

C.I.A. in '68 Gave Secret Service a Report Containing Gossip

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About Eartha Kitt After White House Incident

WASHINGTON, Jan. 2—The Central Intelligence Agency, asked by the Secret Service in 1968 about Eartha Kitt, produced an extensive report containing second-hand gossip about the entertainer but no evidence of any foreign intelligence connections, a copy of the report showed today.

The report, supplied a week after Miss Kitt criticized the Vietnam war at a White House luncheon during the Johnson Administration, shows that the C.I.A. had been collecting raw and unevaluated data on her at least since 1956, eight years after she began appearing professionally in Europe and the United States.

The C.I.A. report on Miss Kitt, which has been obtained by The New York Times, includes information about her from "confidential" sources in Paris and in New York City.

Under the 1947 National Security Act setting up the C.I.A., the agency was barred from any domestic police or internal security functions. The agency's Counterintelligence Division, however, has traditionally been responsible for monitoring the activities of Americans overseas who were suspected of becoming involved with foreign intelligence operatives.

Files on Radicals

It could not be learned whether the C.I.A. report on Miss Kitt was related in any way to the files that the agency reportedly maintained on anti-war radicals and other dissidents in the late nineteen-sixties and early nineteen-seventies.

The New York Times quoting internal sources reported on Dec. 22 that the files were maintained in secret until the practice was discovered in 1973 by James R. Schlesinger, then the C.I.A. director. In addition, The Times reported that illegal break-ins, wiretaps and mail inspections were conducted by the agency inside the United States beginning as long as 20 years ago.

The 1968 report supplied to the White House by the C.I.A. contains no information to suggest that Miss Kitt had any personal or other contact with foreign agents while entertaining overseas. She did dance briefly, according to the report, at the age of 20 with a dancing group whose lead was said to have "served as a sponsor or endorser of a number of Communist-front activities" in 1948.

The report further showed, however, that she left the dancing group shortly thereafter to begin singing in Paris and elsewhere in Europe, and eventually returned to become a successful performer in the United States.

The three-page single-spaced report, which included a C.I.A. warning about the "sensitive nature of the information,"

then quoted a confidential source as saying in 1956 that "her escapades overseas and her loose morals were said to be the talk of Paris." She was depicted in the C.I.A. document as having "a very nasty disposition," and as "being a spoiled child, very crude and having a vile tongue." Miss Kitt, who is black, was said not to associate with other Negroes and "often bragged that she had very little Negro blood."

Support for Dr. King

A few paragraphs later, however, the report noted that in 1960 Miss Kitt had signed an

advertisement in support of late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s civil rights drive in the South. Other signers of the advertisement the C.I.A. report noted, included "a number of persons identified in the past with the Communist party."

A spokesman for the C.I.A., asked about the agency's 1,100-work report on Miss Kitt, said, "I'm not going to discuss the matter with you, sir."

Pressed, the spokesman added, "that is the extent of what I'm saying." Miss Kitt, reached by telephone today at her home in Beverly Hills, Calif., said, "I don't understand this at all. I

think it's disgusting."

The entertainer said The Times could publish as much of the C.I.A. report as it saw fit, adding, "I've always lived a very clean life and I have nothing to be afraid of and I have nothing to hide."

Inaccuracies Noted

The entertainer said that most of the statements about her childhood and career, as recorded in the C.I.A. document, were incorrect. "As long as they're going to investigate any of us," she said caustically, "they should at least come out with the truth."

A number of well-informed Hollywood sources, queried today about Miss Kitt, described her as being—as one put it—"not political at all."

"She was political in the sense that she was in favor of civil rights," this person said.

The inquiry into Miss Kitt originated after she shouted angrily at Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson during a luncheon on Jan. 18, 1968, that the nation's youth were rebelling because they were being "snatched off to be shot in Vietnam." The remark visibly shocked Mrs. Johnson and angered the President.

Secret Service sources acknowledged that the inquiry into Miss Kitt's background and any possible threat to the President and others under Secret Service protection was initiated the next day.

Report by Columnist

The Times obtained the report on Miss Kitt from Jack Anderson, the syndicated columnist, who obtained it in November, 1972, and later wrote a column—without identifying the C.I.A.—about the C.I.A. intelligence.

At the time, however, Mr. Anderson wrote that "we have

confirmed that the C.I.A. doesn't keep files on American citizens, except for security files on its own personnel."

Mr. Anderson said in a telephone conversation today that he had discussed the file on Miss Kitt with Richard Helms, the former Director of Central Intelligence, who he said "insisted that this was not typical."

"He said it was kept only because she had become involved overseas with people in whom the C.I.A. had legitimate interest," Mr. Anderson said.

"We discussed other things," Mr. Anderson said of his con-

versation with Mr. Helms, who is now the Ambassador to Spain "and he spoke with such candor that I wound up believing almost everything he said."

Prof. Harry Howe Ransome of Vanderbilt University, considered an expert on the C.I.A. and its legal authority, said in a telephone interview today that the reporting on Miss Kitt contained in the C.I.A. document was—even if conducted entirely overseas—"extremely mischievous or worse, unwisely and probably in violation of her rights."

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