

# Baltimore Police Admit Political Surveillance

By Edward Walsh  
Washington Post Staff Writer

ANNAPOLIS, Jan. 7—Top Baltimore police department officials conceded today that a member of the department's intelligence unit attended and reported on a 1971 debate between two black mayoral candidates, but denied that these politicians or other political figures were ever spied on by police.

In a report to Gov. Marvin Mandel released here today, police officials also acknowledged having received some information concerning at least four newsmen, but except in one case, involving alleged criminal activity by a newsmen, the officials denied that the reporters were under police surveillance.

The report, ordered by Mandel almost two weeks ago, resulted from a broiling controversy over charges of police spying in Baltimore that has led to a city grand jury investigation of the charges.

The charges were made in articles, first published in the Baltimore News American and

later in The Baltimore Sun and Evening Sun, that the Inspectional Services Division (ISD) of the police department has spied on politicians, reporters and clergymen.

According to the stories, ISD agents have closely followed the activities of black politicians, including U.S. Rep. Parren J. Mitchell (D-Md.), Milton B. Allen, Baltimore's retiring state's attorney, State Sen. Clarence M. Mitchell (D-

See REPORT, A12, Col. 1

## Houston Police Admit Dossiers

Houston's police chief said yesterday that his department has maintained files on substantial numbers of the city's citizens—including federal, state and local officials and business people.

Details on Page A10

A 12 Wednesday, Jan. 8, 1975 THE WASHINGTON POST

# Spying Denied In Surveillance Of Politicians

REPORT, From A1

Baltimore) and George L. Russell, a former city judge and city solicitor.

In one instance, The Baltimore Sunday Sun published a photocopy of a ISD report on a political debate between Russell and Clarence Mitchell in 1971, when both were running for mayor of Baltimore.

There also have been news reports that ISD agents have

gathered information on reporters who wrote or broadcast critical, investigative stories about the police department, and clergymen and others who have been active in the antiwar and civil rights movements.

Releasing the report, Mandel said today he is satisfied that Baltimore police have not engaged in illegal or improper surveillance activities.

"According to the report, there is no suggestion of anything wrong," Mandel said. "I have to believe the report." He added, "Certainly I believe the report."

Under state law, the governor appoints Baltimore's police commissioner, who since 1966 has been Donald D. Pomerleau.

Dennis Hill, a spokesman for the police department, said today the ISD unit was created in 1966, the year Pomerleau was first appointed police commissioner. The unit is responsible for internal security in the department, for example, investigating police officers suspected of illegal activities, he said.

Hill said ISD agents also have gathered information on the anti-Vietnam War movement and various activist groups but since 1973 has focused its outside intelligence gathering work exclusively on organized crime.

The report released today was addressed to Pomerleau from police Maj. Bernard F. Norton, head of the ISD unit.

While denying the charges of illegal or improper spying, Norton conceded that an ISD agent attended a 1971 rally at which Russell and Clarence Mitchell engaged in a political debate, and that the agent's report on the debate had been placed in ISD files.

According to the report, the rally at which Russell and Mitchell debated was attended by "elements of the Black Panthers and the S.O.U.L. School (a Baltimore black activist group) which had been infiltrated by the ISD agent.

"... the undercover man, who was new at the time, attended (the rally) only to increase his credibility with the Panthers and the S.O.U.L. School," the report said. It added: "This was not a directed effort by ISD or this department to effect a surveillance or appointed or elected officials."

Police spokesman Hill said said later that the ISD agent reported on the Russell-Mit-

chel debate apparently because that was the only thing that occurred at the rally.

According to the Sunday Sun, the ISD's agent's report specifically said that during the debate between the two black mayoralty candidates "no mention was made of the police commissioner."

In the police report to Mandel, police officials denied that ISD has ever engaged in political spying or conducted surveillance of appointed or elected officials.

"Elected and/or appointed officials have spoken at many rallies during the civil rights and antiwar movements of the late 60s and early 70s, and so their names, through informant reports as being present at the various rallies, would be interlaced throughout our files," Norton wrote in the report.

"These could have been temporary folders created, which reflected their presence at the various rallies through duplicate reports, but these were merely activity folders and are not to be confused with investigative files on these officials."

Hill said police officials were conceding the possibility such activity folders on political officials had existed but could not recall any specific cases. He said all of these records on activist groups' activities were destroyed in 1973 when the ISD unit turned its attention to organized crime.

The police report to Mandel also acknowledged that police set up a "stakeout" of a former Baltimore television station reporter whom police believed "had city property illegally in his possession and was returning it on a certain day."

The reporter was Art Geiselman who, according to Hill, "had material from the state's attorney's office." Hill would not elaborate on what the material was, and said Geiselman was never found by police to have the material in his possession.