

Curtis Maintains Support of Nixon

Washington

Senator Carl T. Curtis (Rep-Neb.), President Nixon's most stalwart defender in the Senate, said yesterday that he does not believe the Senate will convict Mr. Nixon if the House impeaches him.

"I believe that this thing will turn around in a few months," Curtis said during a taping of the Columbia Broadcasting System's weekly radio program, "Capitol Cloakroom."

He cited as the basis for that prediction his mail and telephone calls on his defense of Mr. Nixon, along with telegrams and a poll of 90 former members of Congress.

Curtis also said, "I don't think you are following the Constitution when you go ahead with this impeachment."

The break-in at Democratic National Headquarters two years ago—which is not among the articles of impeachment before the House—is not a cause, he said, "for toppling this government."

He said he is "not impressed that this break-in is of the magnitude that we should start the procession toward a banana republic."

The Constitution specifically provides the impeachment process and, as amended, acknowledges the possibility of a presidential resignation, which he said he also did not favor for Mr. Nixon, "the strongest man I know."

Curtis referred to Mr. Nixon's revelations Monday that he directed a delay in the official FBI investigation of the break-in six days after it occurred. Curtis said that persons should look "not at what he said" on those newly released tapes "but what he did in giving the go-ahead in a few days" for a full, complete FBI investigation.

Curtis said that, while the Watergate break-in was indefensible, the President's role in the resulting coverup must be seen in the context of his being "the busiest man in the world" and "without a doubt, his information came to him piecemeal . . . He got it from the offenders."

His words on those June 23 tapes, Curtis said, as far as expressing a need to keep the truth contained, were expressions of "keeping the information from the political opposition," not the Justice Department.

"The FBI was never prevented from making this investigation . . . and it completed it," Curtis said.

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