

# GOP Pressure Grows for Resignation

By Spencer Rich

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Criticism of President Nixon's conduct in the Watergate scandal continued yesterday with new demands from members of his own party that he step down.

Sen. Richard S. Schweiker of Pennsylvania became the fourth GOP senator to demand that Mr. Nixon resign from office for the good of the country.

Rep. Joel T. Broyhill (R-Va.) said the President should give resignation "serious consideration."

Sen. Milton R. Young (R-N.D.), like Schweiker a candidate for re-election this year, suggested that Mr. Nixon use the 25th Amendment—which allows tempo-

rary resignation when a President can't fulfill his duties — to turn the presidency temporarily over to Vice President Gerald R. Ford, resuming his powers only if found innocent of wrongdoing.

And Rep. Lawrence J. Hogan (R-Md.), said resignation would "lift a weighty burden from the country."

The President's chief Watergate defense lawyer, James D. St. Clair, strongly discounted suggestions that Mr. Nixon's resignation might be imminent. Speaking to newsmen at the U.S. courthouse here, St. Clair said he did not feel that Mr. Nixon will resign "under any known circumstances."

Others, while highly critical of the president and ex-

pressing dismay with the conduct revealed in the taped White House conversations released by Mr. Nixon 11 days ago, stopped short of demanding resignation.

Former New York Republican Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller told a Kansas City GOP meeting late Thursday that while the transcripts left him shaken and with "a deep sense of sorrow and dismay," the impeachment proceeding is the place to settle the matter one way or another.

The view that the President's future should be settled by the impeachment process, rather than resignation, on the basis of the evidence, also was expressed by Sen. George D. Aiken (R-Vt.), the Senate's senior Re-

publican, and Washington Gov. Dan Evans (R).

"Impeachment, while a difficult and wrenching experience, at least has the advantage of leading to an ultimate answer. Resignation really doesn't answer any thing," Evans said.

In Hot Springs, Va., The Washington Post's Peter Milius reported that a sampling of opinion among members of the Business Council shows that few are defending the President, though most don't favor resignation.

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Strong statements against presidential resignation came from Sens. William L. Scott (R-Va.), Paul J. Fannin (R-Ariz.), Norris Cotton (R-N.H.) and several other conservative Republicans interviewed Thursday.

And California Gov. Ronald Reagan (R) gave support to Mr. Nixon in an interview.

He told reporters that the White House transcripts show the President didn't know of the Watergate break-in in advance and knew nothing of any cover-up until at least March 21, 1973, the date Mr. Nixon says he first learned of the cover-up from then White House counsel John W. Dean III. Reagan said the transcripts show Mr. Nixon "was not aware prior to March 21."

Support, though phrased in highly cautious terms, also came yesterday from Interior Secretary Rogers C. B. Morton, a long-time Nixon associate and member of his Cabinet.

Morton was quoted as saying that the President acted too slowly in remedying the Watergate scandal. "I certainly wouldn't have handled Watergate the way it was handled," Morton said. "The problem was not taken up as quickly and dynamically as I would have liked. There was a little bit too much oscillation back and forth."

But he warned critics of the President not to be "trigger happy," and said, "I'm not going to jump off the ship until there's evi-

dence that the ship is sinking."

On Capitol Hill yesterday, rumors continued to circulate that Republican and Democratic leaders had met to discuss whether to go to Mr. Nixon with a request for his resignation.

Aides to Senate Minority Leader Hugh Scott (R-Pa.), Minority Whip Robert P. Griffin (R-Mich.) and Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.) said yesterday they knew of no such meetings.

"Not a word of truth in it as far as this one senator is concerned," said Senate Majority Whip Robert C. Byrd (D-W.Va.).

The reports apparently stemmed from a statement by Rep. John B. Anderson (R-Ill.) Thursday that some of his House and Senate colleagues had met to discuss the matter but had concluded that since the President kept repeating he wouldn't resign, they had decided to wait until after

an impeachment vote was taken in the House.

Schweiker, at a news conference on Capitol Hill, released the text of a letter which he sent to Mr. Nixon yesterday morning, asking him to step down.

"I cannot remain silent in the face of the now obvious moral corrosion destroying and debasing the presidency," Schweiker's letter stated.

"I have not and will not prejudge questions relevant to impeachment," he continued, "but I believe public review of the released transcripts will inevitably destroy your capacity to lead our nation effectively for the remainder of your term."

"I am convinced you can best serve your country and the presidency by resigning now," the Pennsylvania Republican said.

Even before the tape transcripts were released, calls for Mr. Nixon's resignation had come from Sens. Edward W. Brooke (R-Mass.) and James L. Buckley (Cons.—R-N.Y.).

On Thursday, House Republican Leader John J. Rhodes (R-Ariz.) and House GOP Conference Chairman Anderson suggested that Mr. Nixon consider resigning, and Sen. Marlow W. Cook (R-Ky.) called outright for resignation, asserting that the transcripts indicate "moral turpitude" and that "the President has irretrievably lost any claim to the confidence of the American people."