

Belin, Iowa Attorney, Picked

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Iowa attorney David Belin, an old acquaintance of President Ford, has been selected to be executive director of the "blue ribbon" commission which will investigate the CIA to determine if the agency was engaged in illegal domestic spying, the Star-News learned last night.

Belin, 46, served in 1964 as a counsel to the Warren Commission, which investigated the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Ford, then a Michigan congressman, was a member of that panel.

Informed sources said Belin will preside over a staff of about 15, including seven investigators, a legal counsel, a congressional liaison representative, a staff administrator, a press spokesman and several secretaries.

THE BELIN staff, which will work under the overall supervision of Vice Presi-

dent Nelson A. Rockefeller, chairman of the CIA investigating commission, is expected to establish offices in the new Executive Office Building at the northeast corner of 17th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue NW, on the recommendation of White House Chief of Staff Donald Rumsfeld.

Belin, the Star-News was told, was selected for the key executive directorship from a long list of nominees, most of whom were interviewed by Rockefeller aide Harry Albright before the selection was made.

The commission, named last Sunday by Ford, will hold its first organizational meeting on Monday. Belin's assignment as executive director is expected to be announced at the White House over the weekend while the commission staff is being assembled.

SINCE 1966, Belin has been a senior partner in the Des Moines law firm of Herrick, Langdon, Belin and Harris, which represents

several corporate clients in civil matters.

During the 1968 campaign, he was chairman of Lawyers for Nixon-Agnew.

Belin is the author of a book, "You Are the Jury," which defended the results of the Warren Commission's investigation. The book was published in 1973, on the 10th anniversary of the Kennedy assassination.

THE WHITE House yesterday issued a strong endorsement of former Solicitor General Erwin N. Griswold, who is one of the eight members of the new blue ribbon commission.

Press Secretary Ronald Nessen said Ford considers Griswold "to be a man of stature, experience and integrity."

The endorsement was prompted by a report in the New York Times that Griswold had been investigated by the Watergate grand jury for possible perjury in connection with his Senate testimony concerning the International Telephone

and Telegraph Corp. anti-trust case. No indictment was issued as a result of the probe.

Nessen said Ford knew that Griswold "had had conversations with the special prosecutor" concerning the matter.

"With that foreknowledge, the President made a decision that he wanted Mr. Griswold on the commission," Nessen said.

IN APPOINTING the commission by executive order, Ford ordered it to report its findings on alleged illegal CIA activities within three months.

The President did not give the commission power of subpoena, but said he would make available to the commission and its staff a 50-page report on the charges of domestic spying. The report, submitted to Ford by CIA Director William Colby more than two weeks ago, is said to acknowledge that some violations of the CIA's legislative charter had been commit-

to Head Staff of CIA Panel

ted. The document is being held in secret by the White House.

The commission is expected to take testimony from present and former officials of the intelligence agency, and will work closely with Congress. Five

congressional committees have indicated they intend to hold hearings on the accusations against the agency.

ONE OF THE first witnesses the commission is expected to hear is former

CIA Director Richard Helms, now ambassador to Iran, who has been in Washington for more than a week. Helms has conferred with Ford and Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger about the CIA's activities during his stewardship.

The blue ribbon investigation was ordered by Ford after the New York Times charged that the agency maintained files on nearly 10,000 American citizens and conducted domestic surveillance of citizens in violation of the law.