

WHITE HOUSE SEES POLITICAL MOTIVE IN ATTACK ON F.B.I.

Ziegler Asserts Foes Seek
to Intimidate Country and
Discredit Administration
APR 17 1971

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 16—
The White House charged today
that some of its political op-
ponents were engaged in a cal-
culated, "blatantly political ef-
fort" to intimidate the nation
and discredit the Nixon Admini-
stration with charges that the
Federal Bureau of Investigation
had improperly used its surveil-
lance powers.

Ronald L. Ziegler, the Presi-
dential press secretary, decried
what he said was an attempt
to "create an attitude, an im-
pression" that the Administra-
tion and the bureau were in-
discriminately spying on law-
abiding citizens.

The press secretary's com-
ments represented the strongest
rebuttal so far from the
White House to recent charges
made by Representative Hale
Boggs, Democrat of Louisiana,
that the bureau spied on his
personal life, and by Senator
Edmund S. Muskie, Democrat
of Maine, that the agency had
raised "a dangerous threat to
constitutional rights" by en-
gaging in surveillance of last
year's antipollution rallies on
Earth Day.

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Times that the F.B.I. had moni-
tored, and presumably record-
ed, telephone conversations of
Representative John Dowdy, a
Texas Democrat who has since
been indicted on charges of ac-
cepting \$25,000 in a bribery
conspiracy.

The same article also said
that the bureau had sent an
informant to the Congressman's
office with a tape recorder
strapped to his back. Both the
reported monitoring and the
use of the tape recorder con-
tradicted recent statements by
Justice Department officials
that the bureau had never en-
gaged in electronic surveillance
of Congressmen, even in the
course of investigating specific
illegal acts.

Mr. Ziegler would not com-
ment specifically on the Dowdy
case, with which he said he
was unfamiliar, but he stated
on at least two occasions that
"electronic eavesdropping" on
Representatives and Senators
was "contrary to our policy."

Late today, Federal District
Judge Roszel C. Thomsen in Bal-
timore made public previously
secret documents confirming
that the Government had re-
corded three telephone conver-
sations and one face-to-face
conversation between Mr. Dowd
and Nathan Cohen, an inform-
ant, while investigating the
Representative's bribe con-
spiracy case in January, 1970.

No Reason for Secrecy

Judge Thomsen said he was
releasing the documents be-
cause this morning's article
in The Times "removed the
principal reason for keeping
them sealed." He added that
they had been kept secret at
Mr. Dowdy's request, and that
the Justice Department attor-
neys in the case "have at all
times taken the position that
these papers should have been
made public."

Mr. Ziegler's statements that
Senator Muskie's charges were
largely "political" followed by
less than 24 hours the asser-
tions by Attorney General John
N. Mitchell that the F.B.I. was
well within its authority to dis-
patch agents to Earth Day
rallies because it had advance
information that persons with
records of violence were plan-
ning to attend.

Sees Political Motives

Mr. Ziegler did not mention
Senator Muskie, a leading con-
tender for the Democratic Pres-
idential nomination, by name.
But when asked whether the
Maine Senator was among
those whom he had described
as "creating a feeling of fear
and intimidation among the
people" for essentially "politi-
cal" motives, he replied:

"I think that those who have
raised these question [about the
F. B. I.] are apparent to every-
one."

He alluded to Senator Muskie
later when, after saying the
White House would welcome a
Congressional investigation of
Representative Boggs's charges,
he suggested that Senator Mus-
kie's charges did not warrant
a similar review because they
could be "so clearly placed in
the political category."

Senator Muskie, who was
traveling in New Hampshire,
said he expected his charges
to be called political. "There's
no news in that," he said. He
further suggested that the Ad-
ministration had refused to
"come to grips with the facts"
surrounding the bureau's al-
leged surveillance activities on
Earth Day.

During a long exchange at
his regular morning briefing,
Mr. Ziegler was also asked
several times about a report
in this morning's New York

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