

RICHARDSON URGES CHECKS ON POWER

Says Watergate Disclosed 'Abuse' — Governor and Levitt Hailed at Dinner

By LINDA GREENHOUSE

Former Attorney General Elliot L. Richardson said last night that the Watergate investigations had revealed "an ugly glimpse of the abuse of power," and he called for legislation prohibiting "dirty tricks" and "dirty money" in political campaigns and for a requirement that every employe of the executive branch keep a record of contacts with outside individuals.

Such a requirement, Mr. Richardson said, "would deter attempts to distort decision-making by bringing to bear personal and political pressures unrelated to the merits."

As Attorney General, Mr. Richardson put a similar requirement into effect at the Justice Department in August. He said that an executive order could extend the policy to the entire executive branch of government.

In addition to these reforms, Mr. Richardson also called for stricter regulation of electronic surveillance and greater accountability to Congress and the public of those who hold power in government.

2 Cited for Efforts

Mr. Richardson spoke at a dinner of the Appeal to Conscience Foundation, an interfaith religious group that honored Governor Rockefeller and William J. Levitt, the builder, as "men of conscience."

Rabbi Arthur Schneider, president of the Appeal to Conscience Foundation, cited the Governor as a "man of vision and of the future who has used his energies and resources to better the lot of mankind."

Mr. Levitt, who last month was named co-chairman of a drive to raise \$280-million for the Federation of Jewish Phil-

anthropies and the United Jewish Appeal of Greater New York, was cited as a "great supporter throughout the world of better understanding and improvement of the quality of life."

The award for both men consisted of a geometric Steuben glass design inscribed with the words "More things are wrought by prayer than man dreams of."

The dinner, at the Pierre Hotel, attracted unusual interest because it took place on the day Governor Rockefeller announced his intention to resign the governorship and six weeks after Mr. Richardson resigned as Attorney General rather than follow President Nixon's order to dismiss the special Watergate prosecutor, Archibald Cox.

Rabbi Schneider said that Governor Rockefeller had accepted the invitation to appear last May and that Mr. Richardson had agreed in September to be the main speaker.

\$60,000 Raised

The dinner was attended by 500 religious leaders, diplomats and political figures, including Mayor-elect Abraham D. Beame and Attorney General Louis J. Lefkowitz. At \$250 a couple, the dinner raised more than \$60,000 for the seven-year-old organization, which has sponsored fact-finding missions to Eastern Europe, Northern Ireland, Spain and other areas of religious conflict in world.

Mr. Richardson's remarks about Watergate and its aftermath were pointed, although he did not once mention President Nixon by name and revealed nothing new about his own attitude toward what he called the "Saturday night massacre" — the night of Oct. 20, when

he and Deputy Attorney General William D. Ruckelshaus submitted their resignations after being ordered to discharge Mr. Cox.

Mr. Richardson attributed the public outpouring in the days that followed—three million messages to Congress, he said, almost all supporting him against the President — to a "hunger for a demonstration of willingness to draw a line on an issue of principle."

In addition, Mr. Richardson said, the American public was becoming acutely sensitive even before the Watergate disclosures to "the steady coral-reef-life growth in the centralization, the pervasiveness, and the intrusiveness of governmental power."

4 Reforms Urged

In the wake of Watergate, he said, four interrelated reforms are necessary.

First, he said, privacy must be secured by much stricter regulation of electronic surveillance.

Second, campaign abuses must be prevented by legislation outlawing "dirty tricks" and adopting safeguards against excessive campaign contributions.

Third, Mr. Richardson said, barriers against the improper use of political influence must be erected through the sort of record-keeping he required at the Justice Department.

Finally, he said, those who exercise power in government must be made accountable to Congress and the public. In his sharpest reference to the Nixon Administration, he spoke of the need to do away with "excessive reliance on political amateurs who have not yet learned that it is not always smart to be smart."