reagan, another potential 1976 Republican candidate, said he was pleased that "the cases are now before the courts, where innocence and guilt will be determined . . . and I am confident justice finally will prevail."