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EX-F.B.I. AIDE SEES 'SCAPEGOAT' ROLE

Felt Says He'll Cite National Security if Indicted for Authorizing Break-Ins

By JOHN M. CREWDSON

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Aug. 29—W. Mark Felt, the former associate director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, suggested today that he might become a "scapegoat" in the Justice Department's investigation of several burglaries carried out by bureau agents in recent years.

Mr. Felt, who has acknowledged authorizing two such break-ins by bureau agents in 1972, both aimed at uncovering information about foreign and domestic terrorists, said that if he were indicted, "my defense would be that the national security interest of the country was paramount."

In an appearance on the CBS television program "Face the Nation," the bureau's former No. 2 official noted that one of the target groups, the Weatherman Underground Organization, had said it was re-

ponsible "for hundreds of bombings" over the last few years, including those at the Capitol and the Pentagon here.

The second break-in, he said, had been intended to garner information about an Arab group that was "planning on all sorts of terrorism in the United States, and I think we stopped it because we took that action."

'I'd Do It Again'

"You're either going to have

an F.B.I. that tries to stop the violence before it happens, or you're not," Mr. Felt said. "Personally, I think that this is justified and I'd do it again tomorrow."

The Justice Department lawyers, who questioned Mr. Felt before a Federal grand jury here last week, are investigating a number of burglaries by bureau agents directed against associates of the fugitive members of the Weatherman terrorist group in the New York City area.

Those burglaries, many of which apparently were authorized in advance by bureau officials in Washington, took place between 1971 and 1973, according to bureau records obtained thus far by the department's prosecutors.

None of them was accompanied by a judicial search warrant, and Mr. Felt conceded today that the practice, though necessary, had been an "extra-legal" one. But the problem facing the bureau, he said, had been one of serving "the greater good," even though the constitutional rights of a small number of persons had been violated.

"To not take action against these people and know of a bombing in advance," Mr. Felt said, "would simply be to stick your fingers in your ears and protect your eardrums when the explosion went off, and then start the investigation."

J. Edgar Hoover, the late Director of the bureau, in 1966 ordered the use of burglaries as an investigative technique halted, and one of the principal questions facing the prosecutors is when the burglaries resumed and on whose authority.

Doubts They Stopped

Mr. Felt said today that "I suspect that they probably didn't stop when Hoover said to stop them," but were continued by bureau agents working in New York City and elsewhere without the knowledge of bureau officials in Washington. "But I can't prove it," he said.

Mr. Felt, who retired from the bureau in 1973, again denied today persistent speculation that he had been the mysterious source of inside information about the Watergate scandal who has come to be known as "Deep Throat."

"I am not Deep Throat," Mr. Felt said in answer to a reporter's question. "And the only thing I can say is that I wouldn't be ashamed to be, because I think whoever it was helped the country, no question about it."



Associated Press

W. Mark Felt displaying a publication of a radical group he acted against.