

Want Independent

Senate Pat on A Prosecutor

WASHINGTON — (AP) — The Senate left standing today its call for an independent federal prosecutor for the Watergate case after three Republicans wrangled inconclusively over the action, taken yesterday.

Sen. Charles H. Percy (R-Ill.) chief sponsor of bipartisan proposal adopted with just five senators on the floor, offered to rescind the action provided a definite time was set for a second vote.

Sen. Norris Cotton (R-N.H.) objected, declaring that Percy's proposal for a second vote next Tuesday wouldn't allow sufficient debate on the matter.

That left things where they were when the resolution, expressing the "sense of the Senate" but without any force in law, was originally passed.

'Let It Stand'

"I don't know what the excitement is about," said Sen. Carl T. Curtis (R-Neb.). "The resolution is passed. Let it stand as the sense of five senators."

Curtis wanted to amend Percy's proposal, which urges President Nixon to nominate a special Watergate prosecutor and submit his name to the Senate for confirmation, to permit naming of a chief investigator. Curtis has proposed that former Sen. John J. Williams (R-Del.) head the probe; he isn't a lawyer.

Five senators were on the floor yesterday when Percy, who had checked with both Democratic and Republican leaders and found no objection, introduced the resolution, and, by unanimous consent, obtained its approval.

Late in the afternoon, other senators, mostly Republicans, tried and failed to reverse that voice vote and de-

nonced Percy's speedy action as "contemptible," and "low-life politics," and "a very dirty trick."

Percy refused to withdraw his resolution or to permit the vote to be reconsidered without a promise of a specific hour for a roll-call vote on the issue.

President Nixon took sharp exception to the Percy resolution at a Cabinet meeting yesterday afternoon.

One man who was present said Nixon was angered not at the idea of a special prosecutor but because he felt the resolution put political pressure on Secretary of Defense Elliot L. Richardson, who has Nixon's authorization to appoint such a prosecutor if he deems it necessary.

Nixon Upset

The President was said to have been particularly upset because the resolution came one day after Richardson, nominee to be the next attorney general, had been assigned by Nixon to direct the Justice Department's Watergate investigators.

The Chicago Tribune reported today the Nixon was so angry that he went so far as saying that Percy, considered a candidate for the Republican presidential nomination in 1976, will never be President "as long as I have anything to say about it."

The Tribune reported that Nixon said some critics, "such as Sen. Percy, have the 1976 presidential campaign as their target. . . .

"As long as I have anything to say about it, he won't reach that target," the Tribune quoted Nixon as saying. Percy has described the Watergate matter as more serious than the Teapot Dome scandal under the Harding administration.