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On People, Groups

Army Confirms Civilian Dossiers

WASHINGTON — (CST) — The Army has acknowledged it keeps files on civilians not connected with the military and on nonviolent organizations as part of its domestic intelligence - gathering operations.

The Pentagon issued statements yesterday in response to questions submitted two weeks ago by reporters whose interest was aroused by a former intelligence officer's magazine article.

Former Army Capt. Christopher H. Pyle charged in the article, carried in the January issue of the Washington Monthly, that the CONUS (for Continental U.S.) intelligence branch of the Army Intelligence Command "has gone far beyond the limits of (the Army's) needs and authority in collecting domestic political information."

Civil Trouble

The Army said it gathers political intelligence "in connection with Army civil disturbance responsibilities."

It denied publishing a book Pyle said was known in the intelligence community as "the blacklist."

But the Army said it "does maintain an identification list, sometimes with photos, of persons who have been active in past civil disturbance activity."

It said its information is obtained from "federal, state and local law enforcement agencies."

The Army acknowledged having a computerized data bank on potential civil dis-

turbances, but denied it extracts and keeps separate computerized files on local political activists.

NAACP

Justifying collection of information on such nonviolent groups as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Army said:

"The Army has a responsibility to be prepared for civil disturbance situations should local authorities request it and the President approve the granting of federal assistance.

"Department of Defense and Department of the Army activities are co-ordinated with the Justice Department, which is the executive agent in civil disturbance situations.

"The Army's directorate for civil disturbance planning and operations does analyze some pending public events to determine whether there is a probability of law-abiding organizations being exploited by violence-espousing groups."