



A Kennedy Link To CIA Wiretap

Seattle, Wash.

An official in the Kennedy administration was quoted by the Seattle Post-Intelligencer yesterday as saying the CIA was authorized by President Kennedy in 1963 to tap the telephones of two newsmen in an attempt to stop security leaks from Congress.

"But all we found out was how the bridge game went and what groceries they were ordering," the unidentified official said.

The two reporters were not identified. Neither were the suspected congressional sources nor the nature of the information involved in the alleged leaks.

Asked why the FBI was not asked to carry out the wiretaps, the official replied:

"Sometimes the President had a great deal of difficulty in handling Hoover." He was referring to the late FBI director, J. Edgar Hoover.

Central Intelligence Agency director William Colby told a Senate committee Wednesday the CIA employed telephone taps "di-

rected against 21 residents of the United States between 1951 and 1965." Most of the 21 had a direct connection with the CIA, Colby said.

"But two private citizens in 1963 were thought to be receiving sensitive intelligence information, and the effort was aimed at determining the source," Colby said in a statement before a Senate appropriations committee.

"Our records show," Colby said, "that these last two taps were approved by the attorney general."

The high official who said the taps were on telephones of two newsmen denied the operation exceeded the CIA's authority.

"The charter doesn't limit it to foreign activities, but says that it does not have the responsibility for domestic operations."