

Judiciary Panel Hit On Leaks

White House, Mansfield Add To Criticism

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The House Judiciary Committee came under fresh criticism yesterday from officials of both parties for press leaks and delays in its impeachment investigation of President Nixon.

In an unusual and unplanned collaboration, Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.) and White House special consultant Patrick J. Buchanan voiced similar criticisms of the Judiciary Committee.

Mansfield accused the committee of "not facing up to the issue squarely or fairly" and Buchanan said some of its members or staff employees were waging "a systematic campaign to tear down the reputation" of the President and his associates.

Judiciary Committee Chairman Peter W. Rodino Jr. (D-N.J.) called Buchanan's statement "an unfortunate effort to try to divert the committee from pursuing the inquiry based on the evidence. . . . We have a job, and we're going to go forward to do the best we can, despite some unfortunate leaks," Rodino said.

Mansfield told reporters he was "disturbed and in a sense depressed by the delay and postponement on the one hand and the leaks on the other."

"It's not facing up to the issue squarely or fairly," the Senate leader said. "It's creating impressions and innuendoes and speculations and rumors which ought to be considered only by the committee concerned and the courts."

Mansfield, according to United Press International, blamed the White House for

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the delays in the Judiciary Committee decision and said the committee itself was responsible for the leaks.

But Buchanan, a frequent contributor to Mr. Nixon's speeches and a monitor of press performance for the White House, directed his fire solely at the Judiciary Committee staff.

What triggered his verbal assault on the "nameless, faceless character assassins on the House Judiciary Committee" was a memorandum of his which was published yesterday in The Washington Post.

The memo showed that Buchanan in July, 1971, had attempted to dissuade the White House from launching a campaign to defame Daniel Ellsberg, then a defendant in the Pentagon Papers case. Two

months later, however, Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office was burglarized in a crime for which four former White House aides were indicted and two have pleaded guilty.

In a hastily called press conference, Buchanan charged Rodino and the press with the responsibility of pinpointing the source of this and other leaked memos.

Buchanan said that this particular memo was not damaging to him or the president, but said it was part of "a systematic campaign to tear down the reputation of the President, the Secretary of State, the President's men and some individuals who are under indictment."

The memo in question was first published on June 11 in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, which said it was "in the

between that felony and what the nameless, faceless character assassins on the House Judiciary Committee are doing today," Buchanan said.

He exonerated Rodino from personal responsibility for the leaks, but said "Why they do not put their own staff members under oath to determine the source of those leaks is beyond me."

The White House speech writer said he had no criticism of newspapers that published leaked documents and did not expect the reporters involved to name their own sources.

But, he said, "Who's doing the systematic leaking, why they are doing it, seems to me to be a news story, a major news story, news that the American people have a right to know."

"Since Chairman Rodino has not demonstrated any en-

thusiasm for running down the weasels in his own house," Buchanan continued, "the responsibility, I think, for identifying them, for exposing them and their motivation, belongs to the press."

Failure to do that, he said, would add to the impression "in the minds of many that the press is . . . less and less a neutral observer in the impeachment enterprise and more and more . . . participants or even collaborators."

This was the second straight day on which a White House official had launched a major attack on Judiciary Committee leaks.

On Tuesday, White House communications director Ken W. Clawson blamed the leaks on "the dirty tricks division of the Judiciary Committee."

Buchanan said it was "not

hands of the House impeachment investigators."

Buchanan said he had given the memorandum to Watergate Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski and believed it had gone from him to the grand jury to the Judiciary Committee.

Asked why he had not protested its publication in the St. Louis newspaper, he said "Frankly, I hoped it (the story) would sink." But when it appeared yesterday in The Post, Buchanan delivered a full-scale criticism of the leak.

"Charles Colson was convicted and faces possible disbarment and possible imprisonment for leaking derogatory information about an individual (Ellsberg) under indictment," he said.

"It seems to me there is no ethical difference, and I doubt there is any legal difference,

fair to say we planned an attack to discredit the Judiciary Committee," but it was evident the White House believes public sentiment is swinging against the committee because of the leaks.

However, James D. St. Clair, Mr. Nixon's chief impeachment counsel, defended the Judiciary Committee against White House criticism on the news leak issue, according to United Press International. St. Clair told newsmen he felt that Chairman Rodino was doing his "level best" to stop leaks, but acknowledged that it may not be possible to do so.

The president of the American Baptist Association, Dr. Albert Garner of Lakeland, Fla., said in St. Petersburg Tuesday night that "both the TV and press news media seem to have joined hands in

aiding and abetting open guerrilla warfare against the presidency . . . creating news by encouraging theft and publishing of confidential material . . ."

Rep. Robert McClory (R-Ill.), second-ranking Republican on the Judiciary Committee, said, "We don't appreciate attacks when they blanket the committee and its staff. We deplore the leaks, but this is not the pattern of the committee. Leaks are the exception."