

Spying Data Retained by Army

The Army announced yesterday that it has discovered counterintelligence files on political dissenters that were supposed to have been destroyed under a 1971 Defense Department directive.

The announcement by Army Secretary Howard H. Callaway indicates that the files on dissenters, contained in some 400 microfilms, are now being destroyed and that an investigation of the episode is in progress.

Callaway said the files, which contain the results of military surveillances of American civilians conducted prior to 1971, relate mainly to civil disturbances. A Defense Department spokesman said the civilian spying by the military was also targeted against draft resistance movements, GI coffeehouses and other anti-Vietnam war activities.

The announcement said that the Army "has ascertained that the files of one of its Washington, D.C., offices contains some information relating to activities of American civilians which should have been purged before now . . ."

Callaway advised Congress of the existence of the surveillance files in 1971 and promised that the material would be expunged from its records.

Late last month, however, the Army discovered that some 400 microfilms of files were still in its active files. Material had, in fact, been added to the file subsequent to the pledge that the files would be purged, the Army learned.

Callaway stressed, however, that the Army has not carried out any surveillance of civilians since the 1971 decision to prohibit it. The change in policy was prompted by congressional hearings and press accounts of the military spying program.

Army officials said the lapse in management to counter intelligence record-keeping policies came to light within the Defense Department. An inspector-general investigation was immediately ordered.

A number of civil damage suits have been filed against the Defense Department as an outgrowth of the surveillances which were conducted throughout the 1960s. The suits call upon the Army for

production of any records in its files that might relate to individual cases.

"We're checking to see whether this came about through inadvertance or whether it was done deliberately," said one Army official. "There is nothing at this time to suggest that there was any illegal surveillance or file-gathering."

In a related development a senior government intelligence official acknowledged yesterday that the CIA had accumulated at least two sets of files on American citizens who figured in civil disturbances and war protests in the late 1960s and early in the Nixon administration.

One of those files was compiled in response to requests by the Justice Department for overseas checks on U.S. citizens who were targets of internal security investigations. This was a list variously estimated at 9,000 to 12,000 names.

Another list of some 10,000 names was also assembled by the CIA as a result of requests by domestic intelligence agencies for information from abroad on U.S. citizens. The New York Times said yesterday that well-placed sources told it a low-echelon employee of the CIA sought but did not receive permission to destroy the files which the newspaper described as "illegal."

In another development, AFL-CIO President George Meany commented yesterday on a report in The Washington Post that the CIA read his correspondence with two international labor aides, Jay Lovestone and Irving Brown.

"Obviously I have no way of knowing if my mail was surreptitiously intercepted or read by the CIA or anyone else. If this did happen (and I have no reason to believe that it did) I would resent it very much.

"I am opposed," Meany said, "to the illegal interception of the mail of any American citizen by anyone at any time for any purpose."