

## Aid Police, Mollenhoff Tells Press

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Clark Mollenhoff, former muckracking journalist turned White House watchdog, said yesterday that "it is absolutely essential that newspaper reporters cooperate with law enforcement agencies" in giving background information.

Mollenhoff, special counsel to the President, said at a press briefing that this attitude should apply on information about any group, "whether it's information on White Citizen's groups or Black Panthers."

He said the only time this would not apply was if the information was acquired on a confidential basis — "and the only time it's confidential is when there is a specific agreement (between the reporter and the person giving the information) that what is being said is confidential."

Regarding the Justice Department's subpoenaing of reporters notes and television film on the Black Panthers, Mollenhoff said, "I think the Justice Department should be very restrained in any effort to subpoena reporters."

Mollenhoff, former Pulitzer Prize winning reporter who said he used to "delight" in leaks, now has a sign in his office that says "Background Only."

He is in charge of spotting possible misdeeds in government and "making sure the President is not misled on matters on which he is making a decision."

He would specify none of the "confidential" areas he was working on. Although Mollenhoff said, "I am investigating things in every depart-

ment," he refused to shed any light on recent stories saying he had been slapped down and pulled off an inquiry he had begun into the State Department's handling of U.S. policy toward Nigeria and Biafra.

"I am proceeding with my job the way it started out. I don't want to get into a discussion of this thing in general." Denying reported disputes between himself and the President's assistant for national security affairs, Henry A. Kissinger, Mollenhoff said he was responsible only to the President and had "direct access" to him.

Mollenhoff said he was not investigating any of the controversy surrounding Judge G. Harrold Carswell's nomination to the Supreme Court, "and I hope I don't get into it at any point along the way. That's largely an ideological, political thing."

Mollenhoff said he got involved in the Clement Haynesworth nomination only after there were several charges "referring to his honesty and integrity."

Asked if the Carswell situation could cause embarrass-

ment for the President, Mollenhoff implied there may have been a "mistake" in not more thoroughly examining Carswell.

"Sure—anytime you make a mistake on anything—or that you don't run across something quite as early as you should—there is some embarrassment. But after you've made the mistake, failed to come up with something, there's no way you can be salvaged from it. It's still an ideological argument."

Mollenhoff said his days are now made up of "small successes or interesting experiences."

He considers one success was the firing of Maj. Gen. Carl C. Turner as chief of the U.S. marshals after the Nixon administration discovered he would be a principal figure in a Senate investigation of irregularities in non-commissioned officers clubs.

Mollenhoff said he moved in to examine the information and Turner—a Nixon appointee—was fired.

"By the time he went to committee to tell his story, he wasn't our man."