

WXPost AUG 13 1975

Specialist Will Join Tap Probe

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RICHMOND, Aug. 12—The Justice Department said today it will send one of its specialists in wiretapping cases to supervise a grand jury's investigation here into an illegal wiretap conducted by Richmond police.

Guy L. Goodwin, 46, an attorney who gained the reputation of being a tough and controversial prosecutor as head of a Justice Department unit created by the Nixon administration to prosecute crimes by "revolutionary terrorists," will join the grand jury when it resumes its deliberations Monday, a Justice Department official said.

Goodwin was assigned to the investigation because of his expertise in wiretap law and his role in handling major grand jury investigations, the official said.

Goodwin's assignment is seen as another indication of the importance the Justice Department has placed on the case. It has led to the unprecedented action of placing five FBI agents on administrative leave. The agents, including the head of the Richmond FBI office, were put on leave with pay Aug. 3 as the grand jury was said to have broadened its investigation into the role the agency played in discovery of the wiretap.

The Justice Department official said it isn't yet known yet whether Goodwin, whose efforts in handling antiwar cases earned him the title of the department's "traveling prosecutor," will handle prosecution of any indictments that might result from the investigation. Until now the investigation has been handled by the office of William B. Cummings, U. S. attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia.

The decision to send Goodwin into the case does not reflect criticism of Cummings, the spokesman said. "We can't all be experts in all parts of the law," the spokesman said.

A source familiar with the investigation has said that three FBI agents sent to investigate discovery of the police wiretap in an apartment in suburban Henrico County failed to confiscate the wiretapping device and cite the incident to Cummings' office as a violation of U.S. law.

The device was returned to Richmond police and reportedly has since been lost. Under Justice Department rules, the agents should have confiscated it immediately.