

Ervin Criticizes the White House for Ordering an F.B.I. Investigation of C.B.S.'s Schorr

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 1—Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr. asserted today that the Nixon Administration had acted with either "stupidity" or "duplicitly" in ordering a personal investigation of Daniel Schorr, a television newsman.

Senator Ervin, chairman of the Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights, also charged at a Capitol Hill hearing that the White House was inconsistent in its explanations of a Federal Bureau of Investigation inquiry into the background of Mr.

Schorr, who works for the Columbia Broadcasting System.

The North Carolina Democrat further criticized the Administration for refusing to allow three White House officials to testify as to whether the investigation was a prelude to the offer of a position in the Administration, as the White House has contended, or an attempt to intimidate Mr. Schorr.

The television newsman said in his testimony before the Senate subcommittee that the investigation had a "special dimension" since it came "in the context of other episodes

of conflict between the Government and the press — the speeches of Vice President Agnew, the controversy over the publication of the Pentagon papers, the public discussion of Government credibility and news manipulation."

Mr. Schorr, who has been with C.B.S. for 19 years in Washington and abroad, said, "I should like to think that I have not been affected by the whole episode. The insidious thing about it is that I do not know what subtle effects it may have on me or on my colleagues."

The F.B.I. investigation of Mr. Schorr first came to light last November in a Washington Post article by Ken W. Clawson, who has since resigned from the newspaper to become a deputy to Herbert G. Klein, the executive branch's director of communications.

Subsequently, Senator Ervin asked the television correspondent to testify before his subcommittee's hearings on freedom of the press, which began last fall. The hearings resumed today and will continue into next week.

Mr. Schorr said that, on at

least five occasions, President Nixon and senior officials of his Administration had criticized his reporting. On Aug. 19 of last year, he was asked to come to the White House to hear objections to a report that appeared the evening before.

The next day, Mr. Schorr testified, F.B.I. agents interviewed him as well as C.B.S. executives here and in New York, other newsmen, neighbors, previous employers and neighbors of a brother in New York. He said the agent had told him that he was being considered for a "high Government posi-

tion" but did not know what it was.

The director of the F.B.I., J. Edgar Hoover, confirmed much of Mr. Schorr's recollections of the investigation in a letter to Senator Ervin made public today.

Mr. Hoover said that the F.B.I. was requested by a member of the White House staff on Aug. 19 to undertake a background investigation of Mr. Schorr. It began at 8:30 on the morning of Aug. 20 and ran until 3 P.M., when the F.B.I. learned that Mr. Schorr "desired the investigation be discontinued."

"Prior to the discontinuance of our investigation," Mr. Hoover wrote, "persons were interviewed concerning Mr. Schorr." He said that "the incomplete investigation of Mr. Schorr was entirely favorable to him and the results were furnished to the White House."

Mr. Schorr said today that he believed that the bureau "had acted quite properly, routinely, and on instructions." But he said he had never been offered any job in the Nixon Administration, either before or since the investigation.