

An Angry Editor Disputes Jury Report on IRS Spying

Miami

Howard Kleinberg, editor of the Miami News, branded as ludicrous yesterday the contents of a report in the New York Times on a still-secret federal grand jury's report on Internal Revenue Service intelligence operations locally.

The Times reported yesterday that the grand jury, after an 18-month investigation, "specifically accused the Miami News, which first disclosed details of Operation Leprechaun, of 'knowingly publishing false information' about the IRS's intelligence activities."

Allegations that IRS intelligence officers illegally wiretapped telephones, photographed bank records and threatened a businessman during the early 1970s operation were studied by at least three congressional panels. The operation was aimed at 30 Miami residents, including city officials and federal and state judges.

Kleinberg said he had not seen the grand jury report. But he said, "If the New York Times is accurate in the report of the grand jury statement, I tell you flat outright that grand jury report is untrue."

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