

New Data Bank on Dissenters

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Washington
A DEPARTMENT of Justice intelligence unit that has replaced an Army intelligence detachment as the government's main watchman of political dissidence has compiled computerized dossiers on nearly 14,000 American citizens.

Officials in the department say that the interdivisional unit, known as IDIU, concentrates on black militants, opponents of the war in Vietnam, and New Left advocates of the overthrow of the nation's political and economic system.

But the IDIU also maintains dossiers on elected political officials and moderates who are thought to condone or stimulate civil disobedience. One official says that "anybody like that, no matter what his politics are or what his position might be, would go into the file."

In addition, the unit collects information on those considered right wing extremists, such as members of the John Birch Society, the Ku Klux Klan and the American Nazi Party.

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THE OFFICIAL declined to reveal the specific names on file other than those publicly identified as agitators, such as Rennie Davis and David Dellinger, both leftists.

The operations of IDIU, which was set up by former Attorney General Ramsey Clark during the Johnson Administration in 1967, are another facet of the government's increasingly pervasive collection of information about Americans. This controversial issue was recently explored by a Senate subcommittee under the direction of Sam J. Ervin Jr. (Dem.-N.C.).

The primary purpose of IDIU's data gathering, according to Robert Mardian, Assistant Attorney General in Charge of Internal Security, is to permit the government to make an "adequate, measured response to the

civil disorders that may arise."

IDIU is particularly active now in analyzing intelligence gathered on persons likely to be involved in a series of antiwar demonstrations scheduled throughout April and May. Alleged plans for violence are receiving especially intensive scrutiny.

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WHEN A civil disorder is anticipated, or one begins unexpectedly, the intelligence unit becomes a 24-hour operations center to feed information to Attorney General John N. Mitchell, who is responsible for planning the government's response.

The unit is headed by R. Richards Rolaap, a 30-year-old lawyer who worked with Richard G. Kleindienst, now the deputy attorney general, during President Nixon's 1968 election campaign. Rolaap was a special assistant to Kleindienst until several weeks ago.

IDIU gets about 90 per cent of its information from the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The rest comes from the news media and an occasional report from the Army, the Secret Service and other federal agencies.

Documents stolen from the F.B.I. office in Media, Pa., show that the bureau obtains its information from paid and unwitting informers, local police departments, telephone company officials and operators, bank officers, postal officials and university registrars, plus direct F.B.I. agent observation and possibly by wiretapping and electronic listening devices.

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THAT INFORMATION is screened by the F.B.I. before being passed on to the intelligence unit. Most of it is gathered on F.B.I. initiative and only occasionally on request from the unit.

The intelligence analysts in IDIU then review the F.B.I. reports and extract two types of information for entry into the computerized files. One pertains to persons, the other to incidents such as meetings, rallies or

bombings and other acts of violence. Like the personal file, the incident file contains about 14,000 entries.

The analysts have no written guidelines to tell them what should go into the files but rely on their experience to make that judgment. Files are often opened to persons, long before the extent of their dissenting activity becomes clear.

The unit publishes a weekly summary of disorders or potential disturbances that goes to the attorney general and other senior officers in the Justice Department. Copies also go to the White House, the Secret Service, the Army and the metropolitan police department in Washington.

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THE UNIT'S analysts draw on the information stored in the computer files to make their predictions. But the unit does not make policy recommendations on what police or federal forces might be needed to quell an expected disorder. That judgment is made by the attorney general and his staff.

They, in turn, pass the information on, on a need-to-know basis, to other federal agencies or to local officials who are responsible for marshaling forces to control a disturbance.

Originally an experiment initiated by Clark in the summer of 1966, IDIU started formal operations in December, 1967, after the racial disorders in Newark and Detroit that summer and the antiwar march on the Pentagon that fall.

The Justice Department and the F.B.I. maintained at that time, however, that they lacked the manpower and funds to mount the intelligence operation on the scale ordered by Clark.

Therefore, according to Mardian in recent testimony before Ervin's subcommittee, President Johnson instructed the Army to do the job. That resulted in the wide-ranging continental United States intelligence operation that blossomed in 1968.

Initially for pertinence and verified for accuracy

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