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Laird Says Civilian Aides to Johnson

WASHINGTON, June 21 (UPI)—High civilian authorities in the Johnson Administration, not Pentagon officials, directed the Army to spy on private citizens, Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird said in Congressional testimony released today.

"The military is sometimes blamed for this operation, but this operation was completely known to the highest authorities within our Government," Mr. Laird said. His comments were made March 4 before a closed session of a House appropriations subcommittee.

The surveillance activity, Mr. Laird testified, was stopped March 1 but it had included compilation of data on liberal political candidates and anti-war and civil rights activists.

According to documents Mr. Laird gave the subcommittee, the spy activities were included in a May 2, 1963, directive that was issued after 46 persons had been killed in the riots that followed the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The activities were ordered implemented June 8, 1968, three days after the assassination of Senator Robert F. Kennedy.

Riot Plans Set Up

This action came after Defense Secretary Clark M. Clifford announced the creation of a riot-control command at the Pentagon on April 26, 1968. Mr. Clifford said that the command would oversee Federal troops sent to cities during riots and would provide "prompt and effective supplementary law enforcement."

But according to documents provided the subcommittee the Pentagon directive that was cir-

Directed Spying by Army

culated five days after Mr. Clifford's announcement indicates that the command center was intended to operate on an even larger scope.

Its mission was described as: "To procure, evaluate, interpret and disseminate as expeditiously as possible information and intelligence relating to any actual, potential or planned demonstrations or other activities related to civil disturbances within the continental United States which threaten civil order or military security."

The directive also described "pre-disturbance activities" that

should be carried out by the Army, including "identity of newspapers, radio or television stations and prominent persons who are friendly with the leaders of the disturbance and are sympathetic with their plans."