

'70 SPY PLAN'S END CALLED INFORMAL

Huston Reportedly Testifies
Operation Was Halted by
Phone, Not Nixon Edict

7/10/73
By MARJORIE HUNTER

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, July 9 — A White House aide who helped draft a master plan in 1970 for expanded domestic intelligence gathering indicated today that President Nixon never formally rescinded approval of the operation.

Tom Charles Huston was quoted by Representative Lucien N. Nedzi of Michigan, chairman of a House Armed Services subcommittee, as saying that the intelligence agencies involved were merely notified by telephone to return memorandums in which he said that the President had approved the plan.

"So far as we could learn, no one at the White House gave formal orders to rescind the plan," Mr. Nedzi said, following a two-hour session in which Mr. Huston was questioned about possible involvement of the Central Intelligence Agency in the Watergate affair.

Mr. Huston declined to discuss his testimony as he emerged from the closed hearing.

The White House had no comment.

Approval of Plan

President Nixon, in a statement on May 22, said he approved the intelligence gathering plan in July, 1970, but that

the agencies involved were notified five days later that the approval had been rescinded, primarily because of the opposition of J. Edgar Hoover, then the director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The master plan had called for illegal breaking and entering, electronic surveillance and other covert activities in an effort to stem the wave of domestic disorders on college campuses and in urban areas.

Mr. Huston told the subcommittee today that his memorandum, summarizing the 43-page report and stating that it had been approved by the President, was sent to the F.B.I., the C.I.A. and other intelligence units of the Government on July 23, 1970. He said the memorandum had been approved by H. R. Haldeman, then the President's chief of staff.

Request by Haldeman

Mr. Huston was quoted by Mr. Nedzi as saying that, five days later, he was instructed by Mr. Haldeman to request the agencies to return their copies of the memorandum.

Mr. Nedzi said that Mr. Huston, in turn, asked an employe in the White House "situation room" (a military information and communications center) to relay this message to the agencies.

While President Nixon has maintained that the plan "never went into effect," some of those involved in the Watergate investigation have suggested that key elements of the plan may have been adopted in two subsequent break-ins.

The two illegal entries in question were the burglary of the California office of Dr. Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist in September, 1971, and the break-in at the Democratic National Committee headquarters in the Watergate complex in June, 1972.

Mr. Nedzi said that Mr. Huston told the subcommittee today that the 1970 master plan did not call for any expanded role for the C.I.A.

"I got the impression that the only reason the plan was drawn up was because the White House was unhappy about Hoover's job in handling domestic blow-ups around the country," Mr. Nedzi said.