

U.S. Use of Sweeping Powers Is Doubted

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 16—The White House today discounted the possibility that the United States Government would—or could—ever invoke sweeping emergency powers to combat political subversion similar to those put in force in Canada.

At the same time, security measures were quietly stepped up at federal Government agencies throughout the capital. Guards were ordered to examine briefcases, parcels, handbags or containers carried by visitors and tighter security measures were ordered for Secretary of State William P. Rogers. Mr. Rogers is now attending the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

Attorney General John N. Mitchell, speaking to newsmen at Minneapolis, said that he saw "no" possibility of United States use of the same type of emergency powers. Questioned about public reaction to recent terrorist activities in the United States, he said that a more likely danger would be vigilante-type action by individual groups in the United States.

"If there be any danger," he said, "it might be that society itself might take it upon itself to defend itself against some of these attacks."

"That would be an area of danger that I do not see at the present time but could possibly come about."

Ronald L. Ziegler, White House press secretary, reminded newsmen that the President's emergency powers are limited under the Constitution to war, insurrection, invasion or rebellion. Mr. Ziegler as well as legal experts noted that the Constitution empowers Congress to call out the militia and suspend the right of habeas corpus under emergency conditions. They added, however, that federal intervention in such cases could be invoked only at the request of state or local authorities in whose hands responsibility for law and order rests.

Powers Restricted

Thus, they noted, the Federal Government's powers are far more restricted in cases of domestic political subversion than are those now being demonstrated in Canada by Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau.

State Department officials declined public comment on the situation in Canada. They said that the United States was not going to "second guess" the Canadian Prime Minister, who has evoked wartime emergency powers in the province of Quebec.

However, privately, several officials expressed admiration for Mr. Trudeau's "gutsy" assault on the provincial separatist movement. Some contrasted the "walking softly" attitude of other Canadian political figures with Mr. Trudeau's "hard-nosed" approach and even suggested that the United States Government might follow the Premier's example.

"When our diplomats get kidnaped we go cheep-cheep and talk softly and the result is we're becoming hostages to any two-bit kidnaper overseas," said one official. "We talk privately about getting tough but we march up the hill, peek over and march back down again. It's time someone took a leaf from Trudeau's book."

Argentine Action Cited

Some officials compared Mr. Trudeau's decision to that of the Argentine Government last March when Waldemar Sanchez, a Paraguayan consul, was kidnaped by three armed leftists in Buenos Aires. Despite public threats by the leftist Argentine Liberation Front that he would be executed, the Argentine regime, then headed by Gen. Juan Carlos Onganía, broadcast over radio and television stations at half-hour intervals a flat refusal to deal with the kidnapers or to submit to their demands to release political prisoners.

In cooperation with the Ar-

gentine regime, President Alfredo Stroessner of Paraguay flew to an Argentine resort for a holiday. Three days later Mr. Sanchez was released unharmed on what the kidnapers called "humanitarian" grounds. The outcome was hailed in Latin America as a victory for the Argentine Government's firmness.

Mr. Mitchell said that the Administration was aware of plans by some domestic "terrorist" groups to carry out destructive activities including, he said, "kidnapping of some of the diplomatic corps, foreign representatives and executives in the Government."

"We have naturally taken reasonable precautions," he said.

'Alert' Is Denied

A Secret Service spokesman denied reports that an alert had been ordered tightening security measures at the White House or for diplomatic missions in the capital. He noted, however, that the new executive protective service—formerly the White House police—had reached a strength of 500 on its way to an authorized

strength of 850 men and was now guarding the executive mansion, the nearby executive office building and all foreign diplomatic missions.

The newly expanded force was authorized by Congress after President Pompidou of France had been jostled and insulted by crowds in Chicago during a state visit to the United States last winter and after bombs had exploded during the summer near the Argentine, Haitian, Uruguayan, Dominican and Portuguese embassies here and at the Rhodesian information office.

Government sources said that the State Department had warned its embassy and consulates in Canada last spring to intensify their security arrangements as part of a general alert following several kidnaping incidents affecting United States and other diplomats abroad.

They said, however, that the Canadian Government had not asked for tighter security along the Quebec-United States border and they added that the United States had taken no steps of this kind.

* insurrection - an organized resistance to established government

rebellion - organized resistance to a government or to any lawful authority