

Nixon Bugging Plan -- Details Reported

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The White House urged the FBI in 1970 to mount a massive counter-insurgency program, involving spying, wiretapping and burglaries, against the Black Panthers, potential Arab saboteurs, anti-war radicals, and Soviet espionage agents, well-placed sources said yesterday.

President Nixon briefly described the program in his statement Tuesday and noted then that it had never been put into effect because of opposition by the late J. Edgar Hoover, then the director of the FBI. Extensive details about the project were provided to the New York Times yesterday.

DOCUMENTS

The program was outlined in a secret report on domestic intelligence prepared in July, 1970, and approved by Mr. Nixon, his top White House aides and the chief officers of the Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and the National Security Agency.

The report was among a series of classified documents that were put in a safe deposit box by John W. Dean III, the former White House counsel, and released last week by a Federal judge to the Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities and other congressional committees now investigating the role of the CIA in the Watergate burglary.

The White House has insisted that the documents are related to national security. They have not been made public.

The Nixon Administration repeatedly expressed its concern over the Black Pan-



J. EDGAR HOOVER
He wanted written support

thers and the radical movement, and the Government is known to have infiltrated many such groups long before Mr. Nixon became President. But the details obtained by the Times yesterday are the clearest indication to date of the depth of the Nixon Administration's concern over the problem of dissident groups, and its plans to deal with them.

One high-level source who worked on the 1970 report, said, "The facts we had available in this country then showed that we were faced with one of the most serious domestic crises that we've had.

"One of our greatest problems," the official added, "was that the informed public didn't understand it."

In his statement, Mr. Nixon suggested that the domestic program had been necessitated by deteriorating liaison between the FBI and other intelligence agencies. He also said that the task of maintaining domestic security had been seriously hampered by the FBI's decision in 1966 to sus-

pend "certain types of FBI undercover operations." He did not elaborate.

The sources said, however, that Hoover opposed the project solely because Mr. Nixon would not grant him authority in writing for the use of FBI agents in illegal wiretaps and illegal breaking-and-entering operations.

EARLIER

Those kinds of FBI activities, the sources said, had been ruled out by Attorneys General Nicholas Katzenbach and Ramsey Clark in 1965 and 1966.

The sources also revealed that FBI agents had been engaging in burglaries and illegal forced entries since 1941 as part of a highly classified domestic intelligence operation.

"We'd been doing burglaries for years," a former high-ranking FBI official said. "We did them regularly — as a matter of policy."

One high-level source who was involved in the preparation of the 1970 domestic operation report confirmed that it called for breaking and entering operations on U.S. citizens as well as burglaries of foreign embassies.

In addition, he said, the FBI and National Security Agency, which handles most U.S. electronic eavesdropping, were to monitor foreign embassies in the U.S. to ferret out information about potential disorder.

In his statement Tuesday, Mr. Nixon said that Hoover had been directed to be chairman of the Interagency Committee on Domestic Disorder. The President said this about the report:

"On June 25, the committee submitted a report which included specific options for expanded intelligence operations, and on July 23 the agencies were notified by

memorandum of the options approved. The options initially approved had included resumption of certain intelligence operations which had been suspended in 1966. These in turn had included authorization for surreptitious entry — breaking and entering, in effect — on specified categories of targets in specified situations related to national security."

SILENCE

In a news briefing after the President's statement was released, J. Fred Buzhardt Jr., a special counsel to Mr. Nixon, refused to say whether the report authorized breaking and entering in domestic security cases. "I would not address it further for the simple reason it is a classified document," he said.

Leonard Garment, the White House counsel, who also attended the press briefing, subsequently described the illegal entry recommendations as similar to those that had been "utilized on a clandestine basis, with the approval of chief executives, for many years."

One official who worked on the report described the most serious issue facing the Nixon Administration in mid-1970 as "the black problem."

He said intelligence indicated that Black Panther leaders were being covertly supported by some countries in the Caribbean and in North Africa. Some Government officials also believed, he said, that Algeria, which was vocal in its support of the Black Panthers in the U.S., might become a main overseas base for the Panthers.

Another factor that concerned domestic White House advisers, the source said, was what he termed "the vigilante police action"

by the Chicago police in the 1969 shooting of Fred Hampton, a Black Panther leader from Chicago.

The apparently unjustified police shooting, he said, prompted many moderate black leaders to voice their support for the Panthers "and made it harder for blacks to understand that these guys (the Panthers) were thugs and murderers."

"They had a free lunch program going," the source added, "where they were teaching kids how to kill Whitey."

CLEAVER

Justice Department sources who also were familiar with the 1970 report, which was prepared with the aid of Tom C. Huston, an aide to H. R. Haldeman, the former White House chief of staff, expressed concern about the activities of Eldridge Cleaver, the Panther leader who eventually fled to Algeria.

"He had a lot of money," the officials said, "and we weren't able to find out who was financing him. We suspected the Arabs were involved."

This official complained that Hoover's decision to limit domestic intelligence operations as of 1966 had severely hampered the FBI's ability to penetrate radical black groups and

other organizations.

Both sources said that the second major area of concern, as expressed in the report, was the possibility of Arab sabotage before the Middle East talks at the

United Nations in the late summer of 1970.

Another source said the White House believed that Arab commandos were attempting to penetrate the U.S. before the peace talks

in order to conduct sabotage and assassinations.

White House officials were described as being frustrated by the inability of the FBI to penetrate the Arab operations.

The sources also said the increase in radical activities and in the number of Soviet agents operating inside the U.S. was attributed by White House officials to the lack of effective FBI domestic intelligence operations.