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GOP Hits Spying But Doesn't Deny It

WASHINGTON — (AP) — President Nixon's press secretary and campaign director have denounced assertions that administration aides were involved in political spying and sabotage against the Democrats.

But neither man flatly denied them.

"I will not dignify with comment stories based on hearsay, character assassination, and guilt by association," said White House Press Secretary Ronald L. Ziegler.

Campaign Chief

Clark MacGregore, campaign director of the Committee for the Re-election of the President, said "all the dirt is being thrown" by the opposition to Nixon.

"The mud-slinging, the name-calling, the unsubstantiated charges, the innuendos, the guilt by association, the character assassination, the second-hand hearsay are all tactics exclusively employed by the McGovernites and their apologists," MacGregore said yesterday.

Refuses to Answer

He did not discuss the specific charges of administration-linked sabotage published by The Washington Post and Time magazine.

Instead, he refused to answer questions, saying that position was justified by the unusual developments of recent days. He rushed from the room after reading before newsman and television cameras a statement assailing The Washington Post.

"The statement speaks for itself," he called back as he left.

MacGregore did say that Donald H. Segretti, the Los Angeles lawyer said by the Post and by Time magazine to have been engaged in attempts to disrupt the campaigns of Democratic presidential candidates, has never been employed by the Committee for the Re-election of the President or its finance committee.

Ziegler said Segretti has never been an employe of the White House.

'Fear or Panic'

Frank Mankiewicz, national political director of George McGovern's refusal to answer questions about the stories "shows either fear or panic, and probably both."

"Instead of denouncing the newspapers and magazines that carried the story about organized sabotage, paid for by Nixon campaign contributors and adminis-

tered by cabinet officers, White House staff men and Mr. Nixon's personal attorney, Mr. MacGregore would have done well to answer the charges," Mankiewicz said.

The Post has reported it was told that Dwight L. Chapin, Nixon's appointments secretary, was a contact with Segretti in a spying and sabotage operation aimed at the Democrats.

Time said it had learned Segretti was hired by Chapin and Gordon Strachan, another White House aide, to "subvert and disrupt Democratic candidates' campaigns."

Nixon Confidence

Ziegler said Nixon has confidence in his staff and specifically Chapin.

He noted that Chapin already had described the Post account as "based entirely on hearsay ... and fundamentally inaccurate."

Ziegler said he had nothing to add to that, and that Chapin wouldn't have any further comment, either.

MacGregore said the Post "has maliciously sought to give the appearance of a direct connection between the White House and the Watergate," the affair in which five men were arrested inside Democratic Party headquarters in the Watergate office building last June 17 on an apparent wiretapping mission. Seven men have been indicted in that case.

MacGregore said any such no link has been found "because no link exists."

charge is false; Ziegler said

'Legal Affairs'

Ziegler said "It is an overstatement" to say that attorney Herbert W. Kalmbach is the President's personal attorney.

Kalmbach has been men-