

Tax Files

New Ehrlichman Jab at JFK Aide

Washington

John D. Ehrlichman asserted yesterday that a former Kennedy administration aide was allowed to inspect income tax files for "days at a time" without having to make a written request.

The aide is Carmine Bellino, once a special consultant to President John F. Kennedy and now chief investigator of the Senate Watergate committee.

Bellino was already under fire because of alleged past activities.

Last week Republican National Chairman George Bush produced three affidavits which, Bush said, depicted Bellino as overseeing spying and bugging on Nixon campaign officials during the 1960 presidential election.

On Saturday 22 Republican senators issued a statement calling for Bellino's suspension pending a committee inquiry into the allegations.

COMMENT

Bellino, who had denied any involvement in electronic surveillance, said yesterday he had obtained an affidavit that helps to rebut the accusations against him. He could not be reached for comment on the later allegations by Ehrlichman.

Ehrlichman's remarks yesterday grew out of allegations by former White House counsel John W. Dean III that the administration had sought to use the Internal Revenue Service for political purposes.

Ehrlichman brought up the subject during his final appearance before the committee yesterday.

SOURCE

As his source he cited the Congressional Record for April 16, 1970, which reported the response of former Senator John J. Williams (Rep-Del.) to Democratic

charges that the Nixon administration had violated federal law by giving a White House aide access to income tax returns.

Basing his answer on Williams remarks, Ehrlichman said that the Nixon administration had in fact tightened the procedures for inspection of returns by the White House by requiring requests in writing, and by keeping track of each request. Only nine such requests had been made by April 16, 1970, Ehrlichman said.

By contrast, Ehrlichman said, under the Kennedy administration, "six days after inauguration Mr. Bellino, special consultant to the President, called on the commissioner of Internal Revenue and undertook inspection of many, many tax returns for days at a time."

According to Senator Williams' remarks, as recorded in the congressional record, Bellino was given permission to inspect the IRS files by then IRS Commissioner Mortimer Caplin, because Bellino was "a representative of the President."

In addition, Williams quoted Caplin as stating that then Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy had asked in writing for Bellino to review IRS files "to coordinate the investigation of certain individuals" conducted by IRS, Justice Department and other government agencies.

No member of the committee made any response to Ehrlichman's statement.

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