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Brinegar
'Shocked'
By 'Mess'

By Carroll Kilpatrick
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Transportation Secretary Claude S. Brinegar said yesterday he was "shocked, offended and discouraged" by the Watergate "mess" but does not want President Nixon to resign.

In a prepared speech at the National Press Club, Brinegar said that "to a non-political type, and I'm certainly that, such events are beyond my comprehension."

Another Cabinet officer, Secretary of Commerce Frederick B. Dent, attacked the media's reporting on the transcripts and said that the President's political enemies are leading the impeachment drive.

In a speech in Greensboro, N.C., Dent said the transcripts show that Mr. Nixon is not guilty of any criminal act. But he said the media have tried to obscure "these facts and to dwell on this subject with a vindictiveness and glee that distorts a fair evaluation of the broader issues of the day."

The chief proponents of impeachment oppose the President's policies and his support of free enterprise, Dent argued.

Brinegar made no specific reference to the transcripts of presidential tapes but spoke of the Watergate scandal in its entirety.

At the White House, spokesman Gerald L. Warren said the only comment he would make is that Mr. Nixon also has expressed shock over Watergate.

Nevertheless, Patrick J. Buchanan, a presidential as-

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sistant, told reporters that he did not agree with Brinegar's remarks.

"I was not scandalized by the tapes," Buchanan said, adding that "they were not spiritually uplifting."

Buchanan defended the President and argued that the transcripts show Mr. Nixon is not guilty of an impeachable offense.

Arguing against resignation, Buchanan said he agreed with congressional Democratic leaders and a group of Republican senators who said Monday that Mr. Nixon's resignation would create political polarization and recriminations.

"The greatest mistake any Republican could make would be to be stampeded by the current editorial clamor and insist on this man's resignation," Buchanan said.

Buchanan said some Republicans think that if Mr. Nixon "walks away from his job their chances will be enhanced in November."

If the President should quit and it should then be demonstrated that he was not guilty of an impeachable offense "it would be near fatal for the Republican Party," Buchanan said.

Predicting that the House would not vote a bill of impeachment, Buchanan said he thought that after the House decision the President's popularity would rise in the polls. He maintained that Mr. Nixon is capable of governing even with his present low popular standing.

If a group of GOP leaders called on the President to urge his resignation, Mr. Nixon would listen respectfully "but he would not resign and he will not resign," Buchanan said in answer to a question.

Asked whether he supported the decision to release the transcripts of the taped conversations, Buchanan said he did.

The motivating force behind the decision was to permit the White House to "have the option of releasing them at its own timetable and in its own way rather than through its adversaries."

He suggested that Mr. Nixon was afraid the House Judiciary Committee staff might release the tapes or part of them in a way detrimental to him.

Brinegar, a California oil executive without political experience when Mr. Nixon chose him for his Cabinet after the 1972 election, said that while he does not want the President to resign, "I certainly do want to see the air cleared by the orderly processes envisioned by the Constitution."

"And, of course, I very much hope this will be done promptly, with fairness, and with as little emotion as possible."

Republican National Chairman George Bush, speaking in Medford, Ore., said Republicans should "remain cool" over the Watergate scandals.

"You're not going to get me to defend Watergate," Bush said at a Republican dinner. "I can't stand any-

thing about it. We must remain cool."

He argued, however, that the GOP, which he said "is much closer to the heartbeat of the country than Democrats," will not be repudiated because of the scandal.

In Greensburg, Pa., the Tribune-Review called for the President's impeachment "for the preservation of the democratic system." The paper is owned by Richard Mellon Scaife, who contributed nearly \$1 million to the President's 1972 reelection campaign.

Not only has the President "mishandled his 1972 mandate, but he is now mishandling his own defense, if that is the right word," the Tribune-Review said.