

3-21-73

Calls for a vote**Gray balks at more bugging questions**

By Glen Elsasser

Chicago Tribune Press Service

WASHINGTON, March 20—

L. Patrick Gray ducked a barrage of questions today about the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Watergate investigation orders of his boss, Atty. Gen. Richard G. Kleindienst.

Returning to the Senate Judiciary Committee for another round of hearings on his nomination as FBI director, Gray repeatedly declined to give details about FBI operations.

This was in marked contrast to his candor during the early weeks of hearings, which embarrassed the White House.

Gray's new policy of silence enraged committee Democrats who already claim they have the votes to delay—and, in effect, to kill—his nomination until after the Senate conducts its own Watergate inquiry.

GRAY, ACTING FBI director since the death of J. Edgar Hoover last May, has been caught in the cross-fire between the White House and the Senate over John Dean, President Nixon's coun-

sel who played a key role during the Watergate investigation.

According to new ground rules announced by Gray today, only the committee chairman, James O. Eastland [D., Miss.], the ranking Republican on the committee, Sen. Roman Hruska [Neb.], and their two counsels will have access to the FBI's Watergate files.

Eastland and Hruska are two of Gray's strongest supporters on the committee.

Gray said Kleindienst had called him and informed him the files should be closed to all except those four.

AT THE OPENING of the hearings three weeks ago, Gray had announced he would open the files to the Senate in an effort to clear himself of charges he permitted White House interference in the investigation.

Today Gray apparently was growing weary of the questioning. He remarked at one point:

"We do have to reach the point of finality, don't we? I'm entitled to an up-or-down vote."

HOWEVER, a leader of the Gray opposition in the committee, Sen. Birch Bayh [D., Ind.], said later a vote on the nomination was not imminent.

In other developments:

● The committee voted to subpoena Mrs. Judy Holbanch, a former employe of President Nixon's reelection campaign committee. She has charged that a secret interview with

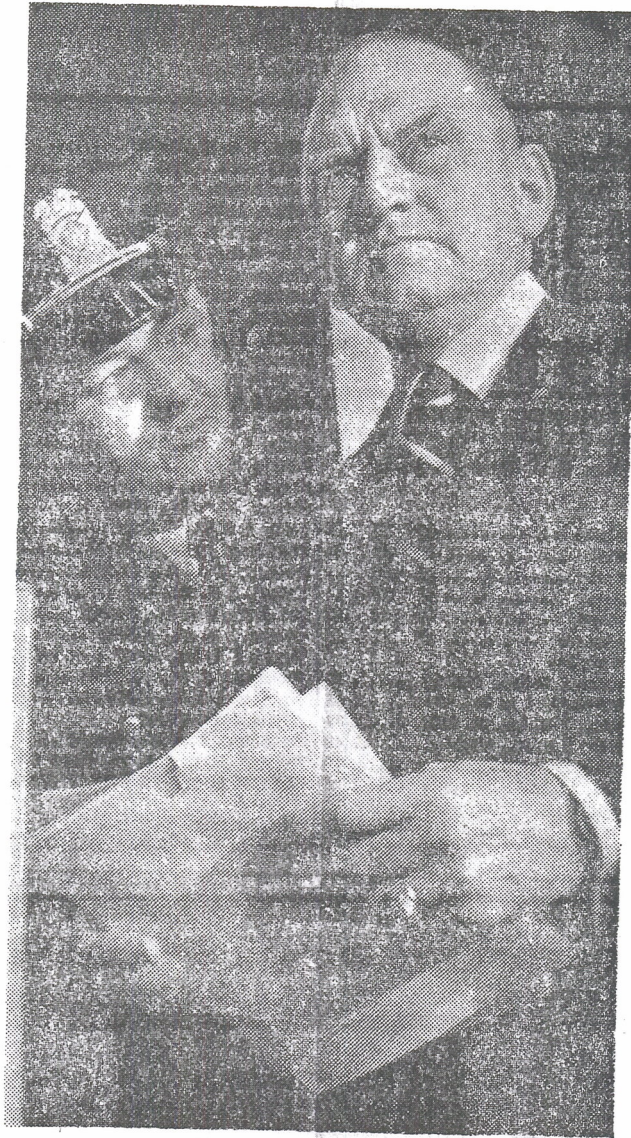
the FBI was leaked to campaign organization officials.

● The committee voted to subpoena Thomas E. Bishop, a former assistant FBI director, and Thomas Lombard, a former counsel to the Nixon campaign committee. Bishop has been blamed for transmitting a memo, carrying Gray's signature, to 14 FBI field offices and requesting crime information for President Nixon's campaign last year.

GRAY TESTIFIED today he did not order an investigation of the circumstances of the memo until after the White House informed him a news magazine planned an article on the incident.

Gray said he was given a July 20 interview report on Jeb Magruder, former deputy director of the Nixon reelection committee. During the Watergate trial in January, Magruder testified that Dean, the White House counsel, was instrumental in the committee's hiring of G. Gordon Liddy, who was convicted of masterminding the bugging of the Democratic National Committee headquarters.

Gray said that on Oct. 10 he sent Dean copies of FBI interview reports of the investiga-



UPI Telephoto

L. Patrick Gray arriving to resume testimony before Senate Judiciary Committee.

tion because Dean was conducting his own investigation on orders of the President.

THE PRESIDENT has refused to make Dean Available

to the Senate for questioning about his role. The tug-of-war over Dean has badly damaged Gray's chances for confirmation.