

Silberman as New Deputy

By Susanna McBee

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Attorney General William B. Saxbe has selected former Labor Under Secretary Laurence H. Silberman to be the new deputy attorney general.

Silberman's appointment has been approved by the White House, sources said yesterday, and since Monday he has been undergoing a background check by the FBI.

If, as expected, he passes the FBI inquiry, Silberman should be named to the Justice Department's No. 2 position in the next few days.

Neither Silberman nor the Justice Department had any comment on the impending appointment.

As deputy attorney general, Silberman, 38, would be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the department's 48,000 employees.

Michael H. Moskow, now an assistant secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and formerly a Labor Department assistant secretary, described Silberman as "a brilliant guy who reads voraciously and has a fantastic analytical mind."

Moskow, a close friend of Silberman, also said that "he knows Capitol Hill and understands political processes well."

Aides of Saxbe have said that the new Attorney General was seeking "someone who knows his way around this town."

As Labor under secretary, Silberman incurred the enmity of then White House special counsel Charles W. Colson, who, according to several sources, sought to secure im-

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proper Labor Department intervention, in certain cases.

Silberman resisted Colson's efforts and, in one dispute, even threatened to resign, the sources said.

According to a New York Times article last July 1, the cases in which Colson sought Labor Department intervention included a Teamsters Union matter before the National Labor Relations Board and a construction union matter before the Pennsylvania State Supreme Court.

Silberman's threat to resign came when Colson tried in 1972 to prevent the nomination of Clayton J. Cotrell as the department's regional director for New York. Cotrell was approved by the White House at Silberman's insistence, but was later removed from the post.

Sources on Capitol Hill said that, as a result of the disputes, Colson blocked Silberman's promotion to Labor Secretary after the 1972 resignation of James D. Hodgson. Instead, President Nixon chose Peter J. Brennan. In December, 1972, when Mr. Nixon asked all political appointees to submit resignations, Silberman's was one the White House accepted.

Since then Silberman has practiced law as a member of the Steptoe & Johnson firm here.

At the Labor Department Silberman was known as an active lobbyist for the administration's position on labor matters. He is credited with helping to work out a compromise on the Occupational Health and Safety Act that passed Congress in December, 1970.

On the issue of the minimum wage, he played a key role in keeping the administration's bill, which had passed the House, out of conference in 1972 with the Senate, which had passed a more liberal measure. Last year a liberal minimum wage bill was approved by Congress but vetoed by Mr. Nixon.

Silberman is also credited



LAURENCE H. SILBERMAN
... "analytical mind"

with pushing Labor Department efforts to get the construction trades to hire more minority workers.

Another Justice Department appointment expected to be announced soon is that of J.D. Sawyer, 56, former president of the National Association of Realtors, as associate attorney general.

Sawyer, who will be Saxbe's top personal aide, is from Middletown, Ohio. In 1968 he was campaign manager for Saxbe when he ran for the Senate from Ohio, and in 1969 and 1970 he served as Saxbe's executive assistant.