

# Teamster Chief Supports Nixon

Washington

Teamsters Union President Frank E. Fitzsimmons said yesterday he remains a staunch supporter of President Nixon although his union membership is divided on the subject.

"I think that Mr. Nixon is no different than any other individual," Fitzsimmons said. "He should have his day in court, if it is necessary to have one, and at this moment I still support him."

Fitzsimmons also rejected a statement made Thursday by AFL-CIO President George Meany that the economy would be bolstered if Mr. Nixon left the White House.

"I do not like to even think (of it) on the basis of a change in the economy of this country," he said. "I like to look at our country as it is. I don't think that George Meany or any other labor leader has any part to play" in a switch of presidents.

A former Nixon aide, Charles Colson, joined a Washington law firm that serves as general counsel to

the Teamsters when he left the White House.

Colson was indicted March 1 for obstruction of justice and conspiracy to obstruct justice.

Fitzsimmons, on NBC's "Meet the Press," was asked whether, under these circumstances, Colson should still handle the Teamsters' legal affairs.

"He was indicted in the circus atmosphere of this Watergate," Fitzsimmons replied. "I think Mr. Colson is a fine lawyer. I know nothing against his character."

Asked how the Teamsters' rank-and-file feel about Mr. Nixon, Fitzsimmons replied that "they are the same as the rest of the American public."

"There are divided opinions as far as our membership is concerned," he said. But he added that almost all the members "want the man to have a fair shake and his side of the story to be told to maintain the well-being of this country."

Fitzsimmons, who as-



UPI Telephoto

**FRANK FITZSIMMONS**  
**'His day in court'**

sumed command of the Teamsters in 1967 when former President James Hoffa was sent to prison, said he has not read the controversial edited transcripts of Mr. Nixon's private tape recordings.

But he said from what he knows of their contents "it's easy to take any sentence out of context from a one, two, three or four hour conversation and make a point of it. But I think overall (they) show that he . . . advocated bringing this to the general public."

A.P. & U.P.