FPost 4-21-71

U.S. Attorney Calls FBI Criticism 'Red Herring'

By MARTHA RAVER
Carroll County Correspondent

WESTMINSTER – Terming recent criticism of the FBI a "red herring," United States Attorney for Maryland George Beall, brother of Senator J. Glenn Beall Jr., said that Representative Hale Boggs of Louisiana has no valid ground for his claim that the FBI has monitored his phone.

Speaking to the Westminster Kiwanis last night, Beall questioned Boggs' claim that the FBI interviewed him, his son, members of his staff and subpoenaed his telephone records. The latter, Beall said, has no connection to wiretapping.

"I know that no Congressman who's been under investigation has had his wires tapped," Beall said referring to investigations into the conduct of Senator Brewster and Congressman Dowdy, Johnson and Boykin.

He explained that the FBI has very limited powers to use wiretapping and that it can do so only when a court order is issued for each case.

Since wiretapping was legalized by Congress in January 1969, it has been used only 183 times in the entire country and resulted in 900 arrests, 500 indictments, and 100 convictions, Beall said. In the ten months he has been in office, he said that wiretapping has been used only six times in Maryland and only against organized crime in gambling and narcotics.

Beall added that wiretapping is one of the few investigative methods sophisticated enough to combat large criminal organizations. As an example, he told the group of a 1970 case in Baltimore in which a $100,000-per-week heroin business, supported by the Mafia, was handled solely by telephone. Beall said that proof of the business and its Mafia connections never could have been substantiated without wiretapping.