

CIA's Report on Files and Break-ins

By Seymour M. Hersh
New York Times

Washington

The Central Intelligence Agency has told President Ford that its agents maintained thousands of files on American citizens and participated in a wide-ranging program of electronic surveillances, break-ins and the surreptitious inspection of mail inside the United States, well-placed government sources said yesterday.

The sources said that CIA director William Colby did not provide any specific instances of wrongdoing in his report on the spying allegations, that was submitted to the President last week, but instead listed the domestic activities by category.

Colby's report, the sources said, reflected the fact that it had been ordered by the President in response to the spying allegations reported on December 22 in the New York Times.

"The report says that the New York Times charges this or that, and then says here are the facts," one source noted.

"While I thought your article exaggerated the importance of the issue," the source said, "basically it was correct as to the facts."

In its December 22 report, the Times quoted well-placed sources as saying that the CIA had violated its charter by mounting a massive intelligence operation in the late 1960s and early 1970s against the anti-war movement and other dissident groups in the United States.

Intelligence files on at least 10,000 American citizens were compiled, the sources were quoted as saying.

The Los Angeles Times said yesterday that Colby's report acknowledged that the CIA kept files on more than 9000 Americans and states that there were at least three illegal break-ins.

The New York Times' sources confirmed that ac-

count, but added that Colby had also told the President of electronic surveillances and the surreptitious opening of mail.

The report did not say specifically whether the electronic surveillances involved bugging or wiretapping or both.

In each case, however, the sources said, the Colby report did not say who was targeted inside the United States and for what reason. "It just said that there was X number of files and X number of break-ins," a source said.

E. Howard Hunt, the convicted Watergate burglar and a retired CIA agent, was one of the early leaders of the domestic spying operations.

Hunt retired in 1970 after more than 20 years with the CIA.

Hunt told the Senate Watergate Committee last year

that the CIA's domestic activities extended to many American cities and that a staff he headed from 1962 to 1966 "ran a media operation known as Continental Press out of the National Press Building in Washington. Hunt said:

"We funded much of the activities of the Frederick D. Praeger Publishing Corp. in New York City.

"We funded, to a large extent, the activities of Fodor's Travel Guide, distributed by the David McKay Corp."

No listing for Continental Press could be found in the current Washington telephone directory, and Hunt recalled during a telephone interview with the New York Times that the news agency was used mostly to supply news articles — or propaganda — to foreign clients.

Kenneth Rawson, the president and editor of the David McKay Company, Inc., said in a telephone conversation

that in the years referred to by Hunt, his company simply distributed the Fodor guides published then by Fodor's Modern Guides, Inc.

Rawson said he had no knowledge of Hunt's allegations or of any outside financing of the guides' publication in the early 1960s. In 1968, Rawson reported, McKay bought Fodor's publishing company and became publisher as well as distributor of the guides.

The CIA's link to the Praeger Publishing Co. became known early in 1967 and Praeger acknowledged then that his concern had published "15 or 16 books" at the suggestion of the agency.

The CIA's involvement with the publication of the Fodor's travel book series had not been publicly known before now.

It was this operation, Hunt testified last December, that distressed him.

"I was not a fan of the

idea," he said. "I thought that it was (A) unnecessary; Fodor and McKay didn't need the money; and (B) that it was an improper extension of CIA activity into the domestic field."

In response to a question a moment later, Hunt depicted Eugene Fodor, president of Fodor's Travel Guides, Inc., as a former agent for the CIA in Austria.

The CIA chief of station in Austria, Hunt said, "had undertaken to help him form his publishing organization, and it continued on through the years—I suppose a matter of 12 to 15 years."

"We'd undergo his losses," Hunt said, "and he was on the CIA payroll and may still be for all I know."

Fodor, a native Hungarian who became an American citizen in 1942, could not be reached for comment at his home or office in Litchfield, Conn.

Original NYT story, filed CIA, is longer; part of it is carried by SFC 31 Dec 74, "Hunt's Role in Domestic Intelligence," THIS FILE.

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In a related development, Senator Hubert H. Humphrey (Dem-Minn.) announced that he would introduce legislation when Congress convenes next month to create a permanent Joint Committee on National Security to oversee intelligence operations.

"The time has come for Congress to face up to a responsibility it has shirked for too many years," he said in a statement issued from his office in Minneapolis.