

U.S. May Discard Names

Subversives List Evaluated

By Margaret Gentry
Associated Press

The Justice Department is thinking about discarding a list of some 300 so-called subversive organizations originally compiled for use in screening government job applicants.

"I think they're tending now toward abolishing it" said one official. "The list is of dubious value. Why have something that's absolutely worthless?"

One source said only about 20 of the organizations remain in existence. The list includes groups ranging from the Committee to Uphold the Bill of Rights to the National Blue Star Mothers of America.

Among the active groups are the Communist Party U.S.A., the Ku Klux Klan and various offshoots of both.

Such groups as the Black Panthers and others in gov-

ernment disfavor during the turmoil of the 1960s never made the list.

Department sources said the criminal division and other officials have prepared memos recommending that Attorney General Elliot L. Richardson do away with the list.

Department spokesman Horace Webb refused to discuss contents of the criminal division recommendation because he said Richardson had not seen it yet.

Sources say Supreme Court rulings on Constitutional rights have rendered such a list impractical for the purpose it was supposed to serve.

In 1947, President Harry S. Truman ordered the Justice Department to maintain a list of "totalitarian, fascist, Communist or subversive" organizations for the use of officials screening applicants for government jobs.

The court ruled four years later that no group could be placed on the attorney general's list, as it came to be known, without a hearing.

Subsequent court rulings now make it virtually impossible to reject an applicant because of membership in one of the listed groups without also proving he was engaging in illegal activity, one department official said.

After the post-World War II Red scare subsided, the list fell into obscurity in the mid-1950s.

But in 1971, when President Nixon was searching for work to assign the highly-paid but unproductive Subversive Activities Control Board, he gave it the task of monitoring and updating the subversives list. Congress, however, cut off all funds for the subversive board.