

Johnson and Clark Linked To Surveillance Planning

Ex-Attorney General Disputes Files on His Role in White House Talks and Exchanges of Memorandums

By RICHARD HALLORAN APR 17 1971

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 16—Documents indicating the extent of the involvement of President Johnson and his Attorney General, Ramsey Clark, in the governmental surveillance of political dissidents have been obtained here from Government officials.

The documents also show that Joseph A. Califano, who was a special assistant to President Johnson, and Paul H. Nitze, who was the Deputy Secretary of Defense, also helped plan the domestic intelligence effort at the time of civil disturbances in 1967 and 1968.

According to the documents, meetings were held at the White House and interdepartmental memorandums were exchanged in an effort to increase the flow of information on civil rights activists, black militants and antiwar protesters.

The origin of governmental

surveillance practices has become an issue here as a result of a Congressional investigation and mounting public debate over Federal dossiers on private citizens.

Mr. Clark, informed of the statements and documents connecting him with military and civilian intelligence operations, said, "That's just not true. I don't care what the documents say."

In response to specific questions, however, he acknowledged that agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation had gathered information on potential and known dissidents. But he added, "I can tell you that I have no recollection of anyone telling me that military personnel were used in surveillance of civilians."

He said, "If someone in the

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Administration says so, they should be prepared to document it."

Mr. Clark also repeated assertions given in an earlier interview that he had been unaware of the Army's surveillance of civilians and that he did not believe President Johnson had known about it.

Mr. Califano, in a separate interview, said, "I have no knowledge of any surveillance of civilians." Referring to an Army intelligence watch on political dissidents, he added, "I have no recollection of anyone ever telling the Army to undertake surveillance of anybody."

No Johnson Comment

An aide in Mr. Johnson's office in Austin, Tex., said that Mr. Johnson does not comment now on events in his Presidency. In addition, the aide said, most of Mr. Johnson's records are stored for shipment to the new Johnson Library, so there would be no way of checking for written orders or memorandums.

Mr. Nitze is in Vienna with the United States delegation negotiating an agreement with the Soviet Union to limit strategic weapons.

Other senior officials earlier identified as involved in the establishing of intelligence operations were Warren Christopher, who was the Deputy Attorney General; Stephen Pollak, who was the Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Civil Rights Division; Stanley R. Resor, who remains as Secretary of the Army, and Robert E. Jordan, who is still the Army's general counsel.

Other Agencies Involved

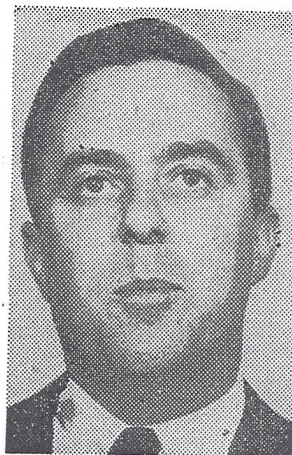
Moreover, the authoritative sources disclosed that more elements of the Government than previously reported had been engaged in collecting, analyzing and exchanging information about thousands of citizens whose political views ranged from the far right through the moderate center to the far left.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Army's Intelligence Command were previously known to have been the mainstays of the operations. In addition, information and assessments are now known to have been contributed by the Justice Department's Civil Rights, Community Relations, Criminal and Internal Security Divisions, plus the 93 offices of the United States Attorneys across the nation and the Secret Service.

By January, 1968, the volume of information flowing into the Justice Department, which was in command of handling civil disturbances, was enough to prompt Mr. Clark to plead with the Army to forward only the most important items to his department.



Ramsey Clark



Joseph A. Califano Jr.

In April, the operations had become so diverse that Mr. McGiffert suggested to Mr. Christopher that a "domestic civil disturbance board" be formed, with representatives of the involved agencies, to coordinate intelligence efforts.

Although the Army eliminated most political surveillance by mid-1970, the civilian operations continued under the new Attorney General, John N. Mitchell. The Justice Department's interdivisional information unit now has computerized files on 14,000 people and about 14,000 incidents.

The role of senior Johnson Administration officials in planning the intelligence operations was first indicated by Assistant Secretary of Defense Robert F. Froehle and Assistant Attorney General Robert C. Mardian, both political appointees in the Nixon Administration, in testimony before a Senate subcommittee last month.

But the Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights, headed by Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr., Democrat of North Carolina, did not pursue the clues in the testimony to ascertain who had authorized the intelligence gathering.

Memorandums Sought

The subcommittee has since asked the Defense Department to allow testimony by several generals who directed the Army's intelligence effort. It has also asked the Justice Department to furnish memorandums on its intelligence functions that Mr. Mardian said had been written by Mr. Clark.

Meantime, officials in positions to be informed on policy and operational details of the Government intelligence operations have divulged new and documented information.

In a meeting in the White House in January, 1968, the sources said, Mr. Califano told Mr. Nitze, Mr. Clark, Mr. Christopher and Mr. Jordan that President Johnson wanted to be certain that all aspects of civil disturbance matters were receiving full attention.

Mr. Califano, in the interview last week, said that the President wanted to have plen-

ty of warning in case he had to call up Federal troops to quell disturbance. He conceded that Mr. Johnson might have personally ordered Army intelligence into action without telling him but said that he doubted it.

Special Unit on Militants

"I recollect saying to Ramsey and a variety of other people," Mr. Califano said, "is there any way we can predict this sort of thing?" Mr. Califano, who now practices law here, said that the White House never received unevaluated intelligence, except in a riot, but did get assessments from the Justice Department.

At that White House meeting, the sources said, Mr. Clark noted that an intelligence unit had been formed in his department to focus on black nationalists and other militant groups. He reported that the unit had an automatic data processing system that could receive and coordinate information and could guide the over-all intelligence effort by spotting areas that needed more attention.

Mr. Clark, in the earlier interview, said that the divisions in the Justice Department were being inundated with memorandums from the Federal Bureau of Investigation. There was a need to pool the information, he said, "so that we could try to prevent or to move more wisely in riotous situations." But he said the "idea that it was designed to accumulate dossiers on people is incorrect."

40 Blacks in F.B.I.

In the White House meeting, the sources said, Mr. Clark emphasized the problems of getting intelligence on blacks largely because the F.B.I. had only 40 black agents, out of 6,300, who could be used to watch or to infiltrate black organizations.

In the interview, he said, "Every once in a while we heard a story that the military had a list of black radicals. We were told in the summer of '68 that it included most of the prominent black leaders in the country." But he said that this had come up in casual

conversation and that he had paid little attention to it.

Mr. Clark said in the White House meeting that every resource of the Government should be tapped for intelligence but asked the Army to screen its information and send only pertinent reports to his department to keep the volume manageable, according to the source.

Civil Strife Feared

But he said in the interview, "There can be no question that the military knew that I would vehemently oppose any use of military people to collect information." Besides, he added, "It never occurred to me that military intelligence could tell us anything that could be helpful."

In the wake of the racial riots in Newark and Detroit in the summer of 1967, and the antiwar march on the Pentagon that fall, Mr. Clark warned the White House group that urban guerrilla warfare might break out, the sources said.

His remarks, reflecting the tension of the time, expressed thoughts similar to those of Maj. Gen. William P. Yarborough, the Army's chief intelligence officer. General Yarborough said elsewhere that foreign subversive influences could be expected to be felt in the highly explosive situation foreseen for the summer of 1968.

Mr. Clark told Mr. Nitze that he might have to ask the Defense Department for help if power generation and electrical transmission lines were blown up, the sources said. He said he would also consult with the Federal Power Commission and the Office of Emergency Preparedness on these questions.

Information on Berrigan

Among the names fed into the Army's computerized dossiers then was that of the Rev. Philip F. Berrigan, who has since been charged with conspiracy to kidnap Henry A. Kissinger, President Nixon's assistant for national security affairs.

Mr. Clark, now a lawyer in private practice here, is one of Father Berrigan's defense counsel.

After the riots set off by the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in April, 1968, the sources said, another high-level meeting was held in Mr. Califano's office at the White House. Mr. Clark was present, they said.

A closer exchange and coordination of the various agencies' intelligence efforts was discussed, the sources said, and Mr. Christopher, the Deputy Attorney General, was appointed to head a committee to pull together intelligence estimates.

Subsequently, General Yarborough gave Mr. Clark in writing a basic outline of military intelligence operations and asked what each Justice Department division was doing so that field operations would not interfere with one another