

Both Houses of Congress Planning F.B.I. Inquiries

By ANTHONY RIPLEY
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WASHINGTON, Jan. 20 — Both houses of Congress were preparing today for inquiries into the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the files it maintained over the years on public figures and politicians.

In the House, two subcommittees of the Judiciary Committee were hoping to hold hearings. In the Senate, the Democratic Caucus voted for creation of a select committee, like the one that investigated the Watergate scandal, to investigate intelligence activities by the Central Intelligence Agency, the F.B.I. and other agencies.

The interest in the F.B.I. arose after reports were published in The Washington Post quoting two top-level aides of the bureau who spoke of files being kept on the personal lives of members of Congress.

Both Representatives Don Edwards, Democrat of California, and Robert W. Kastenmeier, Democrat of Wisconsin, hoped to hold hearings.

Both are Judiciary subcommittee chairmen—Mr. Edwards with general oversight over the F.B.I. and Mr. Kastenmeier with responsibility for wiretaps and electronic surveillance.

General practice in House committees is to make a single investigation of a subject rather than two, and some attempts were made today to work out the problem. An announcement is expected tomorrow.

Statement From F.B.I.

The F.B.I. plans a formal statement on the matter early tomorrow. United Press International, quoting a bureau spokesman, said the bureau had admitted keeping files on the personal lives of members of Congress, including reports on their "loyalty, character and reputation."

Possible F.B.I. surveillance of politicians has been a matter of contention for many years. Repeated attempts by Congress to learn about the bureau's activities have produced a series of admissions, denials and qualifications.

Typical of those reactions were statements today by At-

torney General William B. Saxbe, and Elliot L. Richardson, his predecessor.

Both men appeared on the ABC program, "A.M. America."

"I've looked into this," Mr. Saxbe said. "There is a certain amount of Congressional information that comes from other cases. But as far as having files and dossiers, that's not true. If they're looking for another Watergate, they're going to be disappointed."

Mr. Richardson said he had inquired about the possibility of such files being assembled on Congressmen during his confirmation hearings.

"I received a very explicit denial of it," he said.

In 1971, the late Representative Hale Boggs accused the F.B.I. of tapping telephones and demanded the resignation of the director, J. Edgar Hoover.

Campaign of Fear Seen

Mr. Boggs made an hour-long speech on the floor of the House, saying the F.B.I. was engaged in a campaign of fear and intimidation against members of Congress. In the Senate, Mike Mansfield of Montana, the Democratic leader, and Sam J. Ervin Jr., then a Democratic Senator from North Carolina, both spoke against Senate hearings.

L. Patrick Gray 3d, who served as acting F.B.I. director after the death of Mr. Hoover, told the Senate Judiciary Committee in 1973 that material was collected on politicians and that summaries were made. He said he feared destroying the material because it would have to be reviewed first by employees of the National Archives and he did not want them to read it.

"I do not want people to read some of this rot that is in those files," Mr. Gray said.

Last February, an F.B.I. spokesman denied "categorically" an article in The New York Times that described political intelligence gathering operations by the bureau. The article said that Mr. Hoover had tried to help re-elect friendly members of Congress by supplying them with sensitive information.