

The Washington Merry-Go-Round

Rockefeller Panel Cut KGB Report

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The Rockefeller commission heavily censored a report on Soviet spying that had been intended to put the KGB under the same spotlight with the CIA.

The commission was given an exhaustive account of Soviet espionage activities in the United States, but boiled down the original detailed draft to three slim pages.

Thus, the final report made the point but left out the substance. The result was to advertise CIA abuses but to cover up even worse KGB abuses.

In the secret sessions, some members fought to include the full story of KGB spying. They contended that the menace of the KGB had triggered the CIA excesses. The details were deleted, however, on the grounds of national security.

Some members also feared the anti-KGB data might make it look as if the commission were trying to justify the CIA abuses.

The FBI provided the commission with a comprehensive document, giving names, dates and details of Soviet penetration into the United States. The document told how the KGB pressured Soviet citizens in this country, including newsmen, students and tourists, to serve as part-time spies.

The Rockefeller commission also

withheld details of Soviet electronic spying, except to mention that the Soviets are able to "monitor and record thousands of private telephone conversations."

Actually, the commission was told that the KGB can eavesdrop on some of the U.S. government's most confidential calls. Most White House numbers, for example, start with 456. In the Soviet embassy, within easy range of the White House switchboard, are supersnooping devices, which can select and record all calls to or from numbers beginning with 456.

These devices feed the calls into a computerized system, which has its main terminal in Moscow. There, hundreds of trained employees ultimately translate, transcribe and summarize the calls for the KGB.

Watch on waste—With slick accounting tricks, the Bureau of Reclamation has bilked the taxpayers out of millions of dollars that were never supposed to be spent.

This is the conclusion of a confidential staff report of the House Conservation, Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee. Here's how the books were juggled:

Congress usually includes an "inflation clause" in its spending authorizations for reclamation projects. The purpose is to permit the construction to keep up with inflation.

But the bureau "abused the inflation latitude," the report charges, by "estimating inflation increases on costs long after the cost is expended and, of course, no longer subject to inflation."

Stated more simply, the bureau added inflation charges for projects that were already finished. This sleight of hand has congressional investigators fuming.

Footnote: A spokesman claimed the Bureau of Reclamation had done nothing improper. He claimed the congressional charges amounted to no more than honest differences in bookkeeping procedures.

Washington Whirl—Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger has reported that Communist China is making a "major investment" in Cambodia to counter Soviet influence in neighboring Vietnam. Kissinger also disclosed, according to confidential White House minutes, that the Chinese have "urged us to improve relations with Cambodia."

—Cuban Premier Fidel Castro never bothered to tell the Cuban people about the CIA plots against him, according to State Department intelligence, until a few days ago. He finally told a communist gathering in Havana about the U. S. Senate findings, including the plan to sprinkle his boots with a powder that would make his beard fall out. The crowd howled with laughter.