

ILLINOIS SPYING DENIED BY ARMY

Resor Says Report on Three Officials Is Unfounded— Nixon Bars Such Action

By United Press International
 WASHINGTON, Dec. 17— Army Secretary Stanley R. Resor denied today that Army intelligence agents had ever conducted political surveillance of three prominent political figures in Illinois as reported by Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr.

Mr. Resor said he had checked and found nothing to substantiate Mr. Ervin's report yesterday that the Army had collected information on Senator Adlai E. Stevenson 3d, former Illinois Gov. Otto Kerner and Representative Abner J. Mikva, all Democrats.

"On the basis of information I have received," Mr. Resor said, "I can state that neither Senator Stevenson, Representative Mikva, nor former Governor Kerner are or ever have been the subject of military intelligence activities or investigation related to political activities. Allegations to the contrary are without foundation in fact."

The White House said, meanwhile, that President Nixon "totally, completely and unequivocally" objects to military spying on civilian political figures and would not tolerate it during his Administration.

Nevertheless, Representative David R. Obey, Democrat of Wisconsin, introduced a resolution in the House directing the Government Operations Com-

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mittee to investigate any alleged military surveillance of members of Congress or other public officials. The bipartisan measure was sponsored by 24 other Representatives.

Mr. Resor said that Mr. Kerner, now a Federal judge, had been the subject of a background investigation in connection with his service as a general in the Army National Guard. But he said the last entry in that report, routine in connection with military duties, was in 1952.

Mr. Resor's statement, released by a Pentagon spokesman, referred only to Mr. Stevenson, Mr. Kerner and Mr. Mikva. It did not mention reports that the Army had conducted investigations of 800 other persons in Illinois, or possibly elsewhere.

Mr. Ervin, a North Carolina Democrat, said that his information about the spying had been based on information from a former Army intelligence agent.

A reporter today reminded a Pentagon spokesman, Jerry F. Friedheim that the Army general counsel, Robert E. Jordan

3d, said yesterday that "civil disturbance information previously collected by the Army was ordered destroyed June 9."

Mr. Friedheim replied that he was sure Mr. Resor had assurances that satisfied him that none of the information referred to Mr. Stevenson, Mr. Kerner or Mr. Mikva.

Army Cooperation Pledged

"The Department of the Army has reported to Senator Ervin and to others, including the press, the restrictions which have been imposed on collection and retention of intelligence information," Mr. Resor's statement said.

"I want to reaffirm the Army's intention to continue its full cooperation with Senator Ervin and other members of Congress who share my concern that there must be no abuses whatever of military intelligence responsibilities."

The White House press secretary, Ronald L. Ziegler, said that Mr. Nixon was aware that Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird was investigating Mr. Ervin's allegations. But Mr. Ziegler said no such spying was "going on in any way at this time" and would not be permitted as long as Mr. Nixon was President.

Asked about the ethics of wiretapping by the Federal Bureau of Investigation of such prominent persons as the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Mr. Ziegler said that such inci-

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dents had occurred under proper legal procedures, which he said was different from the type of surveillance Mr. Ervin said the Army had conducted.

Mr. Ervin's office, meanwhile, said the intelligence sections of all three branches of the armed forces had issued guidelines for military spying on civilians.

It released correspondence to

Mr. Ervin from Robert C. Moot, Assistant Defense Secretary, who said Sept. 9 that the Navy, Air Force and Army had issued the guidelines.

Mr. Moot attached a number of classified designations to his letter and stamped the whole bundle "secret." But the letter itself was not secret when detached from the guidelines.