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Britons, Flattered, Amused
At Report of CIA Spying

By Bernard D. Nossiter
Washington Post Foreign Service

LONDON, Jan. 10—People here are chortling with flattered delight today over the news that the CIA wants to spy on British industry.

The story was headlined in the Evening Standard—"CIA 'Spied on Britain's Secret Trains'"—and front-paged in the Daily Telegraph. It could be the biggest booster to this country's sagging morale since the national soccer team won the World Cup in 1966.

Britons are accustomed to hearing that their plant is outmoded, their management feckless and their labor force fractious, that the technological supremacy of the Victorian era has long passed to Germany, the United States and Japan.

The notion that Washington wants to pry out the secrets of Britain's temperamental telephones, awkward airports and strike-ridden coal mines produced waves of laughter here.

"Give them all our secrets," said an official at the Department of Industry. "Then they'll be 10 years behind, too."

The supposed target of the CIA snooping is foreign transport systems, and British Rail is quietly proud of two prototypes developed at its Derby research center. The diesel-powered high-

speed train can travel 125 miles an hour and the gas-turbine advanced passenger train 155.

But there is nothing secret about either, and British Rail collaborates closely with Washington's Department of Transportation on both. Sidney Preston, press officer for the system here, says that DOT has spent about \$500,000 buying research from British Rail in the past few years, and he would like to sell even more.

Just last week, Roger Lewis, president of Amtrak, rode one train and inspected the other.

"There is such an open exchange," Preston said, "it is difficult to see what could be gained by spying. They must be crowding out the Reds under our beds. We are all laughing this morning."

"I should have thought the CIA had better things to do," he said. "It's much easier to get things directly by asking for them."

Samuel Brittan, financial columnist for the Financial Times, dryly observed, "We all have our funny little way of earning a living. Perhaps it's Dr. Kissinger's revenge for Healey's oil plan."

(Chancellor of the Exchequer Denis Healey made a counterproposal Tuesday to Kissinger's plan for coopera-

tion among oil-consuming nations.)

Inevitably, however, someone in the Labor Party worries that Britain is secretly run from Langley, Va. Member of Parliament William Malloy raised the alarm today. He said he would question Prime Minister Harold Wilson about the report.

"These allegations must be thoroughly tested," Malloy thundered. "I consider the situation so serious that it merits an approach on the prime minister-President level."

'Silly ... to Snoop,' Bonn Official Says

French and West German officials yesterday scoffed at reports that the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency might have been spying on their mass-transit systems.

"It would be rather silly for the CIA to snoop around our transport systems, as we officially exchange information with the Americans," said an official at Bonn's Ministry for Research and Technology.

A spokesman for the Paris Metro said simply: "We don't have many secrets."