

Watergate

Effect on

Capitol Hill

SF Examiner

WASHINGTON — (AP) —

The Watergate scandal, its impact rippling through vast reaches of the government, is cited by official sources as one reason for the White House's inability to fill nearly 50 top-level federal jobs.

Sources, contacted in an Associated Press survey also reported instances of paperwork piling up and employe morale sagging because of Watergate, because of President Nixon's second-term reorganization plan, or the lame-duck aspect of his Administration.

White House spokesmen reject suggestions that Watergate is to blame for the lag in rounding out Nixon's second-term team or that it has slowed the bureaucratic processes.

Functioning

"The processes of government are going on . . . the work of government is being done," said White House press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler.

But other sources report a near-paralysis has set in at some policy-making levels in the 10 days since Nixon announced he had launched a personal investigation of the Watergate case after major but still undisclosed developments came to his attention.

The AP survey stretching into widespread sections of

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the federal establishment also found:

- A White House breakdown shows 26 sub-cabinet posts remain unfilled three months after Nixon began his second term and launched his reorganization plan. In the upper levels of some departments, the vacancy rate exceeds 25 percent.

- Ambassadors are yet to be named for 23 countries, a vacancy rate of 18 percent in these top diplomatic posts.

- Latest statistics indicate more than 400 vacancies in lower- and middle-level "Schedule C" government jobs, meaning that about 30 percent of these jobs, filled by political appointment, are empty.

- Reports mandated by the President or Congress

are long overdue in some cases. At the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, one source familiar with the lagging bureaucratic pace said "people are waiting for new bosses to get new directions."

- Low morale is cited virtually everywhere in government. "You'd be surprised how Watergate has affected morale," said an Agriculture Department source.

"The trauma has really set in," added a Social Security Administration source.

- At the White House some staffers have noted sudden slowing in the usually hectic work pace. One Executive Office Building secretary said that the first time in years he has been able to go home because "nothing is coming in from the departments."