

Merry-Go-Round

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## Laird Loses One To the Pentagon




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**Jack Anderson**

**D**ESPITE all those solemn assurances that the military brass would halt their domestic political surveillance, the Pentagon continues to receive daily reports from the FBI on political activity by militant students and blacks.

The confidential reports, entitled "Racial Developments and Disturbances" and "Student Unrest and Agitation," are sent on a special teletype linking the FBI with the Pentagon, White House, Central Intelligence Agency and National Security Agency.

At the Pentagon, the reports are distributed to a number of high-level officials. Even Admiral Thomas Moorer, the Joint Chiefs chairman, had been receiving the FBI reports until this month.

But the uproar over military snooping into domestic political affairs became so loud that Moorer took himself off the list a few days ago.

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**M**OOERER has also been manipulating military strings to circumvent Defense Secretary Melvin Laird's efforts to tighten civilian control over military snooping. On December 23, Laird directed that the Defense Intelligence Agency should report directly to him rather than to the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Behind Laird's back, Moorer sent word to the duty officers in the DIA's communications center to keep a vigilant watch to make sure no sensitive messages intended for the Joint Chiefs fell into Laird's hands. For military commanders had been using

the DIA's communications channels to send messages that they didn't want their civilian bosses to read.

As an extra precaution, Moorer also ordered that these messages, marked for the "eyes only" of the Joint Chiefs, should be routed to the Pentagon through the National Military Command Center, a separate operational communications center that would remain under the Joint Chiefs' control.

Having taken all these steps without Laird's knowledge, Moorer then began lobbying with the secretary to reverse his order and leave DIA under military control. Laird has now agreed, and the DIA is securely in Moorer's hands again.

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**N**AVY PUFFERY Assistant Secretary James Hittle has ordered the Navy's Board of Decorations and Medals to cut the puffery out of the citations that go with Navy awards. In a memo intended for Navy eyes only, he complained:

"For too long, the citations accompanying decorations and other awards have been written in a far too flowery and artificial manner. I believe that any decoration that is justified is more meaningful if the act on which it is based is briefly described in simple, pure, easily understood English. Some of the citations I have recently seen have reached the point of strained word usage and artificiality of expression that approached the ridiculous."

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