

Calls for Nixon Resignation Are Opposed By Two Democratic Leaders in the Senate

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WASHINGTON—President Nixon's latest campaign to convince people he won't resign is causing the tide of resignation talk to ebb.

Yesterday, Mr. Nixon got a break when the Senate's two top Democrats urged everybody to "keep cool" and said a presidential resignation would be bad for the country.

While a number of leading lawmakers, including some top Republicans, have called on the President to resign, many other members of Congress believe the most orderly way to resolve the nation's leadership crisis is to continue the impeachment process.

There are signs, too, that politicians are deciding that it's futile to urge the President to resign, based on frequent declarations from him, his aides, and his family in recent days that he won't.

The latest such statement came from Health, Education and Welfare Secretary Caspar Weinberger, who told newsmen that during a meeting yesterday with Mr. Nixon he urged him not to resign. Secretary Weinberger quoted the President as replying, "Don't worry. There isn't any chance of that whatever."

Similar to Cox Firing

What is happening is similar to what happened following Mr. Nixon's disastrous miscalculation of last October in firing special Watergate prosecutor Archibald Cox. That move set off a public protest whose intensity hadn't been expected at the White House, and it started the impeachment process going. Mr. Nixon at the time managed to stem the wave of calls for his resignation, however, simply by asserting over and over that he wouldn't step down.

In a miscalculation as major as the Cox firing, Mr. Nixon has made public the edited Watergate transcripts, believing that the absence of any clear evidence of criminal conduct on his part would turn the Watergate tide in his favor. He clearly failed, however, to foresee the widespread revulsion that has developed over the tone and content of the transcripts, setting off the latest calls for him to step aside.

Although his latest assertions that he won't resign have diminished the resignation talk, his transcript miscalculation has significantly added to his deep political troubles and has made impeachment more likely.

Yesterday, Senate Majority leader Mike

Mansfield of Montana told his colleagues that "resignation is not the answer . . . this is a time to keep cool. The expression, I believe, is 'Cool it.'"

He was joined by the Senate Democratic whip, Robert Byrd of West Virginia, who said resignation "could do serious and permanent damage to our constitutional system." Sen. Byrd added that only through the impeachment process can enough evidence be presented so that "the Senate and the American people . . . may make a reasoned judgment on the culpability of the President."

Expressing a similar view, House Speaker Carl Albert (D., Okla.) also urged caution, saying the President should be allowed the benefit of the constitutional process of impeachment.

White House Portrayal

Meanwhile, White House officials continued their efforts to portray the President as being hard at work on matters of state and untroubled by his political problems. Mr. Nixon, according to a spokesman, spent much of yesterday morning reading cables from Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and sending Mr. Kissinger "guidance and instructions."

It's likely that Secretary Kissinger, who has been in the Mideast longer than expected, is under some pressure from Mr. Nixon to complete a troop-disengagement agreement between Israel and Syria quickly, partly on its own merits and partly so Mr. Nixon could visit the area early next month, before his planned trip to Moscow.

Mr. Nixon presumably is eager to become the first President to visit the Mideast, an event he probably believes would help some in his struggle to stay in office.