

MAY 2 1973

For the Record

Senator Percy Seeks Watergate Prosecutor

From remarks by Sen. Charles H. Percy (R-Ill.) yesterday prior to Senate adoption of a resolution calling on President Nixon to name a special prosecutor to take over the Watergate investigation.

Now that the President has spoken, I remain convinced that the introduction of this resolution (calling on the President to appoint a special prosecutor) is appropriate. A simple and very basic question is at issue. Should the executive branch investigate itself? I do not think so, and neither, I am convinced, do a majority of my colleagues. In introducing this resolution, I am not attempting in any way to question the integrity or ability of Attorney General-designate Elliot Richardson, a distinguished public servant for whom I have the highest regard. But Mr. Richardson cannot be regarded as independent of the executive branch of the government . . .

In the Resolution, the President is called upon to appoint immediately a special prosecutor, grant him all the authority necessary to effectively perform his duties, and submit the name of such designee to the Senate for confirmation. If the President were to appoint the type of person this resolution envisions—a person of high character and unimpeachable integrity, without association with the executive branch of government — then I do not think that there would be any delay on the part of the Senate in going on record in support of the President's choice.

Let us get on with the important task of governing, but let us remember that we cannot govern unless we have the support of the people. The best way of ensuring the faith and the trust of the people is to appoint a special prosecutor whose motives, actions and conclusions cannot possibly be questioned.