

## Church groups were targets of FBI spying, Senate says

CLAIMS OF "NATIONAL SECURITY" covered up a long history of domestic spying abuses, the U.S. Senate's Select Committee on Intelligence reported last month. Several church leaders and church-related groups were among those subjected to unlawful surveillance by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and other agencies.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., leader of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, was the object of FBI efforts to "neutralize" him as an effective civil rights leader, the committee said. Others who were targets of special attention included the feminist movement, the Christian Front and Christian Mobilizers of Father Charles E. Coughlin, and the fundamentalist coalition led by the Rev. Carl McIntire.

Army Intelligence units were accused of infiltrating without cause various Christian youth groups centered in Colorado and a Washington, D.C., meeting of Roman

Catholic priests which discussed birth control.

"Intelligence agencies have collected vast amounts of information about the intimate details of citizens' lives and about their participation in legal and peaceful political activities" the report said. Files were kept "indiscriminately" on some 2.1 million Americans. The CIA indexed 1.5 million names, the FBI 500,000 and Army Intelligence about 100,000.

The Senate committee made 96 recommendations to protect Americans in the future from "big brother government." Among actions prohibited to government agencies would be opening private mail and wiretapping telephones of private citizens.

JUNE 2, 1976

*The Lutheran*