

DECEMBER 18, 1970

'Without Foundation in Fact'

Army Denies Spy Charge

By JIM LUTHER

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Army says a preliminary investigation has found no truth to charges the U.S. military spied on an Illinois senator, congressman and former governor.

"I can state that neither Sen. Stevenson, Rep. Mikva, nor former Gov. Kerner are or ever have been the subject of military intelligence activities or investigations related to political activities," Secretary of the Army Stanley R. Resor said in a statement Thursday.

Resor replied to charges raised a day earlier by Sen. Sam J. Ervin Jr., D-N.C., who quoted a former Army agent as saying Army intelligence personnel had collected data on Sen. Adlai Stevenson III, former Gov. Otto Kerner, now a federal judge, and Rep. Abner Mikva.

THE ALLEGATIONS, Resor said, "are without foundation in fact." He pledged the Army's cooperation in Ervin's probe of the former agent's story.

Resor said the agent's statement that several other Illinois citizens—including civil, church, education and political leaders—were spied on will be investigated separately. The investigation is continuing in the case of the three Democratic officials, he said.

Ervin quoted the former agent as saying the military intelligence unit at one time was spying on every person in Illinois who expressed disagreement with U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia or who openly opposed Nixon administration domestic policies.

There has been no indication what use, if any, was made of information allegedly gathered by the agents.

AFTER ERVIN issued the report of the former agent's statement, the White House released a statement opposing domestic spying and said, "It

will not be done under this administration."

Asked whether military personnel actually are engaged in spying on citizens, White House press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler pointed to a statement by Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird: "It is not going on in any way at this time."

However, The Associated Press has obtained documents outlining Air Force and Navy requirements for investigation and reporting on "civil disturbances and dissident or subversive activities ..."