

Gray Resigns; Ruckelshaus Heads FBI;
Hunt, Liddy linked to Ellsberg Case

APR 28 1973

Impact: GOP Lawmakers, Party Chiefs Join Demands for Prompt Cleanup

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Republican lawmakers and party leaders yesterday joined in a rising chorus of demands that President Nixon move quickly to "clean up" the Watergate situation.

In a series of statements triggered by the latest disclosure in the widening political scandal, Mr. Nixon was warned that delay on his part could weaken support for his program in Congress, damage Republican candidates and further

weaken public confidence in the political system.

Three prominent figures—Billy Graham, 1936 Republican presidential nominee Alf M. Landon and the president-elect of the American Bar Association, Chesterfield Smith, called on Mr. Nixon in separate interviews to appoint an independent investigator or investigating commission to get to the bottom of the case.

Graham, a close friend of the President, said he was "sick about the whole thing" and "what it is going to do to the credibility of govern-

ment in the eyes of the American people."

Smith, the ABA official, called it "a domestic crisis of unparalleled proportions", and Landon said, "I can't think of anything worse affecting the leadership of the country."

On the other hand, Republican National Chairman George Bush sought to minimize the political fallout from the case, saying "the average American is not as upset about Watergate" as the press and politicians appear to be.

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In a series of Texas appearances, Bush expressed confidence in Mr. Nixon's handling of the case and said that while Watergate might damage public confidence in "the political process . . . I don't think it is hurting the Republican Party."

His conclusion was strongly challenged by other Republicans, including his predecessor as party chairman, Sen. Bob Dole of Kansas.

Dole said in Topeka that "right now the credibility of the administration is zilch, zero." He called on presidential aides H. R. (Bob) Halde- man and John Ehrlichman to resign immediately.

Sen. Milton R. Young of North Dakota, senior Republican on the Senate Appropriations Committee, called Watergate "one of the worst incidents of its kind" and said "it can't help but hurt some" on forthcoming legislative votes.

"He (Mr. Nixon) has to do something decisive," Young said, "and the longer he waits, the more difficult it is going to be."

According to Washington aides, Rep. John B. Anderson of Illinois, chairman of the House Republican Conference, told constituents this week that Watergate "is like Mount Everest; it's there and it's not going away. Anyone who writes it off as of no consequence is whistling in the wind."

Sen. Bob Packwood (R-Ore.) said in Eugene, Ore.,

that the scandal was reaching "disastrous proportions" and that unless Mr. Nixon acted promptly, many of his legislative proposals would lose because Republicans would be "almost scrambling to get off the President's ship."

Sen. Richard S. Schweiker (R-Pa.), who, like Dole and Packwood, faces re-election next year, called on Mr. Nixon to "clean out" the White House staff without waiting for further grand jury indictments and bring in new people with "some integrity."

Schweiker said Watergate would have a "very serious impact" on the 1974 election, calling it "an albatross around the party's neck."

The need for prompt action was also stressed by several senior Republican state officials, all of them Nixon loyalists, interviewed by The Washington Post yesterday.

R. L. "Dick" Herman, Nebraska GOP national committeeman and chairman of the 1972 convention arrangements committee, said Republicans in his state "think that whatever has been done should be corrected and corrected immediately. They think those responsible should pay the price."

"They're hoping and believing the President is not involved," Herman said, "but they want something done to correct the situation."

John S. Andrews, retiring Ohio Republican chairman

and head of the 50-state Association of GOP State Chairmen, said the reaction of Ohio Republicans is one of "outrage, embarrassment, and shame. We wish to hell it would be taken care of promptly and gotten over with. The whole thing is just incredible."

L. Keith Bulen, Indiana Republican national committeeman, said his state's Republicans are "wringing their hands in great anguish" and waiting for the President to take "appropriate action, no matter how painful it may be for close friends and loyal staff people."

In the face of these demands, administration officials rallied around the President.

Secretary of Commerce Frederick Dent said in Tallahassee that Mr. Nixon's critics were trying to pull "a Watergate shade" over the accomplishments of his administration. "It is essential that we in America recognize that we have one of the outstanding leaders of all time available to us for the balance of four more years," he said.

National Chairman Bush expressed continued confidence that the President would clean up what he called "this grubby business," and Billy Graham, in an interview on the Today program, expressed similar faith.

Speaking of Mr. Nixon, Graham said, "I personally do not think he knew about it . . . It was a stupid blunder to begin with, and he's

too smart for that . . . Secondly, I think his moral and ethical principles wouldn't allow him to do anything illegal like that. I've known him a long time and he has a very strong sense of integrity."

Graham went on to say, however, that "everyone connected with the Watergate will have to leave . . . the government, and we'll have to have a whole new group of people coming in that people have confidence in. I think that is very important."

Landon, the party's elder statesman, commented in a telephone interview from Topeka that "I don't think there is any evidence Nixon knew anything about it beforehand, but public sentiment is growing adverse to the thinking that his personal loyalties have prevented him from uncovering it as thoroughly and quickly as possible."

Landon said impeachment of the President would "be counterproductive," and a survey by The Washington Post of about 20 top-level House and Senate aides and a handful of key senators disclosed no evidence of any serious impeachment move being underway.

Those interviewed said the lack of evidence of presidential complicity and the shattering effects of such an effort seemed to preclude its consideration.