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CIA Documents Reveal Training Of Area Officers

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The Central Intelligence Agency has trained officers from at least three metropolitan area police departments to crack safes, conduct burglaries and replaster walls damaged during surreptitious entries and bugging operations, according to agency documents obtained by The Washington Star.

The documents, released by the CIA after a six-month review of a Freedom of Information Act request, also show that nearly every police department in the metropolitan area — many more than previously acknowledged — received CIA training and assistance during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Several memos indicate that the CIA and the local police wanted their unusual relationships to remain secret, despite inquiries from reporters and members of Congress.

BESIDES THE REVELATION of the extent of CIA activity in local police departments, the chief significance of the assorted documents is that they provide many details about CIA-police relationships described without much elaboration in the Rockefeller Commission report on CIA activities released last June.

CIA officials "sanitized" the 189 documents before releasing them to The Star. Nearly every document contained some deletions, and some were missing entire paragraphs or pages. Another 46 documents requested were not released for security reasons.

The Rockefeller report disclosed that police in the District, Fairfax, and Montgomery, in addition to Chicago, Miami, Los Angeles, New York, and Boston, received training from CIA agents, as did Virginia and Maryland State police.

The newly obtained documents contain information not specifically mentioned in the Rockefeller report that officers from Alexandria, Arlington, Baltimore, Fairfax City, Falls Church and Prince Georges County police also received training assistance.

Nearly a dozen police departments in California, mostly in the San Diego, San Clemente, Los Angeles area also got CIA training and equipment loans, the documents show

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THE ROCKEFELLER REPORT discussed some training given to police officers here and elsewhere, but did not specifically describe the training in safe-cracking, burglary and wall plastering. These and other techniques apparently were included under the category "clandestine collection methodology" in the report. The documents show that the CIA trained 24 safe-cracking students from the District, Fairfax and Arlington police departments. A training document entitled, "Technical Training for Local Police Department," which appears typical of the training schedules devised for the local police read as follows:

- April 9-18 (1969) Photo Surveillance
- April 21-25 Surreptitious Entry
- April 28-29 Surreptitious Entry Problem
- May 16-19 Audio Surveillance
- June 2-3 Wall Restoration
- June 4-6 Operational Problems Against Safesites (secret CIA residences and offices)

A FEB. 8, 1973, DOCUMENT from a CIA security office official to a deputy director of the agency discussed the 1968 and 1969 training given to D.C. police. It said, "It should be noted that the initial re-

quest for the above training originated with senior officials of the Washington, D.C., Metropolitan Police Department and was basically predicated on the need to combat the tangible threats posed by radical terrorist groups within its jurisdiction."

For reasons not given in the documents, the Montgomery County police department actually had a "hotline" between its headquarters and CIA headquarters in Langley, Va.

In 1968, 1969 and 1970 the CIA gave 44 police officers from Washington, Arlington and Fairfax demonstrations of explosives that were "ostensibly conducted by the Northern Virginia Police Academy and non-attributable to the Agency," the documents say.

The documents show that CIA director Richard Helms and his successor, William Colby, clearly knew about and approved of the agency activities with local police officials.

Helms, in testimony before a Senate Committee in 1973, cited the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 as authority for CIA assistance to local police. That act later was amended to exclude any CIA training of local police.

THE DOCUMENTS INCLUDED testimonial letters praising the CIA from several area police chiefs, notably from former D.C. Police Chief Jerry V. Wilson, who has repeatedly

denied that he had any direct knowledge of CIA involvement with his department.

In a Feb. 21, 1973, letter contained in the package of documents, Wilson wrote CIA Security Director Howard Osborn: "It has come to my attention that your organization has been criticized for their involvement in the training of personnel from local police agencies. . . ."

"It appears to me that, if any agency has developed techniques which can be legally utilized on a local level, then by all means they should be made available," Wilson's letter said. "You may rest assured that, should your agency continue in this very worthwhile cause, this department would be more than willing to participate."

In 1968 Helms was the host at a banquet for police chiefs held in the CIA executive dining room during a "police liaison seminar."

In 1967, at an unnamed CIA facility (believed to be Camp Peary, the CIA training camp in southern Virginia) the CIA held a similar affair for several police chiefs, including former D.C. chief John B. Layton, former Fairfax chief William L. Durrer and former Arlington chief William G. Fawver.

Also present were the then New York City Police Commissioner Howard R. Leary, then Boston commissioner Edmund L. McNamara, then Chicago Police Supt. James B. Con-

lisk Jr. and several unnamed CIA security officials.

Names of other local officials who attended the seminars and presumably are still active officers were deleted from the documents.

ANOTHER SEMINAR FOR police chiefs in 1970 was described by a CIA security officer as "highly desirable . . . considering the year facing us and the potential difficulties arising if the various dissident groups focus on the Agency."

One of the documents identifies Durrer as the unnamed police official mentioned in the Rockefeller report who received free use of a rental car during a vacation in Puerto Rico in return for earlier favors to the agency.

He was in charge of the Fairfax police department in the early 1970s when the CIA obtained local police credentials for use in operations in Fairfax County.

The Rockefeller report said that the giving of gratuities to local police officials by the CIA should be stopped. It also concluded that in spite of "a few lapses" by the CIA when it allowed its officers to participate in active police cases, the agency "generally" had not exceeded its charter, which does not permit it to be involved in domestic law enforcement.