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COLBY WITHHOLDS DATA ON POLICE AID

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Asserts Programs of Local
Agencies Would Suffer
From C.I.A. Disclosure

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WASHINGTON, Feb' 4—William E. Colby, the Director of Central Intelligence, has refused to identify police departments he says his agency assisted until two years ago because "such publication could hamper current police programs."

Mr. Colby, in a letter to Representative Edward I. Koch, Democrat-Liberal of Manhattan, said, "Confidentiality of relationships is generally a prerequisite to good intelligence. If we are forced to violate the trust and confidence under which these relationships were established, our reputation and effectiveness as a serious intelligence agency will be seriously impaired."

The Central Intelligence Agency is currently facing investigations of allegedly illegal involvement in domestic intelligence activities by committees of the House and Senate and a panel established by President Ford.

Mr. Koch first inquired about the C.I.A.'s relationships with police departments two years ago following publication in The New York Times of reports that high ranking officials in the New York Police Department had undergone training at the agency's headquarters in Langley, Va.

For Dozen Departments

As a result of Mr. Koch's inquiry, the House Government Operations Committee initiated a limited investigation that resulted in the C.I.A.'s admission that it had provided assistance and training to "a dozen city and county police departments."

The agency, though it insisted that the contacts with the police departments did not violate its charter, announced, in a letter to the House committee dated Jan. 29, 1973, the termination of all such activities.

About this time, the identities of several additional police departments that had been trained or otherwise assisted by the C.I.A., became known. Besides New York, they included the departments in Washington, Boston, Fairfax County, Va., and Montgomery County, Md.

It was a letter from Mr. Koch on Jan. 9 of this year about the identity of the remaining seven departments the agency had assisted that prompted Mr. Colby to refuse to name them.

Doubts It Is Classified

After making his request, Mr. Koch said, "With the recent press reports concerning the extensive activities of the C.I.A., I would think that the information I am requesting could not possibly be considered classified."

According to the C.I.A. and the New York Police Department, 14 New York policemen, including former First Deputy Police Commissioner William H. I. Smith, received training in the computerized handling of intelligence information during September, 1972.

The training for the other departments reportedly included the detection of wiretaps and other secret recording devices, the techniques of secret surveillance and methods for finding explosive charges.

The C.I.A. said it did not believe the training activities violated either the letter or spirit of the 1947 law establishing the agency, which said it "shall have no police, subpoena, law enforcement or internal security functions" in the United States.