

His Mind Is Closed For Nixon

Washington

Representative Earl Landgrebe (Rep-Ind.) is still wearing his Nixon button. And he intends to keep on wearing it.

"Don't confuse me with the facts. I've got a closed mind. I will not vote for impeachment," the President's staunch defender said in an interview yesterday.

Landgrebe had said Tuesday, "I'm going to stick with my President even if he and I have to be taken out of this building and shot."

But although Landgrebe says he will do everything he can to save Mr. Nixon, he hopes he won't have to manage his defense if the House debates impeachment.

"With all the lawyers around here, it surely won't come down to this truck driver," he said.

Nevertheless, this truck driver is the only Republican House member who has publicly voiced support for Mr. Nixon since the President's bombshell revelations Monday.

Landgrebe, 58, who owns a trucking business in Valparaiso, is used to standing alone.

Some of his colleagues have dubbed him the naysayer from Valparaiso because he so often casts the only vote against spending bills.

Proud of being a self-made man, Landgrebe is a tireless foe of government spending — unless it's for defense. He is also a devout Lutheran who taught Sunday school for many years and still likes to pass out religious tracts.

In 1972, he was seized by Russian police and interrogated after placing copies of the Gospel of Matthew on a counter in a Moscow department store.

Landgrebe says he and Mr. Nixon became friendly after they both began wearing American flags in their lapels.

"Two years ago when I was at the White House I congratulated him for wearing the flag and he noticed I



AP Wirephoto

CONGRESSMAN LANDGREBE, NIXON BUTTON
'Don't confuse me with the facts'

wore one," Landgrebe related. "Since then we always inspect one another when we meet. Our eyes automatically go to our lapels."

Landgrebe said even if Mr. Nixon lied and obstructed justice he should not be impeached. "We have close to utopia in this country," he said, attributing that state

largely to Mr. Nixon.

Landgrebe said he hasn't heard from Mr. Nixon or the White House since he stepped up his lonely defense of the President.

"Not one specific message of gratitude," he said. "But what I'm doing is not done in anticipation of gratitude."

Associated Press