Last three of CIA's top command resigns

WASHINGTON (AP) — Three more top officials have resigned from the Central Intelligence Agency's counter-intelligence division, which has been named in published reports as conducting domestic spying.

Their resignations combined with that of James J. Angleton, chief of Cia's counterintelligence division, removes the entire top command of the division.

The men resigning are: Raymond Rocca, 57, Angleton's deputy; William J. Hood, 54, and Newton S. Miler, chief of operations.

All three men confirmed they were resigning, but insisted they were doing so to take advantage of extra retirement benefits available to persons who leave the government before the end of the year.

The agency's mandatory retirement age is 65, though it urges its personnel to leave at age 60.

But several sources said the resignations stemmed from three factors other than retirement benefits.

One source said allegations of domestic spying played a role in the resignations.

Sources said the counterintelligence division had two major policy disagreements with CIA Director William E. Colby and higher policy officials.

The disagreements were said to be over interpretation of events and intentions in the Soviet bloc and over Colby's policy of making the agency more open.

The men in counterintelligence were more suspicious of Russian moves toward detente than their superiors and felt Colby's openness had damaged the agency.

According to one source, the counterintelligence staff was particularly upset when Colby debated Daniel Ellsberg, who leaked the Pentagon Papers, at a panel sponsored by a private group critical of the CIA.

Angleton's resignation was requested by Colby 10 days ago. Angleton has denied that his operation conducted any illegal domestic intelligence gathering.

Sen. William Proxmire called Sunday for the creation of an independent special prosecutor's office to prosecute any illegal actions by CIA agents. He also said there should be a special congressional committee to oversee all CIA activities.