

Senators Ask GAO to Probe Police Spying

8/2/78
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The Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations has asked the General Accounting Office to investigate possible use of federal funds for illegal surveillance activities by police departments in the District of Columbia and nine other cities.

Subcommittee Chairman Henry M. Jackson (D-Wash.) and ranking minority member Charles H. Percy (R-Ill.) made public yesterday a letter requesting the probe by the GAO.

Percy and Jackson asked Comptroller General Elmer B. Staats to complete the audit by Sept. 1 and promised that GAO investigators will have the subcommittee's full backing, including subpoena authority, if they encounter any resistance in obtaining data.

According to Percy's staff, the request stems from published reports in Chicago, Washington and other cities of police surveillance and maintenance of dossiers on individual citizen groups

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were legitimate or whether they involved illegal activities such as electronic eavesdropping, burglaries or break-ins.

GAO also was to determine if the intelligence activities were carried out for non-criminal purposes and

whether any information gathered during illegal activities was exchanged with federal, state or other local law enforcement intelligence agencies.

The D.C. police department has admitted that it spied on political activists here during the 1960s and early 1970s.

not suspected of criminal activity.

Last March, the subcommittee had asked the GAO for a general review of whether Law Enforcement Assistance Administration funds have been used for intelligence gathering that goes beyond that normally and properly carried out by law enforcement personnel.

The GAO found that \$539,000 in revenue-sharing funds had gone directly to the Chicago police intelligence division for salaries and that about \$5.1 million in LEAA funds had been spent for intelligence equipment.

But the GAO investigators were unable to say if any of the funds had been used for illegal surveillance.

On Tuesday, the subcommittee agreed to ask GAO to investigate the extent to which federal funds have been used for intelligence operations in Washington, Chicago, Baltimore, Cleveland, Dallas, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, New York and Philadelphia.

The GAO was directed to determine whether such federally-funded operations

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