Impeachment Is Doubted by Saxbe

By Austin Scott
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Attorney General William B. Saxbe says he doesn't think the House of Representatives will impeach President Nixon "on the basis of any evidence that's available to me today," and that to try would be "the greatest type of foolishness."

"An impeachment action—especially a bitter, partisan impeachment, which it would have to be if no further crimes of a great nature are developed—would tear this country apart," he said in a copyrighted interview in U.S. News & World Report.

"To take this before the American people at a time when they're worried about energy, when they're worried about peace in the world, when they're engrossed in their own affairs in a runaway world—and to neglect the business of government while the show goes on in the main tent—seems to me to be the greatest type of foolishness."

"If we want to wallow in our own misery for the next couple of years we have this opportunity," Saxbe continued, adding:

". . . I think that unless more serious evidence is uncovered in the case, we'll look back at this perios 20 years or 50 years from new and say, 'What in the world were these people doing—to wreck their country, their economy; to demoralize their people—the greatest nation in the world tearing itself apart?' "

Saxbe said the "nature of evil deeds that are alleged to the President are . . . serious as to the moral turpitude of the people involved, and do reflect on the President."

But he called them "not of an impeachable nature," and said he expects the House to "hassle . . . around" the impeachment issue.

"They'll keep it alive," Saxbe said. "They'd rather have a crippled Nixon than a healthy, sitting Jerry Ford" in the White House.

Meanwhile, three U.S. senators called on Mr. Nixon to resign rather than subject the nation to impeachment, the Associated Press reported.

Sen. Edward W. Brooke (R-Mass.), repeating an earlier resignation call, and Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.) appeared on WTEV in New Bedord, Mass. Abraham Ribicoff (D-Conn.) was on WABC's "Eyewitness News Conference" in New York.

House Minority Leader John J. Rhodes of Arizona, appearing on "Issues and Answers" (ABC-WMAL), said that "the sword cuts both ways" and warned fellow Republicans they should not take part in a House vote on impeachment if they have expressed a view that the President can never be impeached.

A congressman "may be called upon to perform a judicial function and certainly any judge who gets up on the bench and says the plaintiff is going to win this case, before the case begins, is suspect," Rhodes said.

The U.S. News & World Report interview with Saxbe touched on a number of subjects, including the Attorney General's belief that "—school integration just hasn't worked too well."

"I don't think anybody's satisfied with the progress of integration," he said. "It's our intent to firmly enforce the law. But the discouraging part of it is that school integration just hasn't worked too well. So much of it boils down to economic segregation, and we've never had a way to satisfactorily handle that problem."

Saxbe called "rather disturbing" an element which he said has emerged lately, ". . . black racism—when blacks don't want to go to school with whites . . It's become a peace-keeping job at the highest level to run these schools."

"It's also beginning to appear that the education that is resulting from this situation is deteriorating," he said.

Saxbe said he thinks the demand for integration by busing is not as strong as it once was, because both blacks and whites have been objectng.

"The black children don't want to go to Montgomery County, and the white children don't want to go into D.C.," he said. "We used to say, 'Well, they will when they understand the situation,' but it just hasn't worked out that way. To try to enforce something impracticable to both sides is not, to my mind, something that the government can successfully pursue for very long."

REP. JOHN J. RHODES
. . . "sword cuts both ways"