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Editor
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New York, NY 10036

To The Editor:

We are writing to express our profound concern about recent disturbing developments in the prosecution of ex-FBI Director L. Patrick Gray, ex-Assistant Directors W. Mark Felt and Edward S. Miller, all charged with having authorized widespread illegal intelligence activities. As their trial is about to begin, the Department of Justice and sources in the intelligence community (as revealed in an article entitled "Trial of Ex-FBI Officials Raises Fears Over National Security Data" by Nicholas Horrocks which appeared in the February 6, 1979 New York Times) have raised the issue that this trial may lead to violations of national security. We can only view this as a smokescreen, behind which is hidden a systematic cover-up of massive and continuous illegal counterintelligence activities. Why, after thousands of pages of files have been released to the defense; why, after an investigation that has gone on for three years, is this question being raised now? It is clearly another instance in a pattern of refusal by the Dept. of Justice and the intelligence community to expose and prosecute those responsible for illegal activities.

This attempted derailment of the trial of Gray, Miller and Felt parallels the recent statement by FBI Director William Webster exonerating 68 agents of the FBI who were involved in illegal break-ins, wiretaps and mail tamperings. Two days after the article about the Gray trial appeared, all charges against former ITT executive Robert Bereliez for his involvement in the overthrow of Chile's elected president Salvador Allende were dismissed by the government for fear of jeopardizing "national security". All this adds up to an extremely dangerous situation in which the most flagrant abuses of constitutional and human rights will never be aired and prosecuted.

The Dept. of Justice, the FBI and the intelligence community as a whole wish us to believe that those responsible for the systematic illegal activities of the past 15 years have been brought to justice. They are attempting to reassure us that such flagrant abuses can never reoccur. Yet this flies in the face of a pattern of actions: a massive investigation launched three years ago by the Dept. of Justice has resulted in the indictments of only three

individuals, despite the fact there is documented evidence of illegal activities, carried out by entire squads of agents, which were planned and authorized by high officials including President Nixon himself. A dangerous precedent is being set: those guilty of illegal break-ins, surveillance and worse will never be prosecuted for their actions.

The people of the United States have learned from the experience of Watergate that only public concern and vigilance can prevent the wholesale violation of political liberties by an unbridled intelligence apparatus. We see, once again, that apparatus in league with Dept. of Justice and the press, setting the stage for the continuation of such violations. We demand that the cover-up cease; that illegal activities be exposed to the light of day and that those responsible for illegal counterintelligence activities be fully and vigorously prosecuted.

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