U.S. Sued On Spying

By Timothy S. Robinson Washington Post Staff Writer

A group of American citizens who have lived in West Berlin in recent years charged the U.S. Army with spying on their activities in Europe.

The allegations were made in a suit filed in U.S. District Court here by 16 civilians, a former GI, the Lawyers Military Defense Committee (a civiliam group that represents GIs overseas) and the Berlin Democratic Club, which backed the presidential candi-dacy of Sen. George McGovern (D-S.D.).

According to the suit, the Army conducted a massive intelligence operation on the ci-

vilians in Germany.

Included in this intelligencegathering activity were illegal wiretaps, infiltration of the or-ganizations, the keeping of secret files, "blacklisting" of the group's members and the opening of private mail, the suit claims.

Filed with the suit were several documents which the plaintiffs identified as copies of confidential reports on their activities that were com-piled and read by military personnel.

They also filed affidavits of a former military intelligence officer who said he was ordered to destroy documents relating to the alleged illegal surveillance, and who also pro-vided copies of some of those documents to the press.

Among persons overheard on the wiretaps, according to the suit, were journalists and attorneys. Among the 17 individual plaintiffs are free-lance writers, a correspondent for Liberation News Service, two

attorneys and two ministers.

Named as defendants are
Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger, Secretary of the Army Howard H. Callaway and several military intelligence officers.

The alleged illegal wiretaps

were "conducted for the express purpose of determining the political views, associa-tions and activities of the plaintiffs . . . and . . . of intercepting communications between and among attorneys and their clients," the suit

The Berlin Democratic Club claimed that its private meetings were infiltrated by intelligence officers in an attempt to ascertain who belonged to the

organization.

It also charged the Army with opening its mail and obtaining a copy of a petition calling for the impeachment of President Nixon that had been signed by more than 325 Americans living in Berlin.

The petition was photographed, and the names of persons who had signed it were placed in a military intelligence file on "dissident persons," the suit charges.

The Army maintains a file on the club "which characterizes it as a 'leftist' and 'subversive' organization organization linked to the Democratic Na-tional Party," the suit adds.