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Wiretap Doesn't Disturb Agnew

Washington

Vice President Spiro Agnew said that he is not disturbed that he was investigated by the FBI in 1968, as long as it was for national security purposes and as long as it was authorized by "competent authorities."

Agnew's comment followed two lengthy meetings held Tuesday night and yesterday morning with acting FBI Director William D. Ruckelshaus, during which the two men discussed disclosures that President Johnson had ordered such an investigation in November, 1968.

FBI sources had revealed that Mr. Johnson had ordered a check of Agnew's long-distance telephone calls after receiving a wiretap report that allegedly linked the then Vice President-elect to a plot to sabotage Vietnamese peace negotiations in Paris.

The purported motive of the plan to undermine the peace talks was to give an assist to Richard M. Nixon's campaign for the presidency.

Agnew denied "categorically" that he was involved at all in any plot to undermine the peace negotiations that led to the October 31 bombing halt ordered by Mr. Johnson.

"The record will show that on many occasions in 1968 I publicly supported President Lyndon B. Johnson's efforts to bring peace to Vietnam," Agnew said yesterday.

The FBI said that, at the request of President Johnson, it "checked out" five telephone calls Agnew made Nov. 2, 1968, from his campaign airplane and from a pay phone at the Albuquerque airport.

FBI sources said Mr. Johnson ordered the telephone checks to determine whether Agnew had been leaking information about the Vietnam negotiations to a prominent Republican supporter, Anna Chennault.

Mrs. Chennault, the Chinese-born widow of the late Flying Tiger leader, General Claire Chennault, later was accused of trying to sabotage the peace talks to help Mr. Nixon's candidacy. She has denied the accusation.

FBI officials confirmed that wiretaps were placed on the South Vietnamese Embassy here as a result of Mrs. Chennault's activities.

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