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Patman Charge

Nixon Tactics Held Sordid

WASHINGTON — (AP) — Chairman Wright Patman of the House Banking Committee said today President Nixon, as chief of his re-election campaign, is directly responsible for the "most sordid political tactics ever employed by a major political party."

The Texas Democrat made the comment at a news conference which he

called because of reports in today's Washington Post detailing alleged plans by Republicans to disrupt and sabotage efforts by Democratic presidential contenders earlier this year.

Referring to the Post story, Patman said, "This is an attempt to substitute espionage for political discussion. It is a chapter out of the political handbooks of the totalitarian countries."

Held Responsible

"President Nixon is in control of his own campaign. He is responsible," Patman said.

Sen. George McGovern said in Detroit "I've heard reports for months about the Administration engaging in tactics of this kind.

"This is the warning that I've been giving about the

Watergate thing, that it is not an isolated incident," he said, adding, "This is the thing that the American people have to understand about the significance of the Watergate case."

Fends Off Questions

At the White House, press secretary Ronald Ziegler fended off questions about the Post account, saying they had already been dealt with by the Committee for the Re-Election of the President.

Beyond that, Ziegler would only refer to past Nixon statements disavowing any connection with the Watergate case, saying that no one presently employed in the White House was involved and calling the wire-tapping attempt at Democratic headquarters a "reprehensible activity."

Sargent Shriver, McGovern's running mate, said he has no personal knowledge of the incident but said:

"How many coincidences can occur before you believe corruption exists?"

Shriver Reply

Asked whether he believed Nixon was aware of the alleged incidents, Shriver said:

"I don't believe that the President is sitting innocently in the Oval Office, pure and undefiled, without knowing anything that is going on in the Republican National Committee . . . It's his committee, not my committee, nor your committee. If he doesn't know what's going on in his committee, how can he know what's going on in the country?"

Patman, who last week was voted down by his committee when he sought to launch a full-scale investigation of the Watergate incident, said he is renewing that effort.

Special Session

Calling on Nixon to open up the records of his campaign organization, Patman said he was summoning his committee to a special session Thursday and would

ask four key Nixon aides to appear.

He urged Nixon to require that all presidential aides be available to answer questions and "to reveal publicly what has gone on behind the backs of the American people."

Patman said he had asked four witnesses to appear Thursday: Maurice Stans, Nixon's re-election finance chief; former Attorney General John Mitchell, who stepped out in July as over-all campaign chief but remains a top consultant to Nixon; Clark MacGregor, current head of the Committee for the Re-election of the President, and John Dean, White House staffer who conducted an in-house investigation of the Watergate incident.

GAO Probe Set

Patman said he had consulted with the General Accounting Office, which is charged with enforcement of a new federal election law, and that the GAO had agreed to reopen its own investigation of Nixon finances, already linked to the Watergate.

The GAO investigation, Patman said, "is under way at this hour."

"We now know that President Nixon's campaign has included massive espionage and harassment of the Democratic Party and its candidates," Patman said.