

Colby Assures CIA On Prosecutions

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CIA Director William E. Colby told the agency's employees yesterday that he was confident none of them will be prosecuted for any illegal activities.

In a 2½-page bulletin distributed throughout the agency, Colby said he had reached that conclusion "after careful review of all activities in question."

A CIA spokesman indicated that Colby's optimism rested on the belief that it would be impossible to show any criminal intent in the agency's domestic spywork.

The spokesman suggested that CIA agents who carried out what Colby has described as "missteps" were acting in good faith on orders issued in the name of national security.

The CIA declined to release the full text of the bulletin, but described it as urging agency employees to cooperate with the Rockefeller Commission's inquiry into allegations of massive, illegal spying on American citizens.

"My own belief, after careful review of all activities in question, is that legal action will not be taken against individuals," Colby said in part. "The final decision, however, must rest with the Department of Justice and other legal authorities and the risk of such action is a judgment each employee must make for himself."

The agency spokesman, who volunteered the excerpt, said that Colby had been "in touch with competent people" before reaching his conclusion, but did not know whether the advisers included anyone from Justice.

A source familiar with the Justice Department inquiry, which apparently is concentrating on incidents after 1970 because of the five-year statute of limitations, said no decisions had been made and doubted that Colby could have received any official assurances that no prosecutions would be undertaken.

The Colby bulletin told em-

ployees they could go to one of three places—Colby's office, the CIA inspector general, or the White House commission headed by Vice President Rockefeller—if they were aware of any activities that struck them as illegal.

Neither the Justice Department nor the special Senate and House committees that also have been assigned to investigate the agency was mentioned. The CIA spokesman said the bulletin was meant to deal only with the Rockefeller Commission inquiry.

The Rockefeller Commission heard testimony yesterday from six secret witnesses who work for the CIA and wish to maintain their "cover." Five of them were associated with the CIA's Office of Security, which allegedly handled some of the domestic surveillance under investigation.

C. Douglas Dillon, a commission member, told reporters that the investigation is "maybe halfway" toward completion of its work and it is likely that the eight-member group will ask for an extension of the April 4 deadline set by President Ford.

David W. Belin, the commission's executive director, told United Press International: "I don't think we yet know everything that occurred. It's possible we know the major areas of inquiry, but I would not preclude more major areas opening up as we go along."

Positions Filled

BALTIMORE, March 3 (AP)—Two high level appointments within the State Employment Security Administration were announced today.

Peter Sfekas was named as assistant executive director of the Employment Security Administration, and Franklin A. Owens Jr. was named director of the Maryland State Employment Service.