

State Tells Of Checking Travelers

Surveillance Made
If Agencies Ask It,
McCloskey Says

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The State Department said yesterday it intends to continue using United States embassy personnel to check up on certain American travelers abroad.

Officials also indicated that the practice is widespread and that it may involve hundreds or thousands of American citizens each year.

State Department spokesman Robert McCloskey was unable to cite any legal authority for the Department's activities in this field. But, he said, "It's been done for 30 years."

No Questions Raised

He said the Department makes no effort to find out

if a surveillance request is either desirable or warranted.

"We are not an investigative agency," said McCloskey, "and would not conduct screening procedures."

Any number of Federal agencies, officials said, may request surveillance checks on American travelers—the FBI, the CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the Treasury Department and its Narcotics Bureau and the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Each time State receives such a request, it goes into dossiers in at least four Federal offices—the requesting agency, State's Intelligence and Research Division, the Passport Division and the U.S. embassy involved. Whether the information is passed around to still other security and intelligence agencies was uncertain.

A Department official indicated that surveillance requests are handled as routinely as weather reports. "We do it for any agency that asks," he said.

This practice came to light earlier this week when it was learned that the Passport Division, at the FBI's request, had asked the embassies in Paris and Moscow to place Harvard history Professor H.

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Stuart Hughes under surveillance when he visits Europe next fall. The messages sent out by passport officials to U.S. Embassies described Hughes as a man who "reportedly in the past has had strong convictions toward communism."

Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) described Hughes Wednesday as a "gentleman of integrity" and demanded a full explanation from Secretary of State Dean Rusk.

In advance of his letter to Rusk, a minor change in the handling of surveillance requests had been ordered. Henceforth Passport Director Frances Knight will be required to clear all requests with her superior, Philip Heymann, acting administrator of the Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs.

Heymann canceled the request for surveillance of Hughes on March 16, but whether that cancellation will stick is uncertain.

No one at State was able to say yesterday whether surveillance requests must be honored. But one official said he knew of no instance in which a request had been denied.

The manner in which these requests are handled was also shrouded in vagaries. In the case of Hughes the surveillance request carried a very low security classification—"limited official use only." This meant that the contents of the message were widely available in the State Department.

McCloskey was asked if that kind of handling was not a violation of presidential orders that rigidly restrict access to derogatory "security information" about American citizens. He did not answer the question.

Under current procedures it is understood that surveillance requests go first to the Intelligence and Research Division in the State Department. They are routinely sent along to Passport, then to Heymann's office, then back to Passport for transmission.