

Senate Unit Investigating Moves Against Radicals

Inquiry by Watergate Panel Centers on Activities of Internal Security Division of Justice Department

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By JOHN KIFNER JUN 1 1973
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WASHINGTON, May 31—The Senate Watergate committee is investigating the Justice Department's campaign against radicals.

The investigation centers on the activities of the department's Internal Security Division, which, over the last four years, has brought a wide-ranging series of grand jury actions against radical groups around the country. Nearly all the cases that have come to trial have been unsuccessful, and several were dropped when the Government refused to divulge its wiretaps.

"This could overshadow everything else," one Senate source said of the investigation, which began this week.

Statement by Nixon

The Senate investigators are looking into whether the Justice Department's efforts to deal with what it saw as the threat of dissident groups included the use of agents provocateurs, illegal wiretaps and other unconstitutional activities.

President Nixon said in his written statement on May 22 that, because of the threat of domestic violence in 1970, he had approved what some reliable sources have described as a counter-insurgency program of wiretapping, burglary and spying against Black Panthers, anti-war radicals, suspected Arab saboteurs and Soviet spies.

But, the President said in his statement, the plan was not put into effect because of the objections of the late J. Edgar Hoover, director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Mardian Led Division

The Internal Security Division had languished, seeing little major action since the McCarthy era, until it was taken over on Nov. 7, 1969, by Robert C. Mardian. A staunch conservative and important figure in Administration circles, Mr. Mardian, as counsel to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, had been the architect of Mr. Nixon's southern school strategy.

Mr. Mardian quickly bolstered the division and stated a series of investigations. He is to face

Senate staff investigators tomorrow.

Last March, the antiradical unit was relegated to a less-visible position under the criminal division. Its activities, however, are still continuing, most notably with an ongoing grand jury investigation in San Francisco looking into the Weatherman underground.

Remark by Weicker

The concern of some member of the Watergate committee with the activities of the Justice Department was illustrated this afternoon when Senator Lowell P. Weicker inserted into the prepared text of a graduation speech at the Kent School in Kent, Conn., the following remark:

"We have heard in recent days that there is a slogan with elements of the Justice Department that The Constitution is not meant to be a suicide pact."

Asked later what elements he had been referring to the Connecticut Republican cited the Internal Security Division and added, "It typifies the attitude toward the Constitution that is almost the same as that of the Committee to Re-elect the President. They do not believe the American Constitution is workable. They feel they can exercise their own choices."

Possible Connection

A possible connection between the Justice Department and the Watergate operation came to light when a convicted Watergate conspirator, James W. McCord Jr., testified before the Senate committee that Mr. Mardian—after he had left the Justice Department to work on the President's re-election campaign—had told him to meet with John Martin, chief of the analysis and evaluation section of the Internal Security Division, to receive intelligence briefings.

McCord testified that he had met with Mr. Martin in his Justice Department office and



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"almost daily" had received highly restricted intelligence reports. Democratic party officials have said they received no such reports.

Said He Feared 'Violence'

In his testimony McCord asserted that one of his motivations for bugging the Democratic headquarters had been fear of "violence" at the Republican convention. He mentioned the Vietnam Veterans Against the War several times and noted that members of the group had been indicted.

That indictment, brought at the close of the Democratic convention last July, charged six members of the group with conspiring to launch an assault on the Republican convention with automatic weapons, crossbows and slingshots.

Besides Mr. Mardian and Mr. Martin, another key figure in the Senate committee's investigation of the Justice Department activities is believed to be Guy L. Goodwin, chief of the Internal Security Division's special investigations section.