

CIA White House Infiltration Alleged

By George Lardner Jr.
Washington Post Staff Writer

Members of the select House intelligence committee said yesterday that they have been told of evidence that the CIA had a long standing practice of "infiltrating" the White House and other executive branch agencies.

They said that the committee's staff director, Searle Field, told them this week of secret documents indicating that the secret agents included a high-level aide in the Nixon White House and apparently White House aides during other administrations as well.

A spokesman for the CIA denied that it ever had spies in the White House or other executive branch agencies.

The congressmen spoke up in hopes of preserving a vigorous House investigation of the nation's "intelligence community" in the face of a determined effort to abolish the 10-member committee and perhaps to replace it with another panel that would have much more limited jurisdiction.

Overriding the apparent wishes of House speaker Carl Albert (D-Okla.), the House Rules Committee took up a resolution yesterday to kill

the committee and scheduled a vote for today that seems certain to send the issue to the House floor.

On the matter of CIA infiltration, Reps. Robert W. Kasten (R-Wis.) and Ronald V. Dellums (D-Calif.), both members of the embattled select committee, spoke up in general terms near the close of the day-long hearing by the Rules Committee and elaborated later under questioning by reporters.

Dellums said he had been informed of evidence that the CIA had a highly placed aide at the White House under President Nixon and that it

also had penetrated the President's Office of Management and Budget in the past.

Kasten said he understood from a separate briefing by Field that the spy agency also had surreptitiously placed agents in official positions at the Treasury and Commerce departments.

Speaking of the CIA's "infiltration" of the White House, both congressmen said it was Field's belief, based on documents recently inspected at CIA headquarters, that not even presidents were aware of it.

See CIA, A8, Col. 5

CIA, From A1

The CIA, which usually declines to comment on news reports about its activities, denied that it ever had spies in the White House. An agency spokesman said:

"There has been no penetration or infiltration of the White House at any time. Any agency personnel on duty there had been detailed there with the full knowledge of the White House."

The CIA spokesman said the statement also applied to the other departments and agencies cited by Dellums and Kasten.

CIA Director William E. Colby's report to President Ford on the agency's domestic spywork included an August, 1973, edict decreeing that: "CIA will not develop operations to penetrate another government agency, even with the approval of its leadership."

The CIA spokesman, however, said this particular directive referred solely to the CIA's work with the then Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs in late 1970.

The Rockefeller commission's report last month noted that in late 1970 the BNDD had asked the CIA for assistance in developing counterintelligence expertise on drug traffic in the United States and that the intelligence agency had provided the help.

Dellums and Kasten said they were persuaded that infiltration of the White House and other agencies had taken place. Kasten said he found it difficult to believe that Presidents were not told of the presence of CIA agents on their staffs, but he thought the reported practice plainly improper even if they were informed.

"We're talking about people who were working in high places in these agencies," Dellums told reporters in a separate interview. "We've created a monster we no longer control . . . I think it would be safe to say," Dellums added, "that there are documents to sustain these allegations."

The sudden furors stemmed from a memo Field wrote Tuesday to members of the House intelligence committee outlining what the staff was prepared to demonstrate if the investigation were permitted to go forward. Among "questionable matters not bearing on legitimate CIA Functions," Field listed:

"Infiltration of the executive."

"CIA Fronts and cooperative corporations taking financial advantage of inside information."

"Activities that influence domestic policies."

"Infiltration and manipulation of domestic media."

"Questionable activities in recruiting, controlling, and dismissing agents, and in the treatment of domestic information sources."

Field did not elaborate in the memo, and he refused to make any comment on it after it surfaced. However, he separately briefed several members of the committee earlier this week in varying degrees of detail.

In a televised broadcast Tuesday night, ABC-TV said

it had learned from two congressional sources that Field had mentioned evidence of an unnamed CIA agent in the Nixon White House, "someone just below the level of a Halde-man or Ehrlichman."

Later Tuesday night, the CIA and the Ford White House released copies of the six-month-old Colby report, including the so-called "corrective action" phasing out the BNDD project and prohibiting the penetration of any other federal agency even when that agency approved. The CIA spokesman yesterday denied any connection between the broadcast and the abrupt late-night release of the Colby report a few hours later.