

G.O.P. AIDE TELLS OF SABOTAGE ROLE

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Secretary Asserts She Was Part of Anti-Muskie Plot

in Florida's Primary

NYTimes

By MARTIN WALDRON

Special to The New York Times

TAMPA, Fla., Oct. 24—A 26-year-old Tampa secretary has said that she was part of a Republican scheme to sabotage the Presidential campaign of Senator Edmund S. Muskie in Florida last winter.

The secretary, Miss Patricia E. Griffin, who said she had served as a Muskie volunteer to carry out the anti-Muskie effort, told a Tampa newspaperman that she had been recruited by Robert Benz in Tampa. She said that Mr. Benz had worked for Donald H. Segretti of California.

There have been a number of reports linking Mr. Segretti to political sabotage efforts financed by the Committee for the Re-Election of the President, and alleging that he was paid by a special campaign fund. The New York Times has learned that a number of telephone calls, made from Mr. Segretti's phone or charged to his credit card, were placed to the White House and to the home of Dwight L. Chapin, an assistant to President Nixon.

But Miss Griffin's admission is the first direct evidence of actual Republican sabotage against Democrats. Previous reports said that Mr. Segretti had attempted to recruit a number of persons to engage in such activity, but none said that any such efforts had actually taken place.

None of the allegations con-

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cerning Mr. Segretti have been denied in detail by the reelection committee or other Republican officials, but the charges in general have been ridiculed by Republicans.

Miss Griffin, a former worker in the Republican state headquarters in Columbia, S.C., told a Tampa Time reporter, John Perry, that she had been told to infiltrate Mr. Muskie's campaign in the Florida Presidential primary and to sabotage it if possible.

She said that she had been recruited for the job by Mr. Benz, a Tampa member of the Young Republicans, to whose telephone numerous calls were placed this year and were charged to the home telephone of Mr. Segretti, a former Treasury Department attorney now living in Los Angeles.

Asked Legal Advice

Details about Miss Griffin's activities were sparse. Her attorneys refused to allow her to be interviewed further, and Mr. Perry said that he talked with her only briefly before she decided to seek legal advice.

Senator Muskie, of Maine, who was considered the front-runner for the Democratic nomination before the primaries, came in fourth in the March 14 Florida voting and went on to lose the nomination to Senator George McGovern.

Mr. Perry is a former secretary-treasurer of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions at Santa Barbara, Calif.

He said that Miss Griffin readily acknowledged that she had been planted in the Muskie camp and had prepared a bogus new release on the campaign stationery of Senator Henry M. Jackson of Washington.

Miss Griffin denied, he said, that she had know anything about a scurrilous letter on Muskie letterheads attacking Senator Jackson and Senator Hubert H. Humphrey. The letter, mailed three days before the Florida primary to numerous voters in the state, is now being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Miss Griffin said that the Jackson "news release" she helped prepare had accused Mr. Muskie of preparing campaign material on Government-owned typewriters and other equipment assigned to the office of Representative Sam Gibbons of Tampa a Democrat who was supporting Mr. Muskie.

Mr. Perry said that the young woman, who taught in a high school in Columbia, S.C., before moving to Tampa, had told him that her activities

Miss Griffin said that she knew about other acts of sabotage directed at Senator Muskie but that, on the advice of her attorneys, she would not give any details.

Mr. Benz could not be reached for comment today. His father, W. H. Benz, said that his son was "on the road."

Last week, Robert Benz denied talking with Mr. Segretti but later changed his statement to "no comment."

at least 20 calls were made from Mr. Segretti's telephone to that of Mr. Benz from March 5 to July 9 this year.

Miss Griffin said that she knew Mr. Benz received a number of calls after July 9.

In recent weeks, both Miss Griffin and Mr. Benz have been working in the campaign of Conway Brock, a Tampa stockbroker running as a Republican for the State Legislature.

Mr. Brock said that he knew nothing of any sabotage activities. He said he dismissed Mr. Benz last week after reading of the Segretti telephone calls.

Coordinators of Mr. Muskie's Florida campaign said that they recalled Miss Griffin's volunteering to assist in the Senator's Presidential campaign last winter. They said she had told them that she worked in 1968 in South Carolina for Mr. Nixon's election but since had become "disillusioned" with the President.

Originally from St. Augustine, Fla., Miss Griffin attended Converse College at Spartanburg, S.C., and later taught at C.A. Johnson High School in a Negro area of Columbia.

Reports Bid by Segretti

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct. 24 (AP)—A former military attorney says that he was invited last fall to join a group planning to infiltrate Democratic campaigns to prevent any one candidate from dominating the primary elections.

Gary L. Hultquist, 29, said yesterday that the proposal was made by Mr. Segretti at the Presidio Army base here last September or October, while he still was in the service. Mr. Hultquist said that he declined the offer because his tour of duty extended into 1972.

Says He Was Approached

CHARLESTON, Ill., Oct. 24 (UPI)—A campaign worker for Senator McGovern said yesterday that he was approached earlier this year by a man claiming to be a Republican party worker and was asked to participate in political spying.

Eric Wuennenberg, 22, a University of Wisconsin student working for Mr. McGovern in

polis. [Mr. Svihlik has been identified by The New York Times as one of two Middle Western Republican activists who received phone calls billed to Mr. Segretti.]

Mr. Wuennenberg said that he knew Mr. Svihlik from regional Republican activities. Mr. Wuennenberg said that Mr. Svihlik had asked him if he "would be interested in doing any espionage work such as disturbing public appearances and planting people in the offices of other Democratic candidates."

Mr. Wuennenberg said that he had not agreed to do the work but later received \$25 from Mr. Svihlik after campaign appearances by Mr. Muskie in Madison, Wis., and Mr. McGovern in Milwaukee were disrupted by demonstrators.

Finds 'Good Suspects'

Special to The New York Times

JACKSONVILLE, Fla., Oct. 24 — United States Attorney John L. Briggs said today that there were "some good suspects" who might have helped distribute the bogus letter last winter defaming Senator Jackson and Senator Humphrey.

But the prosecutor said that there was no evidence to connect the suspects with the Republican party.

The United States Attorney's office was asked in March to investigate but did not begin doing so until last week.