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McGOVERN SILENT ON BUGGING 'SPY'

Won't Comment on Reports That Informant in G.O.P. Told of Wiretapping Bids

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Special to The New York Times

ESPANOLA, N. M., Sept. 10 — Senator George McGovern refused today to confirm or to deny published reports that the Democratic party had a highly placed informant at the Committee for the Re-election of the President or the Republican National Committee.

"I can't comment on that," the Democratic Presidential nominee told newsmen here this afternoon. But he refused twice to rule out the possibility. Further prompting speculation that it was correct.

Two newspapers, the Los Angeles Times and The St. Louis Post-Dispatch, reported this morning without naming the source of the information that an official of the Republican campaign had provided information to Senator McGovern's aides on the wiretapping of the Democratic National Committee offices and an alleged unsuccessful attempt to plant a listening device at the McGovern campaign headquarters in Washington.

Senator McGovern initiated the speculation yesterday in Albuquerque at a news conference in which he asserted that he had detailed information about the supposed attempt to bug the offices his campaign used to occupy on Capitol Hill.

On May 27, he said, "as I understand it, there were two carloads of men who went to the headquarters. They were clocked at about three in the morning. There was someone sleeping in the doorway of the headquarters and other workers inside, and apparently that combination was enough to run them away."

The alleged incident would have occurred about three weeks before five men were arrested with electronic eavesdropping devices and photographic copying equipment in the Democratic headquarters at the Watergate Hotel. One of the

five was found later to have \$114,000 in Republican campaign funds.

Senator McGovern declined yesterday to disclose the source of the specific information about the bugging attempt on May 27. But he asserted that "I can tell you it's a fact" and he said the information came from a source that was very reliable.

that night."

In their Sunday editions, The Los Angeles Times and The St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported that the source was said by unnamed officials of the McGovern campaign to be either an employe of the Committee for the Re-election of the President or of the Republican National Committee.

Knowledge Disclaimed

Aides to Senator McGovern disclaimed any knowledge of the source today, however, and Richard Dougherty, the press secretary, was at first unaware of the news accounts.

Mr. Dougherty advised Mr. McGovern to make no comment on the reports. Reporters asked the Senator about them after he addressed a rally of some 8,000 people at John F. Kennedy Junior High School in this northern New Mexico Pueblo. Asked if the news accounts were correct, Mr. McGovern replied:

"I can't comment on that. I advise you to talk to Ed Williams." Edward Bennett Williams is the attorney for the Democratic party in a civil lawsuit seeking damages for the break-in at the Watergate.

Asked a second time if he could deny the news accounts, Mr. McGovern answered, "I cannot."

He said yesterday in Albuquerque that he knew the identities of the individuals who were alleged to have gone to his campaign offices in May with the intention of planting listening devices. He declined to name them, however, or to say whether they were the same men arrested at the Democratic committee offices in June.

One of Mr. McGovern's traveling aides said that he did not know if anyone in President Nixon's campaign was supplying information to the McGovern staff, but said that "if we do have an informant, I hope he [Senator McGovern] didn't blow it."

Senator McGovern has sought repeatedly to place responsibility for the Watergate break-in at the White House, contending in campaign speeches that it was one indication of a disdain for civil liberties on the part of the Republican Administration.

The Democratic nominee came to Espanola to issue an "agenda for Spanish-surnamed Americans" that pledged to improve Government efforts to provide bilingual education, Government and private jobs, "criminal justice" and "full participation" for Spanish-speaking minorities.

He devoted nearly all of his remarks, however, to his standard campaign theses—ending the war in Vietnam, reforming the tax system and providing job opportunities for all who are able to work.

The predominantly Spanish-speaking and Indian audience—the size of which was at issue—cheered the Senator.