

Huston Says Nixon Unaware of Spy Acts

By George Lardner Jr.
Washington Post Staff Writer

Former White House aide Tom Charles Huston said yesterday that President Nixon was apparently unaware that some of the illegal and improper domestic activities he was asked to approve in 1970 had been going on for years in the CIA and the FBI.

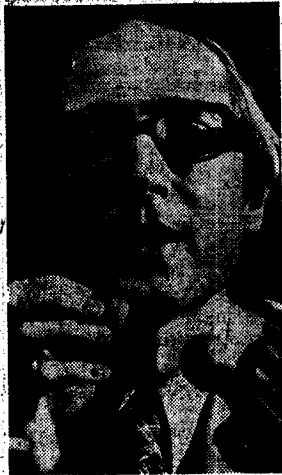
Testifying before the Senate intelligence committee, Huston said he, too, had been ignorant of such operations as the CIA's illegal mail intercepts when he recommended them to Nixon as part of a stepped-up campaign of spying on dissidents.

"If we had known all these tools were being used and still not getting any results, it might have changed the whole approach," Huston said.

Nixon approved the "Huston plan" on July 23, 1970, but revoked it five days later at the insistence of FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover and Attorney General John N. Mitchell, the committee was told.

Chairman Frank Church (D-Idaho) said the episode showed clearly that the government's intelligence agencies have operated as "independent fiefdoms" that tell neither the President nor each other of their illicit operations.

"The President and Mr. Huston, it appears, were deceived



TOM CHARLES HUSTON
... "If we had known"

by intelligence officials," Church said. "Even though the President revoked his approval of the Huston plan, the intelligence agencies paid no heed to the revocation. Instead, they continued the very practices for which they had sought presidential authority."

Huston said he now realized that the expanded domestic intelligence program he advocated as a White House aide was wrong and dangerous, but insisted that the turbulence of

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Huston Testifies Nixon Unaware of Illegalities

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Genetic dissent made it seem much more logical five years ago.

"We were talking about getting more information about activities in the CIA and the FBI," Huston said. "I was not aware of the extent of the operations and the fact that they had been going on for years."

other people had already approved.

The 34-year-old White House aide said he had voiced objections to the plan to Attorney General Mitchell and to other officials in the White House.

The FBI conducted investigations and surveillance of individuals and groups in the United States for national security purposes.

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He said proposals were kept from Hoover until the last minute, "because bureau personnel felt he would refuse to go along with it" but thought he might acquiesce if the

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