

White House Meddling

Claimed by Ingersoll

By William Claiborne

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The government's top narcotics enforcement officials accused the White House yesterday of meddling in his agency's affairs and of disrupting the fight against drug trafficking by creating competing bureaucracies.

John E. Ingersoll, who has resigned as director of the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, specifically accused former presidential aides: H. R. (Bob) Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman of interference.

He said he was quitting government service because Haldeman and Ehrlichman did not intend to keep him when the BNDD and several smaller drug agencies are consolidated into a new Drug Enforcement Administration, effective today. His resignation is effective Aug. 1.

He said he would have been interested in heading the new administration, provided he had been assured of independence from the White House.

Ingersoll, who headed the BNDD since its creation in 1968, did not accuse the White House of attempting to influence drug investigations or personnel matters. But he said that was only because he made it clear he would not yield to such pressure.

Instead, Ingersoll said in a meeting with newsmen, he constantly received signals from the White House concerning BNDD policy.

"More than policy setting, it got into implementation of policy, and how you should go about doing your job," Ingersoll complained. He said most of the White House calls came from former presidential aide Egl Krogh, who, like Hal-

de, man and Ehrlichman, resigned as a result of the Watergate scandal.

Ingersoll, whose resignation was disclosed earlier this week, said he decided to quit after he was told by former Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst in February that "unnamed White House officials" did not plan to keep him after the drug agency reorganization.

Ingersoll said he learned later that the unnamed officials were Haldeman and Ehrlichman. Haldeman was Mr. Nixon's chief of staff, Ehrlichman his chief domestic affairs adviser.

In San Clemente, Calif., White House press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler said he knew nothing about interference in the BNDD. He said the reorganization plan was bound to lead to differences of opinion and "possibly to personality conflicts."

Ingersoll was particularly critical of a rival drug agency, the Office of Drug Abuse Law Enforcement, which was established by the Nixon administration last year to "bring the federal presence to the street."

Ingersoll said DALE agents duplicated and detracted from the efforts of BNDD and were unprofessional in their conduct. Asked whether DALE agents bypassed legal safeguards, Ingersoll said, "You



Departing BNDD chief John E. Ingersoll cites interference by Nixon ex-aides Haldeman and Ehrlichman.

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can look at the record and see that."

He added, "I've gotten complaints from police chiefs all over the country."

A BNDD official later said complaints against DALE operations came from Miami, and that the Los Angeles County sheriff's department had pulled its drug agents out of DALE investigations.

Ingersoll cited a DALE raid earlier this year in Collinsville, Ill., in which agents mistakenly broke into the homes of two families because they had the wrong addresses. The agents are under investigation by a grand jury.

The narcotics chief said the rivalry among the BNDD, DALE, the U.S. Customs Bureau and the Office of National Narcotics Intelligence had blunted the drug control effort. Additionally, he complained, the BNDD lost 250 agents when DALE was created.

Meanwhile, Attorney General Elliot L. Richardson announced yesterday that John R. Bartels Jr., deputy director of DALE, will become caretaker administrator of the DEA until a permanent administrator is selected.

Ingersoll said he knows the job of permanent administrator has been offered to several people, but he knows of no one who has agreed to take it.

He said he believes the new DEA should concentrate on national and international drug cases, leaving local offenses to state and local officials. The DALE office, he said, contradicted that decentralization concept, which he said was originally supported by the White House.

A BNDD official said that Ingersoll plans to become security head for a private international corporation. Myles J. Ambrose, head of DALE, also is quitting for a private job.