

# GOP Gave Columnists Muskie Election Memo

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A former Nixon campaign official told Senate investigators yesterday that the President's re-election unit had received copies of documents taken from Sen. E. Muskie's presidential campaign and had turned them over to nationally syndicated columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak.

This marked the first time, beyond the original Watergate bugging arrests, that a Nixon campaign official has publicly told of the President's re-election committee making use of documents belonging to another candidate.

Herbert L. Porter, testifying before the Senate select committee on the Watergate, mentioned no other newsman as being the recipient of Muskie campaign documents in late 1971 and early 1972, but John J. Lind-

say, of Newsweek's Washington bureau, said yesterday that he also had received copies of documents from the Muskie campaign.

Both Novak and Lindsay said the documents had arrived in plain envelopes on two or three occasions, with no indication of the sender. Lindsay said the material obviously had come from the Republicans. Novak said the material "obviously was provided by someone within Sen. Muskie's campaign who did not have the best interests of Sen. Muskie at heart."

Porter yesterday did not name the source of the documents, which had been photographed from the originals. He said filmstrips containing copies of documents, as well as transcripts of the photographed documents,

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that the senator's role ... as chairman of a subcommittee ... could be used as a great front to go to California and hold tax hearings that would be a great visual event for Sen. Muskie and all at the taxpayers' expense and he could get a lot of value for his campaign." He said Magruder told him to send a copy of the memo to Evans and Novak.

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had been provided to him by Jeb Stuart Magruder, then the deputy campaign manager, and Kenneth C. Rietz, then the campaign youth director, in November and early December, 1971.

One copied document, Porter said, "was a staff memo ... from one of the campaign manager, saying

The memo was printed in the Evans and Novak column of Dec. 12, 1971. Novak said the item was thoroughly checked out for authenticity with Muskie staffers before it was printed.

The intra-office memo cited in the column went from Anna Navarro, who headed public opinion analysis for the Muskie campaign, to Dan Lewis, a Muskie Senate staffer. Muskie headed the Senate Intergovernmental Relations subcommittee.

The memo suggested he hold property tax hearings on Dec. 20 and 21 when he was to visit California, the column said, because "property taxes are all important in this crucial state. . . Capturing the issue is worth a gold mine to any candidate."

Such a hearing was never held by Sen. Muskie.

The memo went on to state that the timing was crucial, the column said, because it would come just before Muskie was to announce his Democratic presidential candidacy on Jan. 4. Also, only until that date, the column quoted the memo as saying, could the proposed hearings "take advantage of free TV time before it is too late."

Novak said he and Evans also received other unmarked, unsigned material on the Muskie campaign, which he felt came from the same source. Much of the information, he said, was "very trivial." The only

other information used from the anonymous source was printed in a March 12, 1972 column after first checking with Muskie staffers, Novak said.

That column quoted a Feb. 22, 1972 letter to Muskie from his aide, Donald E. Nicoll, outlining a project to hire a man who once was a ghost-writer for Gov. Nelson Rockefeller (R-N.Y.) to write Muskie's personal journal of the 1972 campaign. The columnists commented that "a professionally ghosted Muskie journal might seem to violate the 'trust Muskie' campaign theme."

In the letter quoted in the column, Nicoll proposed hiring Rodney Campbell, who had ghost-wrote a 1970 book for Rockefeller.

Lindsay said yesterday that he received information and documents in unmarked envelopes on two or three occasions in late 1971, but that "none of the information was very startling and we never used any of it in Newsweek."

He said he did not recall if he received the same information as cited by Porter in his testimony yesterday. Lindsay said he did recall that one of the envelopes contained documents showing that Muskie had received many financial contributions from "motion picture and production people."

"This was all low-key, verifiable stuff," Lindsay said.

"None of the contributions was illegal. It just wasn't newsworthy, in my opinion."

Lindsay said he recalls receiving documents from the presidential campaign of Sen. George McGovern (D-S.D.) or perhaps Sen. Henry M. Jackson, (D-Wash.), but does not remember the nature of it.

Senate sources said that the original source of the Muskie documents was a spy in the Muskie campaign. Senate investigators' attention had been focused on a retired suburban Mary-

land cab-driver who, Muskie staffers said, had shuttled documents back and forth between Muskie's Capitol Hill office and his downtown campaign headquarters during a four to five-month period in late 1971 and early 1972. Muskie staffers said the man had been a volunteer worker.

A Senate source said the man had not definitely been implicated in the photographing of the Muskie documents. A reporter went to the man's house yesterday and left a message, but the man did not return the call.