

BORK MEETS AIDE

More Justice Dept. Resignations Seen — Moore Quits

By JOHN M. CREWDSON

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 21—Robert H. Bork, the acting Attorney General, spent his first morning at the head of a stunned Justice Department discussing the future of the Watergate prosecutions with Henry E. Petersen, to whom control over the Government's investigation has reverted because of the dismissal of Archibald Cox.

Afterward, he declined to meet with newsmen, saying that he would have a statement on the future of the Watergate case on Tuesday. Mr. Bork met later with other Assistant Attorneys General, including J. Stanley Pottinger, the head of the Civil Rights Division.

There were unconfirmed reports of further resignations in the department, possibly including that of Mr. Pottinger, and some officials expressed fears this morning that there might be further dismissals as well.

Mr. Petersen, who heads the Justice Department's Criminal Division, was relieved of his authority in the Watergate case five months ago when Mr. Cox, a professor from Harvard law school, was named as the special Watergate prosecutor.

It was Mr. Bork, who left Yale law school to become the Government's Solicitor General, who discharged Mr. Cox last evening after Elliot L. Richardson

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Bork and Petersen Meet On Status of Watergate

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son resigned as Attorney General and William D. Ruckelshaus, Mr. Richardson's deputy, was dismissed by President Nixon.

Mr. Bork intends to meet before Tuesday with former members of Mr. Cox's staff to seek their views on the investigation and, presumably, to get a progress report. The special prosecution force has been operating largely outside the Justice Department.

No 'Wholesale Firing'

Asked whether the Cox assistants could expect to lose their jobs or, alternatively, to be absorbed into the Justice Department, one official said only that "there won't be a wholesale firing." It was also understood that several of the aides were reserving decisions on whether to resign until after seeing Mr. Bork.

One of Mr. Bork's first official acts this morning was to order the Federal Bureau of Investigation to remove the agents who had been sent by the White House last night to seal off the offices of Mr. Richardson and Mr. Ruckelshaus.

The presence of the agents, who spent the night in chairs in front of the two offices, had angered a number of other officials there.

But even after the agents' departure, the atmosphere at the Justice Department headquarters, remained gloomy. One contributing factor was the possibility of other resignations in support of the Richardson-Ruckelshaus decision not to carry out the President's order to discharge Mr. Cox.

Moore Submits Resignation
Associate Attorney General Jonathan Moore, whom Mr. Richardson brought to the Justice Department from the Pentagon when he resigned last April as Secretary of Defense, said that his resignation, submitted today, would take effect next week.

Some of those who intended,

at least for the time being, to remain at the Justice Department expressed concern that Mr. Bork, considered a political and judicial conservative, might himself dismiss some of his more liberal colleagues.

One Assistant Attorney General, asked if he needed anything, replied "Yeah, give me a glass of hemlock." He was not smiling.

There was a report that Mr. Petersen, who was on the verge of resigning last summer at the height of the criticism of his earlier handling of the Watergate case, might not stay. He could not be reached tonight for comment.

Some observers speculated, however, that the Solicitor General, who was thrust reluctantly into the department's top post by a statute that makes him its third-ranking official, might be reluctant to make any major personnel or policy changes during his tenure as acting Attorney General.

Fourth in 2 Years

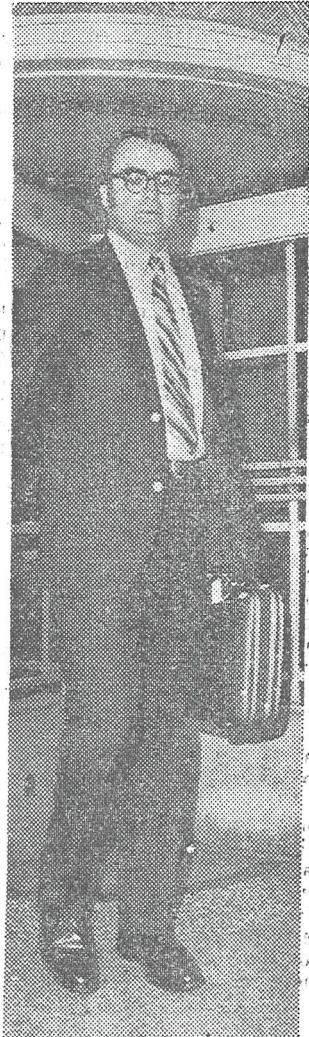
There was also speculation on how long Mr. Bork would, or, legally, could remain in that position, and on who would become Mr. Nixon's nominee for his fourth Attorney General in less than two years.

"Nobody who could be confirmed [by the Senate] wants it," said one observer.

A law passed by Congress in 1868 prescribes that a Federal position subject to Senate confirmation that is vacated by death or resignation may not be filled on a temporary basis for more than 30 days.

But, because Mr. Bork acceded to the Attorney General's post through statutory succession rather than by a Presidential appointment, it is unclear whether the 30-day rule on acting officials applies to him.

Ronald L. Ziegler, the President's press secretary, said in announcing Mr. Cox's dismissal last night that the Watergate "matter" would be "carried out



United Press International
William D. Ruckelshaus, then Deputy Attorney General, leaving Justice Department Saturday before announcement of discharge.

with thoroughness and vigor by the Justice Department.

Some of those who saw Mr. Bork today said it was their impression that he would do just that. But as a legal matter, he could direct Mr. Petersen to discharge the two Federal grand juries who are hearing evidence in the Watergate case and other alleged abuses of power by Nixon Administration officials.