

Congress to Investigate 'Political' Audits by IRS

Washington

The Joint Tax Committee of Congress yesterday ordered an investigation of allegations that the Nixon administration has used tax audits to punish its enemies and help its friends.

The joint committee, made up of the senior members of the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee, approved the investigation after a very brief discussion and with no recorded dissent.

The chairman of the joint committee is Representative Wilbur D. Mills, (Dem-Ark.).

The joint committee instructed its staff to examine the tax returns and any audits of all persons who have been mentioned publicly as possibly receiving favorable

or unfavorable treatment by Internal Revenue.

One person, Robert Greene, of the Long Island newspaper Newsday, was explicitly mentioned by John W. Dean III, the former White House counsel, as having been audited because of his role in preparing a series of unfavorable news articles on Charles (Bebe) Rebozo, a friend of President Nixon.

While no other alleged target of a politically motivated audit has been discussed by name, memorandums that have been introduced at the Watergate hearings indicated that members of the White House staff repeatedly tried to pressure internal Revenue to perform tax audits on persons considered to be enemies of the Nixon administration.

The memorandums indi-

cated that the first two men to hold the position of commissioner of Internal Revenue under President Nixon had generally resisted these pressures. They were Randolph W. Thrower and Johnnie M. Walters.

The man who now heads IRS, Donald C. Alexander, promised the director of the staff of the joint committee, Laurence N. Woodworth, his "full cooperation" in the investigation.

Thrower said he had been told that President Nixon personally wanted former White House aide John J. Caulfield appointed to head the IRS Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms division. Thrower resisted the appointment on the ground that Caulfield had no qualifications for such a high-ranking administrative job.

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