



Muskie May Sue Over 'Political Espionage'

Washington

Senator Edmund Muskie said yesterday he is exploring the possibility of suing President Nixon's re-election committee and White House aides for violating his civil rights through political espionage and sabotage.

The Muskie staff has prepared a memorandum listing ten or so events which they said lead them to suspect the presence of such espionage directed at the Maine senator during his unsuccessful campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination.

"I have no time to consider this in any active sense," Muskie said in an interview. "In so far as my personal feelings are concerned I don't think I'd be interested in pursuing such a course.

"But in so far as the importance of raising this issue for public consideration — an

effort to somewhat purify the political process—it might be useful to do it."

The staff memorandum detailed examples alleging stolen campaign documents, stolen Muskie polls, the use of forged Muskie envelopes to drive a wedge between Muskie and Senator Edward M. Kennedy, (Dem.-Mass.), harassing and false telephone calls and a smear campaign aimed at two of Muskie's opponents which were falsely attributed to him.

"Over the past 18 months there have been a number of inexplicable incidents that seem to us to be inevitably connected with somebody's sabotage efforts," Muskie said. But we were never able to trace them . . . we have no hard evidence.

"But there was an astonishing series of them," he said.

John McEvoy, a Muskie aide, noted that the senator

already has called on President Nixon to name an independent body similar to the Warren Commission to investigate the allegations and to give it, the investigators, full cooperation of the FBI.

McEvoy said one of the possibilities being explored is for a large group of citizens to join Muskie in a suit, making it a class action "on the basis that everyone has been defrauded."

"We're not making any direct accusations at this point," McEvoy said. "And I've not made any serious attempt to check out these incidents. We're not the FBI . . . But if these reports are true, it's my opinion something should be done.

"Stealing documents and fraudulent use of the mail are felonies," he said. "They were not undertaken in the spirit of fun. They were undertaken to destroy a candidate."

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