

Watergate, CIA Abuses Held Threat to Survival

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KANSAS CITY, Oct. 5.—Sen. Walter F. Mondale said today that he talks about the Watergate scandals and intelligence agency abuses in his campaign because they are “a threat to our survival as a free society.”

The Democratic vice presidential nominee, in a lengthy, detailed speech to several hundred University of Missouri law students, said both the Republican and the Democratic parties share the blame for creation of the atmosphere that led to Watergate. But, he said, the Republicans, most notably President Ford and his runningmate, Sen. Bob Dole of Kansas, are solely to blame for attempting to block efforts to prosecute violators and institute reforms aimed at preventing future official abuses.

It was the Minnesota senator's most direct attack on Mr. Ford's handling of the pardon of former President Nixon and the GOP role in the Watergate affair. Mondale started his speech outlining the non-partisan origins of the scandals, but as he continued the speech it became a tough point-by-point indictment of the President, Dole and their party.

“This is not yesterday's issue,” he said. “It did not disappear with Richard Nixon; and in 1976 there is no more crucial test facing our nation than whether government will once more respect and obey the law.”

Mondale extensively listed occasions on which he said Mr. Ford and Dole got in the way of those persons who were trying to correct official misconduct.

He said, as House minority leader, Mr. Ford “led the fight to prevent the first investigation of the Watergate break-in by the House Banking Committee.” Dole, he said, “sought to limit public disclosure of Watergate-related abuses.”

And at one point Dole sought to downplay the importance of the Watergate investigation by publicly stating that Americans “want the members of Congress to be concerned about the problems that affect them, and Watergate does not affect them,” Mondale said.

Some of the senator's most scathing remarks were aimed at Mr. Ford's pardon of Nixon—a matter that Jim-

my Carter, the Democratic presidential nominee, has not raised as a campaign issue.

Mondale said Mr. Ford's pardon clearly showed “weakness of leadership.”

“That pardon was issued with no accountability, no official listing of crimes, and no means of determining the specific offenses involved,” Mondale said. “No act more perpetuated Nixon's own dangerous doctrine that a President is somehow above the law,” he said.

The senator said he recognized that Mr. Ford “was undoubtedly in a delicate position” at the time of the pardon. But, he said, “The most essential strength of national leadership is the ability to put loyalty to principle above loyalty to party or personality—and even loyalty to the President of the United States.”

He said Mr. Ford failed in all those regards.

The senator offered several reform proposals. They included:

- “Setting up a specific legislative charter to spell out the powers of the FBI, CIA, and other intelligence agencies, and the precise limitations of those powers.”

- Forcing government agencies to put in writing that proposed investigative programs are lawful before they are carried out, and requiring that those agencies obtain written approval from the Attorney General before undertaking those programs.

- Establishing an office of an independent prosecutor to investigate official misconduct.

(In Pittsburgh, Dole responded to Mondale's criticism by saying: “Sen. Mondale must be reading the polls. We're going to hear the start of the mud-slinging by Carter and Mondale.”)