

Saxbe Critical of Nixon On Enforcement of Law

WASHINGTON, June 17 (UPI)—Attorney General William B. Saxbe said today President Nixon either was ignorant of grand jury operations or had a "casual" attitude about enforcement of laws in connection with the Justice Department investigation of Watergate.

Mr. Saxbe, appearing on public television's series "Washington Staright Talk," contended it was "wrong" that Mr. Nixon had discussed with his top former aides, H. R. Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman, matters then before the Watergate grand jury. Mr. Nixon had been informed of the matters by Henry E. Petersen, the Assistant Attorney General who in the spring of 1973 was in charge of the department's investigation of Watergate.

Mr. Saxbe said the President had promised Mr. Petersen their discussion would remain private.

Asked whether this reflected "a kind of casual attitude" toward law enforcement, Mr. Saxbe said, either that or a lack of knowledge about a grand jury proceeding.

Also, he said he would not now approve the wiretaps of 13 government officials and four newsmen that were made in 1969, and are causing the controversy involving Secretary of State Kissinger, unless the request was based on "a genuine national security."