

Finish With Watergate, Says Percy

New Delhi

Senator Charles S. Percy said here yesterday the Watergate scandal has damaged the foreign policy of the U.S.

At the same time, the Illinois Republican urged the Senate Watergate committee to divide into three groups, conclude its public hearings by October and issue its final report and recommendations by the end of the year.

"Leave it to the courts after that," Percy said at a news conference. "We should get it (Watergate) behind us and get about the business of government."

Percy, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations committee and a possible contender for the Republican presidential nomination in 1976, is on a ten-day visit to India after "a combined study and business trip" in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

"Watergate has hurt the foreign policy of the U.S.," Percy said. "It has diverted attention. . . it has eroded confidence in the U.S. and detracted from a foreign policy that has been brilliant."

Percy avoided direct criticism of President Nixon's handling of the affair.

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