

The Soviet 'Concern' Over Nixon

Moscow

Elliot L. Richardson, the former U.S. Attorney General and Defense Secretary, said yesterday he has found that Soviets are concerned about President Nixon's possible impeachment.

"I think there is an undertone of concern but I had the feeling that nevertheless they expect continuity," Richardson told newsmen.

Richardson, who resigned last October rather than carry out Mr. Nixon's order to fire Watergate special prosecutor Archibald Cox, said he found that the Soviets had a "highly sophisticated and extensive" knowledge about Watergate events.

He said they also asked about the Democrat most likely to succeed Mr. Nixon in 1976, and he told them he thought Senator Henry M. Jackson (Dem-Wash.) is the strongest candidate.

"Interestingly enough, the only question I got on future leaders was on the prospects in the Democratic party," Richardson said.

Richardson is here for a two-week visit at the invitation of the Institute of U.S. Studies.

He said he sought to assure the Soviets that "in spite of apparent difficulties, America's constitutional system is fundamentally strong and is, indeed, proving its strength."

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