

CIA Aide's Hard Line Hit

Almost from the day he was appointed director of the Central Intelligence Agency, William E. Colby was urged to fire James J. Angleton as head of the agency's counterintelligence division.

Angleton, the fiercely opinionated counterspy who has directed counterintelligence in CIA for a quarter of a century, is the central figure in the controversy over domestic spying activities by the agency, which is, by statute, to confine itself to foreign intelligence-gathering.

One of those who contacted Colby, a former high-level clandestine officer, said in an interview that under the aegis of Angleton there "were certainly reprehensible if not quote illegal unquote things done."

Another long-standing veteran of the agency, who has held one of the most prestigious jobs in the CIA's intelligence directorate, said that the leadership of the counterintelligence department reflected a "paranoid mentality" on international affairs.

"Anybody who in recent years held the view that the conflicts between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia as well as the Soviet Union and China are deceptions to dupe the Western world . . . are simply not in touch with reality," said the former official.

He disclosed that several internal studies were conducted within CIA in 1970-1971 to determine whether the antiwar movement had any sponsorship from for-

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eign governments. The CIA studies concluded, he said, that there was no foreign support of the movement.

Yet, he added, "if an intellectual or journalist had contacts with, say, an Eastern bloc diplomat, the premises of the counterintelligence people were that it could be for no other purpose but espionage."

Much of the objection to Angleton's continued tenure at CIA centered on this hard-line view of international relations and its impact on his conduct of the counterintelligence role. Even some of his detractors, however, paid tribute to Angleton's effectiveness in thwarting espionage penetration of the CIA.

As the counterintelligence chief spent the final work day of his 31-year career in the U.S. intelligence service, there was growing evidence that the agency indulged in highly questionable—if not illegal—surveillance of American citizens.

One former CIA operative, who recently left the intelligence service, corroborated accounts of burglaries directed against foreign embassies. Qualified officials, familiar with Colby's report to President Ford, also acknowledged that some prominent American citizens were also the targets of CIA surveillance in operations which strayed far from the commonly accepted objectives of the 1947 National Security Act under which CIA was created.

So well concealed were the CIA surveillance activities within the United States that one high-ranking former FBI official acknowledged that the bureau had no inkling of any such activities within its investigative jurisdiction.

Both CIA and FBI officials reaffirmed yesterday that the operational code under which the two agencies functioned proscribed the CIA from conducting counterintelligence functions within the United States.

"If Hoover [the late FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover] had an inkling that anything like this was going on," the FBI veteran said, "he would have

blown a gasket and put a stop to it."

The CIA's 1947 charter provides that the agency shall have "no police, subpoena, law enforcement powers or internal security functions."

However, other provisions of the same charter require the CIA director to be "responsible for protecting intelligence sources and methods from unauthorized disclosure."

The charter further states that the agency should "perform such other functions and duties related to intelligence affecting the national security as the National Security Agency may from time to time direct."

One official who has been kept closely briefed on the progress of the domestic spying investigation said yesterday that "there wasn't much that happened which did not have the prior authorization of the National Security Council."

An acknowledgement that the CIA was responsible for a number of burglaries within the United States was made by a former intelligence officer in an interview with The Washington Post.

The ex-CIA officer said he had no knowledge of break-ins against domestic political groups, and said he doubted that any have occurred, but he did corroborate the allegation that the CIA engineered a burglary at the Chilean embassy here in 1972, an earlier break-in at the Israeli embassy and other foreign installations, particularly in New York, where foreign governments have U.N. embassies.

The CIA, he said, was principally interested in photographing codebooks from the foreign embassies which would be useful in reading past messages, even if the country changed its code after the burglary. The National Security Agency makes tape recordings of coded broadcasts from foreign embassies and keeps them on file so past transmission can be read if codes are broken.

The former agent said that some of the burglaries were done primarily for "harassment purposes in retaliation for something that happened overseas. Embassy in the foreign capital was burglarized, he explained, the CIA might do a similar break-in in Washington or New York to retaliate.

All agency trainees, he and other ex-CIA employees said, are given a primer briefing on how to conduct a burglary, the basic elements of breaking and entering. The actual technical skills are left to a small number of experts, including locksmiths, who are experienced at miniature photography, getting past alarm systems, and other techniques of espionage burglaries.

The former agent said he was not certain how far up the chain of command a proposal for burglary had to go for approval, but his impression was that during the 1960s a division chief could authorize a break-in. In recent years, he said, public controversy over the agency has required approval at a higher level.

"I don't want to leave the impression that these were frequent," the agent said. "They were rare." He did not attempt to estimate how many there were over the years.

CIA agents, according to the intelligence officer, also participated in surveillance of foreign nationals within the United States, including in New York City, where the U.S. government has formally assured foreign governments that it does not spy on U.N. diplomats. The FBI expends much more effort on this than the CIA, he added, partly because the FBI has the jurisdiction of protecting against foreign subversion within the United States and partly because the CIA has limited manpower for that task.

"I can remember situations in New York City where they wanted to surveil half a dozen people—not Americans—and they couldn't get the manpower," the agent said.

The former agent was not familiar with any spying on American citizens within the United States, though he noted that the CIA has made contact with "tens of thousands" of citizens who travel abroad, businessmen and scholars, among others, in order to gather information about foreign countries. All of these people are recorded in CIA files, the agent said, but that does not mean that any of them were ever under surveillance.

"There are files in the CIA that have tens of thousands of citizens' names on them," the agent said. "That fact is going to shock some people, but there's no reason why it should."

The reports of CIA involvement in domestic spying were given a retrospective note of corroboration in testimony given by former White House counsel John W. Dean III to the Senate Watergate committee 18 months ago.

"My office," Dean testified, "received regular intelligence reports regarding demonstrators and radical groups from the FBI and, on some occasions, from the CIA." He was not drawn out on the point.