

The Nation

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In Summary

The C.I.A. Disclosures: 3 Quit Agency

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A series of high-level conferences were held in Washington yesterday in connection with disclosures that the Central Intelligence Agency had illegally spied on thousands of Americans who opposed Government policies, especially in the Vietnam war. It appeared that President Ford, who has received a preliminary report on the matter but has not yet commented publicly, may be ready to take action soon.

There has been speculation that he will form a high-level panel of investigators, perhaps including some from outside Government, to look into the allegations first disclosed in a series of articles in The New York Times.

Richard Helms, now Ambassador to Iran but the man who headed the C.I.A. when most of the domestic intelligence allegedly occurred, is back in Washington and conferred at length yesterday with Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger. Mr. Kissinger in turn conferred with the President.

There were a number of other developments in the matter last week:

• Three officials resigned last week. All had served under James Angleton, head of the agency's secret counterintelligence unit until he quit two weeks ago after being named in a New York Times report as the director of the domestic spying program.

Before resigning, the three men—Raymond Rocca, William J. Hood and Newton S. Miler—had been informed by C.I.A. Director William E. Colby that they were being transferred from counterintelligence work, according to Government sources. Mr. Colby apparently made this decision only after reports of the domestic activity were made public.

• In a report to President Ford, Mr. Colby confirmed that the agency had maintained thousands of files on American citizens and had used various surveillance techniques, including break-ins and the opening of mail, to gather information for those files, well-placed sources in the agency said. The report reportedly did not deal with

specifics but rather answered allegations made in the original Times story. Some of the activities, however, are known to have taken place as much as 20 years ago.

• It was revealed that in testimony before the Senate Watergate Committee, E. Howard Hunt, one of the Watergate burglars, told of serving as the first head of the C.I.A.'s Domestic Operations Division. Mr. Hunt said his work had included the financing of a Washington news agency, the underwriting of several popular travel guides, and the gathering of information from the headquarters of then Republican Presidential candidate Barry Goldwater.

A former agent of the Domestic Operations Division had previously been quoted in the Times as saying that this unit was directly involved in spying on antiwar dissidents, beginning in 1968. The Times report said the unit had been formed in 1964; Mr. Hunt asserted it was begun during the Kennedy Administration.

• Singer Eartha Kitt was identified as one of the persons that the agency kept a file on. Data-gathering on Miss Kitt was started in 1956; after she criticized the Vietnam war during a White House luncheon in 1968 her dossier was turned over to the Secret Service.