

# COURTESY CALLS

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WASHINGTON, May 3 — Elliot L. Richardson refused today to commit himself to name a special prosecutor in the Watergate case, but Senators who met with him got the impression that he would appoint one.

One Senator said after talking with Mr. Richardson that he expected him to announce the name of such a prosecutor in the "next day or two."

Mr. Richardson had lunch with the Republican members of the Senate Judiciary Committee and later met individually with other Senators.

The committee is scheduled to open hearings next week on Mr. Richardson's nomination to be Attorney General. It is customary for a nominee for a high Government position to pay courtesy calls on Senators before the Senate begins confirmation proceedings.

Mr. Richardson said after the lunch that he still had "under deliberation" the question of an independent supervisor for the Watergate investigation.

Most of the Senators who were at the lunch reportedly urged Mr. Richardson to pick a special prosecutor, and one of them said that he expected Mr. Richardson to announce the name of such a prosecutor in the next few days.

President Nixon, in announcing Monday that he wanted Mr. Richardson to shift from Secretary of Defense to Attorney General, said that he had given Mr. Richardson authority to appoint an independent prosecutor to oversee the Watergate investigation if Mr. Richardson thought such action was appropriate.

Senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina, one of the Republicans who had lunched with Mr. Richardson, said that if he were Attorney General he would want a special prosecutor. Then Senator Thurmond added, "I think he [Mr. Richardson] will do the right thing."

Another Senator said that most of the luncheon talk had been about a special prosecutor and he commented that Mr. Richardson expressed "no resistance to the idea."

### Apparent Consensus

Most of the Senators seemed to agree with the view expressed by Senator Barry Goldwater, Republican of Arizona, at an earlier meeting with reporters. Senator Goldwater said that Mr. Richardson might find that he would have to disqualify himself from prosecution of the Watergate affair because his associates in the Nixon Administration had been implicated. That was the reasoning that led Richard G. Kleindienst to resign as Attorney General.

Mr. Richardson, for instance, is a long-time friend of Charles W. Colson, a former special counsel to President Nixon who is being questioned by investigators of the break-in and bugging last June at the Democratic National Headquarters in the Watergate complex here.

Mr. Richardson and Mr. Colson were once aides to former Senator Leverett Saltonstall of Massachusetts, and, at one time, the two considered forming a law partnership. They also worked closely together within the Nixon Administration.

One person who has been mentioned in speculation about who a special prosecutor might be is William T. Coleman, a Philadelphia lawyer, who served with Mr. Richardson as clerk to Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter. The two have remained good friends.

Another who has been mentioned is Richard A. Sprague, who was the chief prosecutor of those accused of murdering Joseph A. Yablonski, once a leader of insurgents in the United Mine Workers Union. Arnold R. Miller, the new president of the union, sent a letter to President Nixon urging the appointment of Mr. Sprague. Mr. Sprague is a Democrat.

Some Republicans are pressing for the appointment of John J. Williams, a former Republican Senator from Delaware. Mr. Williams is not a lawyer.