

Public Trust Tied to Nixon

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Former Deputy Attorney General William D. Ruckelshaus said yesterday the only way President Nixon can convince the country he is worthy of its trust "is to reveal everything he has" about the Watergate case.

Ruckelshaus, who quit Oct. 20 with Attorney General Elliot L. Richardson rather than obey Mr. Nixon's order to fire Watergate Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox, told a group of reporters:

"The public interest today is tied up with the President's ability to inspire the confidence of the people. I don't see how he can do that without turning over all documents relevant to the case."

Asked about the advice Sen. George Aiken (R-Vt.) gave Congress Wednesday, "Either impeach him or get off his back," Ruckelshaus said that if Mr. Nixon does not reveal all material dealing with Watergate, "I think the people are going to stay on his back."

He added that if Aiken's call for impeachment by a deadline to be set by the House "is a means of getting disclosure, that's one way of getting it done."

But Ruckelshaus said, "I think the calls for resignation are unlikely to result in that, and I don't know that there is sufficient public demand for impeachment now to carry it forward without further revelations" concerning Watergate.

He ventured a guess that "there will be some more revelations" although he said he didn't know of any, and added, "That's why it's so essential for the President to reveal all documents on any allegation."

Ruckelshaus, asked about the President's "emotional stability" during the period before Cox was fired, said his own discussions with Mr. Nixon's chief of staff, Alexander M. Haig Jr., "made it clear that Cox's actions would get the President agitated. He'd get very upset over what Cox and his people would do."

Ruckelshaus said he had "heard complaints about Cox starting in August, not from the President, but from the White House. I knew he was a constant irritant, but I didn't think they would do it [fire Cox] because the [public] reaction was so predictable."

The former deputy attorney general was asked if he thinks Cox was fired more because he was an "irritant" or because his investigation was getting too close to the

President. "I think there was a mixture of motives," Ruckelshaus replied.

He also said he thinks the White House felt that firing Cox would lead his staff to resign.

He revealed that he had not seen or talked to the President since first coming to the Justice Department April 27 as acting FBI director (he was sworn in as deputy attorney general Sept. 26).

Ruckelshaus said he recognizes the need for executive privilege, or secrecy of presidential documents and conversations, particularly in national security matters.

But he added that "the principle of privilege" in the Watergate scandal "is simply overridden by public demand." He also asserted that public demand will insure that the new special

prosecutor, Leon Jaworski, will be independent and aggressive: "I think he has to be. He has no other choice," Ruckelshaus said.

On other subjects, he revealed:

- He would not violate his pledge not to run for the Senate next year against Sen. Birch Bayh (D-Ind.) but "might" challenge Sen. Vance Hartke (D-Ind.) in 1976.

He thinks a Republican ticket led by Richardson for President and Ruckelshaus for Vice President in 1976 is "fairly remote."

- He has received more than 3,000 letters since Oct. 20, and all but three supported him. Two of the three came from his home state of Indiana.

He thinks Mr. Nixon "has had some impact" in passing part of the blame for Water-

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WILLIAM RUCKELSHAUS
... disclosure 'essential'

Disclosure

gate "off on the press." He cited a discussion he had last week with an organization in Miami and said that while many members expressed "disbelief" in the President, "a smaller but vociferous group was mad at the press."