

... Attorney General

NYT

11/2/73

The nomination of Senator William Saxbe of Ohio as Attorney General is a measure of the President's political desperation. Having purged Walter Hickel and other outspoken members of his Administration in the past, Mr. Nixon would not willingly take on board a folksy, free-talking, free-wheeling politician like Senator Saxbe if he felt he had any choice. But as a member of the Senate, Mr. Saxbe is almost certain of eventual confirmation. That asset has to override every other consideration in the President's calculations at this time.

If his record as state attorney general of Ohio stands up to the necessary scrutiny of a Senate hearing, Mr. Saxbe merits confirmation. He has expressed a laudable ambition to restore the morale and good name of the Justice Department. He may well make a competent head of the department in its normal operations. But only an independent special prosecutor can effectively remove the stain of Watergate.