

New FBI Checks In White House

Washington

FBI agents are regularly searching the briefcases of top presidential aides H. R. Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman as they enter and leave their offices, FBI sources disclosed yesterday. But the agents are no longer patrolling the corridors of the White House.

The check reflected what FBI sources described as new acting director William D. Ruckelshaus' determination to maintain the bureau's independence and integrity.

They also said Ruckelshaus told President Nixon that on matters bearing on the Watergate case he would deal with the White House only through new Attorney General Elliot L. Richardson, or, if necessary, with the President himself.

CONTRAST

"He's not going to let this place turn into a circus," one Ruckelshaus associate said. "There are going to be no speeches, and, for the time being no press interviews."

All of this contrasted sharply with the actions of Ruckelshaus' predecessor L. Patrick Gray III. In his first months as acting director Gray made a host of speaking appearances around the country.

One of Ruckelshaus' first initiatives, after moving into Gray's old office Monday, was to propose assigning FBI agents to guard any material bearing on the Watergate probe in the files of Haldeman, Ehrlichman and former White House counsel John Dean.

The three men resigned Monday because of the Watergate scandal.

GUARDS

After checking with Richardson and acting White House counsel Leonard Garment, Ruckelshaus sent a 12-man guard detail to the White House.

But President Nixon was startled and offended by the sight of the agents in the White House corridors on Tuesday—so much so that at a Cabinet meeting later that day he reportedly pounded the table in anger. The pres-

ence of the guards was obtrusive, the President complained, and cast an unfair aspersion on the individuals involved.

The agents have since been moved out of the halls. And the files have been shifted to other rooms in the White House where an FBI records team is taking inventory.

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