

NY-4/16/71
**MANSFIELD BACKS
HOOVER AND F.B.I.;
RIDICULES CRITICS**

**Says Charges Have 'More
Noise Than Substance'—
Opposes Investigation**

By WARREN WEAVER Jr.

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 15 — Senator Mike Mansfield, the Democratic leader, came to the defense of J. Edgar Hoover and the Federal Bureau of Investigation today and charged that recent criticism of the agency and its director contained "more noise than substance."

Questioned by reporters at a breakfast meeting, Senator Mansfield said that he would not replace Mr. Hoover if he were President and strongly implied his opposition to a Congressional investigation of the agency.

The Montana Democrat said that Senator Edmund S. Muskie of Maine had "produced something" to support his statement yesterday that the F.B.I. sent surveillance agents to Earth Day rallies last year. But Mr. Mansfield cast doubt on other Congressional criticism of the agency.

"If members of Congress are going to make allegations," he said, "they're going to have to have evidence and put it on the table."

Boggs Charge Recalled

On April 6, Representative Hale Boggs of Louisiana, the House Democratic floor leader, called for Mr. Hoover's resignation on the ground that he had ordered wiretaps on members of Congress. The next day, Mr. Boggs said that he himself had been under the agency's surveillance, but he has not submitted further evidence.

Senator Mansfield said today that no member of Congress

had ever complained to him that his telephone was being tapped. The F.B.I. has denied that it has ever tapped the lines of any Senators or Representatives.

Meanwhile at the White House, the Presidential press secretary, Ronald L. Ziegler, said that "perhaps" F.B.I. agents had made official reports on Earth Day activities in April, 1970, but that any policy of surveillance of private citizens at public events was "repugnant" to the Administration.

In a long exchange with reporters, Mr. Ziegler repeatedly declined to serve as a spokesman for the agency or to "talk about what steps the F.B.I. takes in terms of carrying out its responsibilities," hinting that the agency might have some response today to Senator Muskie's charges.

At F.B.I. headquarters, however, a spokesman said, "We had no comment yesterday, and we have no comment today." during his briefing, Mr. Zieg-

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ler went to some length to differentiate between Administration policy on surveillance and F.B.I. activities, of which he claimed ignorance. He decried the agency vigorously for its law enforcement record over the years but did not mention Mr. Hoover.

Meanwhile, controversy developed here over whether Congress should begin an investigation of Government surveillance generally and the F.B.I. specifically. One Senator said that 11 already had.

Senator Gaylord Nelson, Democrat of Wisconsin, introduced a bill to create a commission that would look into all domestic surveillance by Government agencies, including the Central Intelligence Agency and various military intelligence units.

A co-sponsor of last year's Earth Day observance, Senator Nelson said that he was "astonished that the F.B.I. could conceivably dream up any legitimate excuse for conducting surveillance over their activities."

Senator Muskie proposed

yesterday the establishment of a domestic intelligence review board, responsible to the President and Congress, that would oversee all types of Government surveillance.

Doubts Need for Agency

Senator Mansfield questioned today the need for creating an agency to undertake such a survey. He said, however, that any Senator who disagreed was free to introduce a resolution and present evidence in support of it to the standing committee to which it was referred.

Senator William V. Roth Jr., Republican of Delaware, pointed out today that the omnibus crime bill that President Nixon signed last October had created a 15-member commission to study the collection of information about private citizens.

This commission will come into existence next Jan. 1 if Congress appropriates money for it in the 1971-72 budget. It would consist of four Senators appointed by the Vice President, four Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House and seven private citizens appointed by the President.

Griffin Praises F.B.I.

WASHINGTON, April 15 (AP)—Senator Robert P. Griffin of Michigan said today that the F.B.I. was at an Earth Day rally here last year not because Senator Muskie was a speaker but because "such individuals as Rennis Davis" were on the same platform.