

'Mr. Clean'

At the FBI

WASHINGTON — (CDN) — President Nixon, embattled over the Watergate scandal, has turned to a handsome Indiana Republican known as "Mr. Clean" to be acting director of the FBI.

Nixon's choice of William D. Ruckelshaus, 40, was announced within hours after L. Patrick Gray III quit under fire when it became known he had admitted destroying documents belonging to a chief Watergate conspirator.

Questioned by newsmen yesterday at the White House, Ruckelshaus said he had no personal knowledge of any effort to cover up the Watergate bugging plot by administration officials.

Interview

Only two weeks ago on a TV interview program, Ruckelshaus said:

"The Watergate was obviously a mess. It has got the people in this country very upset and I think the quicker we can straighten it out by telling all everybody knows about it, the better off we will all be."

Ruckelshaus, known as "Ruck" to his friends, has headed the Environmental Protection Agency since it was established in 1970. He was Assistant Attorney General in Charge of the Civil Division for 10 months in 1969.

A stand-in campaigner for President Nixon last year, Ruckelshaus has held political jobs — appointive or elective — since he was graduated from Harvard Law School in 1960. As a "surrogate" for Nixon, he made more than 20 speeches in the 1972 campaign.

1974 Prospect

He was Republican Leader of the Indiana Legislature in 1967-68 and lost a Senate

race to Sen. Birch Bayh (D-Ind.) in 1968. He has been considered a prospective GOP candidate for governor or U.S. Senator in 1974.



Wm. RUCKELSHAUS

Taking over FBI

Ruckelshaus, who said he would remain "not much longer than two months" in the top FBI post, pledged an "honest, fair and vigorous" prosecution of his duties.

He said his short tenure and political past would not be handicaps to him as head of the major federal law enforcement agency. He promised to weigh the "serious charges" against top White House aides H. R. Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman.

Sen. Robert C. Byrd (D-W. Va.) said he was pleased that Nixon had chosen an acting head of the FBI who had "nothing to do with the Watergate affair." Byrd urged the President to act quickly to find a permanent director who could start to "repair the damage" that has been done to the FBI.

Also FBI Pro

Sen. Henry M. Jackson (D-Wash.), however, said it would have been "a lot better" if the President had named a high-ranking FBI official to take over until a permanent successor to Hoover was found.

"They've got to get the

FBI out of politics," Jackson said, "and I've got nothing against Mr. Ruckelshaus personally."

Gray was sharply criticized during Senate confir-

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mation hearings for making speeches that supported the Nixon Administration during the 1972 campaign.

But Gray resigned yesterday afternoon when it was disclosed that he destroyed "political dynamite" documents taken from the White House safe of E. Howard Hunt, former Central Intelligence Agency man who pleaded guilty to wiretapping and burglar charges in the Watergate trial.

Gray confirmed reports that Dean gave him the documents at a meeting last June 28 attended by John D. Ehrlichman, presidential assistant for domestic affairs.

The sealed package reportedly contained a fake cable implicating the late President John F. Kennedy in the assassination of South

Vietnam President ^{N 98 D 1 N 4} Nguyen Van Diem in 1963, plus a dossier on Sen. Edward M. Kennedy's accident at Chappaquiddick Island that caused the death of Mary Jo Kopechne.

"Friends of Gray" — who later turned out to be Sen. Lowell Weicker (R-Conn.) — said the former FBI chief left the documents in his closet for a week, then put them into a "burn bag" used for secret papers without ever examining them.