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Saxby Wins Confirmation As Envoy

United Press International

The Senate unanimously confirmed Attorney General William B. Saxbe yesterday as ambassador to India.

The vote, taken as senators hurried toward adjournment, came only four hours after the Senate Foreign Relations Committee completed public hearings on Saxbe's nomination.

A White House spokesman said Saxbe's confirmation in effect elevated Deputy Attorney General Laurence H. Silberman to acting Attorney General.

A leading contender for Attorney General is Edward Lewi, president of the University of Chicago.

Saxbe, who represented Ohio as a Republican senator from 1968 to 1973, was nominated by President Ford last week to replace Daniel Patrick Moynihan in New Delhi.

"I hope to establish a friendly relationship with mutual respect between our two countries," Saxbe told the Foreign Relations Committee.

"As Secretary of State (Henry A.) Kissinger said recently, we are on the threshold of establishing a more mature relationship, one where we won't expect too much from each other and then be disappointed."

Saxbe said he had visited India five times since 1969. During his years in the Senate he repeatedly expressed concern about India's problems, particularly in the fields of food, refugee and rehabilitation needs.

But, he said, "I certainly do not claim any expertise. I'm going to have to move very slowly. I will not make any recommendations or promises until I am sure they can be carried out."