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Errors in GOP Campaign

WASHINGTON — If tomorrow's balloting produces the Nixon landslide which some pollsters expect, we may spend a lot of years asking why the President ran so scared that he permitted the trampling of historic principles and protections.

All incumbent Presidents have used their appointees and other resources of government to try to win reelection. They have fanned surrogates out on the campaign trail, but almost always they used only those Cabinet members (the Attorney General, e.g.) and assistants who were clearly understood to be politicians-in-waiting.

BUT IT BODES future ill for the nation when the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense are pulled into naked political hucksterism. It injects a special measure of political poison into the foreign policy dialogue when a political campaign is festooned with the voice of a Secretary of State who has otherwise hardly been heard from for four years.

The assumption is that Secretary of State William Rogers will now go back to civilian pursuits.

The FBI's directive to field stations to provide data that John Ehrlichman and other Nixon aides could use in the campaign is an even more serious matter, as Ehrlichman admits publicly.

I won't ask how, then, in the name of sanity, an FBI struggling to regain the confidence and adulation of all the people

could make the colossal error of helping the political campaign of the incumbent President. I know how. Ehrlichman and his associates in the White House are known to play rough.

But the FBI will survive this misadventure. Even though it may be pressured toward new indiscretions if the same insensitive characters hold power for four more years, the FBI is going to move back to a posture where it espouses no social, economic or political ideology, and it plays footsie with no political party.

Perhaps the most ominous development of all is the extent to which 1972 turned American politics into a sort of CIA-vs.-the-KGB operation — no ideological comparisons intended.

Now that we've had the Watergate burglary and bugging caper, the revelations that Donald Segretti was running a massive campaign to sabotage Democratic candidates, and overwhelming evidence tying this espionage, thievery and sabotage to the White House, you can wager that in future campaigns anything will go.

THE THIRST for power, suspicion, intrigue, will combine to diminish the little respect that remains for rights of privacy in this society.

Before this nation pays the final price even a retired Richard M. Nixon may one day look back and ask: "Was winning worth all that?"