

Saxbe Quits Cabinet, Named India Envoy

By Carroll Kilpatrick

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Attorney General William B. Saxbe, the outspoken businessman-farmer and former senator from Ohio, yesterday became the first Cabinet member to resign in the Ford administration.

Praising him for his accomplishments in the year he has been in office, President Ford announced that he would nominate Saxbe to succeed Daniel P. Moynihan as ambassador to India.

Moynihan's resignation, which has been expected because he is scheduled to return to the Harvard faculty, also was announced.

The Saxbe resignation is the first of four expected from the Cabinet in the next month or two as Mr. Ford moves to reorganize his administration and to put his own men in office.

No successor to Saxbe was named, but Edward H. Levi, president of the University of Chicago, is the leading candidate despite criticism from two powerful members of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Chairman James O. Eastland (D-Miss.) and Roman L. Hruska (R-Neb.), the senior GOP member, conferred with the President about Levi Thursday and are known to have raised objections.

Saxbe was nominated to be

the nation's chief legal officer following the October, 1973 resignation of Elliot L. Richardson after he refused President Nixon's order to fire Watergate Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox. Saxbe took office Jan. 4, 1974.

White House press secretary Ron Nessen said Mr. Ford believed that Saxbe "came to the position of Attorney General at a most difficult period and under difficult circumstances and believes he did a good job."

Saxbe has long been interested in India and has visited the country five times, Nessen said. Saxbe has conferred with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on four occasions and has a wide acquaintance among Indian officials and newsmen, the press secretary reported.

The President praised Moynihan for his achievements in improving relations between India and the United States and for his "dedicated" public service over recent years.

Mr. Ford is scheduled to fly today to Martinique for his first meeting with French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. They are expected to focus on energy problems, as the President did in recent meetings here with West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and Canadian Prime Minister Pierre E. Trudeau.

In addition, they will discuss European problems, East-West relations, food issues and the rivalry between French and American military planes in NATO.

Mrs. Ford, who was scheduled to accompany the President, will not do so because of a recurring back problem, Nessen announced.

She has had periodic attacks of osteo-arthritis for a number of years but no difficulties in the past year and a half until two days ago, Nessen said.

Dr. William Lukash, the White House physician, advised her to rest and undergo massages and other treatment, according to Nessen. The back problem is not related to the chemotherapy treatment she is receiving, Nessen said. The doctor predicted she would be well by early next week.

The President also accepted the resignation of Kenneth R. Cole Jr., as executive director of the Domestic Council.

Cole had indicated that he would resign to return to private life. He will remain in his post until March to help with preparation of the President's domestic recommendations to the new Congress.

The President announced that he would nominate career diplomat Thomas J. Scotes as ambassador to Yemen.