

SCHLESINGER SEES
FEW C.I.A. LAPSES

Tells Ford Panel the
Number of 'Misdemeanors'
in Last 20 Years Is
'Quite Small'

By Linda Charlton

Washington, Jan. 13—The Presidential commission investigating alleged domestic spying by the Central Intelligence Agency held its first meeting today and was told by Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger, a former C.I.A. director, that the number of "misdemeanors" by the agency was "quite small."

Mr. Schlesinger, one of three top C.I.A. officials who appeared before the eight-member

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by Richard Helms, who preceded Mr. Schlesinger as Director of Central Intelligence.

William E. Colby, the present director, who succeeded Mr. Schlesinger in September, 1973, was the first to go into the conference room, entering with an attache case and bulging notebook at 11:20 A.M. and leaving about 4:30. He made no public statement.

Mr. Rockefeller and the seven other members of the commission appointed by President Ford were sworn in by Carrie L. Gooding, a General Services Administration personnel officer, in Mr. Rockefeller's cream-and-blue office about 10:30 A.M. The panel members then walked through a small anteroom to the adjoining conference room, where they sat around a boat-shaped table.

Mr. Rockefeller, in a brief statement, said that the commission had "but one objective: We are going to get to the bottom of this problem."

"We are going to conduct this inquiry with determination and with thoroughness, and we are going to get all of the facts," he said. "We can have, and we must have, an intelligence capability—which is essential to our security as a nation—without offending our liberties as a people."

None of the three men who appeared today were sworn, but each signed a waiver allowing his words to be used by the commission. The nameplate in front of the seat reserved for witnesses said only: "Visitor."

David Belin, the 46-year-old Des Moines, Iowa, lawyer whose appointment as executive director of the commission will be announced by the White House Wednesday, sat in on the opening portion of the meeting and met after the session with Mr. Rockefeller.

He was not able to stay throughout the day, according to Mr. Rockefeller's press secretary, Hugh Morrow, because his security clearance has not been completed.

Mr. Belin, who served as counsel to the Warren Commission, which, in 1964, investigated the assassination of President Kennedy, will have a staff of at least seven investigators. The only money at the staff's disposal at present, Mr. Morrow

said, is \$150,000 from Presidential contingency funds.

'A Lengthy Report'

Mr. Rockefeller, at a news briefing at 4:45 P.M., said that Mr. Colby had "made a lengthy report during which questions were asked." He was followed by Mr. Schlesinger, and "again questions were asked."

The Vice President said that he thought the panel's investigation would "probably consume a large part if not all of the three months" that the President had allotted for its work.

He said that Mr. Colby had indicated his willingness to have the commission talk with present and former C.I.A. employees. In response to a question, he said that there were "no restrictions on who we will call."

However, in response to another question—as to whether he could call upon past C.I.A. employees to come forward with information about the agency's domestic activities—he said that "to go out with a dragnet" would strain the resources of the committee's "very small staff and very small time."

Pressed as to whether the panel intended to hear not only from top officials of the agency but also from "the ranks," he said, "We will go down into the ranks."

Asked if the committee would,

make its report public, he replied, "I would think that would be the case," but added that he was not making a commitment.

He said that he was "not going to go into the detailed discussions which have been held" and would not comment on individual statements or reports. Of Mr. Schlesinger's statement he said, "All of the information he referred to is going to be made available to the commission in detail."

No conclusions set

Mr. Rockefeller was asked if any of the three former C.I.A. directors had confirmed the allegations of a widespread and illegal domestic intelligence operation focused on dissident groups. "I don't think the commission is going to try to jump to any conclusions," he said.

The Chicago Tribune reported yesterday that the files kept by the agency included information on businessmen and political figures such as J. Fred Buzhardt Jr., a former White House counsel, and the late Representative L. Mendel Rivers, former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee.

According to The Tribune, the C.I.A. made use of foreign police and intelligence units to gather its information on Americans.

The next meeting of the commission is scheduled for next Monday. Mr. Rockefeller

appeared before the eight-member commission, told reporters as he left the meeting that "certain things did come to light" in the review of the agency's intelligence activities that had been precipitated by the discovery of the agency's involvement in the Watergate affair.

20-Year Period Cited

But, he added, "Over all, one must recognize that these bear on the entire history of the Central Intelligence Agency over a period in excess of 20 years, and one must recognize that the number of misdemeanors in that period is, I think, quite small."

Vice President Rockefeller, who heads the commission, said at a news briefing in the late afternoon that Mr. Schlesinger "made exactly that same statement" to the commission, but would give no details of this or anything else heard or discussed at the day-long meeting, which continued until just past 6 P.M.

Secretary Schlesinger, whose words were at variance with what was reliably reported to be his extreme concern and distress on hearing of the agency's alleged domestic spying, was one of two former C.I.A. directors to appear. He was followed

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