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Report of FBI Spies At Conventions

Washington

FBI agents and informers infiltrated the leadership of most groups that demonstrated at the national political conventions last summer and took part in planning protests, a Justice Department source said yesterday.

The source said he attended several department meetings at which convention intelligence reports from the FBI and other federal agencies, including Army intelligence, were discussed.

He said then Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst ran the meetings and former FBI acting Director L. Patrick Gray III and Robert Mardian, a former top department official who then was a staff member of the Committee for the Re-Election of the President, attended them. The careers of all three men later were touched by the Watergate scandal.

LIMITS

The source said he did not know the names of any of the groups the FBI infiltrated or of any protest planning

that undercover agents and informers may have prompted during the Miami Beach, Fla., conventions of the Democratic and Republican parties. *

An FBI spokesman said the bureau maintains surveillance through agents and informants on groups deemed a threat to national security. He said there were such groups in Miami Beach but declined to name them.

"This does not mean we had informants in legitimate peace groups," he added.

A Justice Department spokesman said that at no time did the department get Army intelligence on the conventions and the Army had no intelligence-gathering role at Miami Beach that the department was aware of. He said Republican and Democratic officials regularly were briefed on convention matters.

The source said that Mardian, head of the Justice Department's internal security division until March 1972, had no status within the department at the time of the meetings. His job then was solely with the reelection committee. No rep-

resentative of the Democratic Party ever attended the meetings, he said.

QUALITY

During the meetings, the source said, Mardian would needle Gray on the quality of the FBI's convention intelligence reports and sometimes referred to them as rewritten versions of Army reports.

The source said that Army intelligence reports were considered the most comprehensive received before the conventions.

By the time demonstrators arrived in Miami Beach in early July, he said, Gray reported that the FBI was taking part in the planning and policy decisions of most of the protesters' groups.

During the conventions, the source said, Gray told an official, "One of our people is a nude girl in there." On several occasions during both conventions, young demonstrators swam nude in the public pool at People's Park.

The source said that at several meetings Kleindienst expressed concern that demonstrations might get out of hand and be be-

yond the capacity of local authorities to handle. If federal troops had to be used, it would reflect adversely on the President, the source quoted Kleindienst as saying.

Neither Kleindienst, Mardian nor Gray could be reached for comment on the source's statements.

Associated Press

* See Nix Ad 19 Aug 72 et seq.