

Kissinger: No Role in CIA Spying

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By William Greider
Washington Post Staff Writer

Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger denied yesterday that he had anything to do with the Central Intelligence Agency's controversial domestic spying operations during the Nixon administration.

Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger added later that the CIA did get direction for the activities from other unnamed "senior officials" in the Nixon White House.

The two Cabinet officers appeared separately yesterday for private testimony before the Rockefeller commission which is investigating alleged violations by the CIA of its charter prohibiting domestic intelligence collection.

Former CIA Director Richard Helms has insisted that any domestic operations launched by the CIA were in response to the expressed concern of two Presidents—Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard M. Nixon.

As the President's national security adviser, Kissinger is responsible for affairs of the National Security Council, which is supposed to direct the CIA.

But Kissinger told reporters that neither he nor the NSC ever got into domestic spying, suggesting that if the CIA got such orders, it received them directly from the President or from other White House aides.

"Since I have been in Washington," Kissinger said, "the NSC or the NSC staff or the assistant to the President for national security affairs did not concern themselves with domestic intelligence or were not informed about domestic intelligence."

When Kissinger was asked about Helms' statement attributing the surveillance operations to presidential concern, Kissinger replied: "No such presidential concern was transmitted through me or through the NSC."

Schlesinger, a former director of the CIA, added another

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dimension when he appeared later before reporters following his private testimony. Based on his own investigation, Schlesinger supported the accounts of both Kissinger and Helms.

"My recollection, the whole tone of the agency would suggest that, indeed, there were expressions of interest on the part of senior officials of the government," Schlesinger said.

He would not elaborate on who those officials were, but he cited, by way of example, the pre-Watergate episode involving the CIA and the White House "plumbers" when presidential assistant John D. Ehrlichman contacted the intelligence agency for help.

That matter, he noted "had come through channels other than the NSC channels from senior White House officials."

Both Cabinet officers also apparently dealt in private testimony with the allegations of CIA involvement in foreign assassination attempts, though neither would say much about the subject to reporters.

When a reporter asked Kissinger if his testimony touched on the issue of assassinations, the Secretary chuckled.

"I have said that I will not go into any further details," Kissinger replied. "At any event, none of these allegations occurred, pertained to any period in which I have personal knowledge."

Schlesinger made a general denial that the CIA used assassination as a "tool" but he would not discuss the allegations that the CIA was involved in plots aimed at several foreign leaders.

He did denounce as "simply preposterous" the various popular theories that link the CIA to the slaying of President John F. Kennedy.

When Kissinger entered the press room for his statements, he made a joking reference to a harsh attack which former CIA Director Helms made last week on CBS correspondent Daniel Schorr. Helms called Schorr a string of names, including a sexual epithet.

Kissinger quipped: "Where's Dan Schorr? I have a new word for him."