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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ATTORNEY GENERAL WOULD NOT APPROVE WIRETAPS IF ASKED FOR TODAY

WASHINGTON, D. C. -- Attorney General William B. Saxbe says the wiretaps of thirteen (13) officials and four (4) newsmen made in 1969 would not be approved by him if made today: ". . .they would not meet the standard, and I have to sign these. And the standard that I employ is that the activity, first, must be controlled, directed, paid for by a foreign power. It must be genuine national security, not something that we would guess might be, but a reason to believe because of certain circumstances." So if General Haig called up today, asking the same wiretaps that the White House got in 1969, Attorney General Saxbe would turn him down?" "That's correct."

Mr. Saxbe's remarks were made in an interview on public television's weekly series, "Washington Straight Talk," produced by NPACT, the National Public Affairs Center for Television. He was interviewed by George Will, Washington Editor of National Review, in a program taped for broadcast this evening (June 17) at 8 p.m., WETA/Channel 26.

The Attorney General also said the President was doing something wrong "in discussing this grand jury material with Mr. Haldeman and

Mr. Ehrlichman, or whoever came in the office." He referred to conversations in the White House transcripts between Mr. Nixon and Assistant Attorney General Henry Petersen and said he did not know whether the President "lied to him [Petersen] or not. All I know is that after the discussions there were further discussions in that room on matters that Mr. Petersen had brought in about matters that were happening before the grand jury and this was wrong."

The firing of former Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox and the resignation of then Attorney General Elliot Richardson came in for comment by the Attorney General, who said "I don't think there was good cause to fire Archibald Cox, and I was frankly disappointed that Mr. Richardson saw fit to fire him, or to resign. He could have. . . stood ground and say, Mr. Cox stays." As to the possibility of firing Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski, Mr. Saxbe said "I can help Mr. Jaworski by saying to him. . . relax, nobody can fire you but me and I'm not going to, and I assure you that if the President wanted to get rid of him so bad that he'd fire me, he'd have to go pretty far down the line in the Justice Department."

Also in the half-hour interview, the Attorney General said of the practice of plea bargaining ". . . this idea of circumventing the fifth amendment by offering immunity and then trying to make them testify and then to prosecute them when they don't is a device that we should re-examine."

"Washington Straight Talk" will be broadcast by the Public Broadcasting Service to its member stations at 10 p.m. EDT Monday, June 17. (NOTE: Check local listings for correct broadcast times

in other areas.)

"Washington Straight Talk" is a production of NPACT. For attribution please refer to NPACT, the National Public Affairs Center for Television.

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