

Baltimore Police Spy Role Cited

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ANNAPOLIS, Jan. 14—An investigating committee of the Maryland Senate cited the Baltimore city police department today for spying on noncriminal community groups and prominent individuals during the 1970s and for general "abuses in intelligence gathering" done with the "full knowledge and consent" of the police commissioner.

Commissioner Donald D. Pomerleau specifically was accused of using improperly obtained information as a way of intimidating some prominent persons.

The report of the committee concluded a year-long investigation. A special intelligence unit within the department, called the inspectional services division, was criticized for compiling dossiers that contained sensitive personal information about persons who are not criminals.

That unit, according to the committee report, also obtained personal information from a large consumer credit bureau in Baltimore.

The report also says that officers in vice investigations conducted illegal telephone eavesdropping as a matter of routine.

The department's "broad information-gathering with respect to various facets of governmental political and community life . . . was clearly excessive," the report concluded. The intelligence unit in the department "amassed a data bank containing the names of, and information pertaining to, hundreds, perhaps thousands, of citizens of this state, many of whom did nothing more than testify with respect to a particular piece of legislation before the Baltimore City Council, or peaceably walk a picket line," the report said.

Many of the specific

allegations mentioned in the report already were publicized through committee hearings or newspaper reports.

The committee found a "mental attitude" among intelligence officers in the department by which "persons who deviated from the norm, who were outspoken or criticized the status quo, members of organized labor, picketers, and protesters, these people were 'potential threats' and society must be protected against them."

The committee also said that Pomerleau used information for his own personal advantage in dealing with prominent people.

Several persons testified that Pomerleau, when meeting with citizens and government representatives about legitimate matters concerning the department, related to them words in a threatening fashion to the effect that ". . . I know where you meet, when you are going to meet, before you meet, what you do . . ." the report said.

Others, including elected officials, told the committee how Commissioner Pomerleau frequently tried to impress upon them that he knew everything about everybody, including them. One public official was said to have been "down on his knees" in Pomerleau's office because of information the commission had obtained about him.

The committee recommended 15 legislative measures as a result of its investigation. It called for a new state wiretapping law, calling the current one inadequate and a law prohibiting governmental agencies from maintaining information unnecessary for its statutory duties. In addition, the committee called for control of the city department to be returned to the city government from gubernatorial control.