

# A Justice Dept. Prober Quits With Slap at Saxbe

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## Washington

The director of a Justice Department inquiry into administration of the Freedom of Information Act resigned yesterday, charging that Attorney General William B. Saxe broke a promise to give him a free hand.

Jerry N. Clark, named last February as executive director of the freedom for information study unit, told Saxbe he is quitting June 8 because of what he called a broken pledge to give him "substantial independence."

"Last February I had every reason to believe that you understood and supported the arrangements that

had been worked out." Clark wrote Saxbe. "Recently, however, it has become clear that the department wishes to exercise greater control over the study and its products."

Clark said it is necessary for the executive branch, Congress and the public "to trust in the objectivity of the study."

Saxbe accepted Clark's resignation from the \$28,200-a-year job with "deep regret." In a letter which did not comment directly on Clark's complaint, he said, "You may be assured that an objective study of the freedom of information

problems will proceed."

However, Saxbe revealed he has directed a steering committee representing several government agencies affected by the act to hold the study in abeyance until Saxbe can weigh the impact of pending legislation to amend the 1966 Freedom of Information Act.

The Senate late yesterday passed, 64 to 17, its own version of the legislation. The House passed a different version several months ago.

Representative William S. Moorhead, (Dem-Pa.), sponsor of the House bill, said he was "greatly dismayed but not too surprised" that the

Justice Department is unwilling to let Clark's unit produce an independent report.

Moorhead charged that the Justice Department had been doing "heavy lobbying in the Senate to weaken House-passed amendments to the Freedom of Information Act."

Under present law, government agencies must make documents available at the request of news reporters or others except for those concerning continuing investigations, private personal matters, interim memos that are not final and national security.

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