

F.B.I. Aide Linked to Circulation of White House Political Request

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Nov. 5—An investigation of how a controversial White House request for election-year political advice was circulated to F.B.I. offices has placed key responsibility on a top assistant to the acting bureau director, L. Patrick Gray 3d, a reliable informant said today.

The request, from the office of John D. Ehrlichman, the chief domestic adviser to President Nixon, was initiated by David Kinley, the chief assistant to Mr. Gray, and routinely forwarded to field offices of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the report is said to have shown.

Controversy has focused on the request since Time magazine reported about a week ago that Mr. Ehrlichman's office had asked for advice on "substantive issues in the criminal justice field," saying that the information was needed to give the President maximum support during campaign trips over the next several weeks.

Criticism Reported

Criticism centered on what was considered to be a violation of the F.B.I.'s nonpolitical tradition. Mr. Ehrlichman was quoted as saying that the request was not intended for handling by the bureau and criticizing the Justice Department for forwarding it to the field offices.

There were also unconfirmed reports today that an F.B.I. official who relayed the request to field offices would be retired ahead of schedule, but it was not clear whether his early retirement was related to the information incident.

The official, Thomas E. Bishop, an assistant director in

charge of the Crime Records Division, had been expected to retire early next year.

Mr. Kinley said he had been ordered by Mr. Gray not to comment on the incident. Mr. Bishop could not be reached, and there was no immediate comment from spokesmen for the Justice Department or the bureau.

According to the informant, this is the way the request for advice was channeled through offices here and finally reached the bureau field offices in 14 states:

The request, which originated in Mr. Ehrlichman's office, was forwarded to the office of Deputy Attorney Gen-

eral Ralph E. Erickson, where it was handled by Associate Attorney General Donald E. Santarelli.

From Mr. Santarelli, it went to Mr. Gray's office at a time when the acting bureau director was absent. With Mr. Gray away, and apparently responding to a plea of urgency in the request, Mr. Kinley initialed it and forwarded it to the office of Mr. Bishop.

Mr. Kinley, one of three assistants who moved from the Justice Department with Mr. Gray when he was named to his new post, is said to be the director's "right-hand man."

Mr. Bishop, in turn, forwarded the request to the field offices through the bureau's teletype system.

The investigation, the informant said, was conducted under Mr. Gray's orders by Leonard M. Walters, assistant director in charge of inspections.