



REP. PODELL
He said Nixon ordered it

Demo Says Government Spied on Him

Washington

A Democratic congressman yesterday charged that he had been put under government surveillance on the orders of President Nixon.

Representative Bertram Podell of New York, in a speech to the House, said this had been shown by a Justice Department affidavit submitted in a case in New York last July.

In the case, Podell was charged with attempting to use influence with the Federal Aviation Administration to help a client. He is still under federal indictment.

Podell said that on January 18 his attorney was served with a court order designed "to silence me and all others from revealing

this electronic surveillance that was ordered by the President."

Te told the House that the court order was based on an affidavit by Attorney General William B. Saxbe, "who stated that the defendants in my case, or one of them, were electronically surveilled on numerous occasions in the interests of national security as a result of an order by the President of the United States, Richard Nixon."

Podell said the affidavit was a direct contradiction to statements made in the past by President Nixon and former Attorneys General John Mitchell and Richard Kleindienst that members of Congress had not been subjected to wiretapping or other electronic surveillance.

The congressman added that although the attorney general's affidavit referred to "one of the defendants" and did not mention him by name, "there is no question that I was the target of the surveillance ordered by President Nixon and I am reliably informed of this."

At the White House, deputy press secretary Gerald L. Warren said Podell's charge is "ludicrous."

Podell acknowledged that his speech breached the court order under which defendants were not supposed to discuss the case, but said he was using his congressional immunity under the Constitution — which protects members from legal action for statements made to the House — because he felt that he should disclose the alleged surveillance to Congress.

Reuters