

# 'Central Issue Is Nixon'

WASHINGTON — (UPI) — Sen. William Proxmire, saying the central issue in the Watergate case is whether President Nixon "was involved in any way," urged yesterday that the appointment of William B. Ruckelshaus as temporary FBI chief be submitted to the Senate for confirmation.

The Wisconsin Democrat said Ruckelshaus "can only serve legally after May 26 if his name has been submitted to the Senate for confirmation before that date."

## "Served Illegally"

Proxmire said a report provided him by the General Accounting Office shows that L. Patrick Gray III, who quit Friday as acting FBI director, "served illegally for almost nine months . . . because President Nixon failed to comply with a clear legal requirement" that Senate confirmation be requested within 30 days after the appointment.

"This is far more than a legal technicality," Proxmire said. "It is apparent

that William Ruckelshaus is being appointed as FBI director for only two or three months for a single purpose.

## Nixon Is Issue

"That purpose as publicly expressed is to conduct a thorough investigation of the

Watergate. But the central issue in the Watergate case is whether President Nixon, the man who appointed Ruckelshaus, was involved in any way, at any time and to any extent in the case.

"Ruckelshaus has an excellent reputation. He has demonstrated genuine independence as the courageous, tough-minded environmental administrator.

"But it is quintessential in this case that the Senate exercise its independent judgment after testimony by Ruckelshaus and on the basis of an established public record so the Senate is satisfied that Ruckelshaus will indeed investigate vigorously, thoroughly, and pursue the full, truth even if it involves the President himself."