

Nixon Aide Proposed Espionage, Burglaries

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A White House aide drafted a broad plan of domestic espionage in the summer of 1970 that included burglaries and other illegal activities, Sen. Stuart Symington (D-Mo.) disclosed yesterday.

Symington said the proposal, written by former assistant White House counsel Tom Charles Huston, was marked so that copies would go to President Nixon and White House chief of staff H. R. (Bob) Haldeman.

Symington said the proposal contemplated breaking into foreign embassies for unspecified intelligence pur-

poses. However, he said, the plans were not implemented when the late FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover raised "strong objections."

As part of the renewed federal investigation into the Watergate affair, the FBI and grand jury are attempting to determine if some of the same men convicted of bugging Democratic headquarters were also responsible for break-ins at the Chilean embassy here.

The break-in at the embassy occurred during a May, 1972 weekend when the Miami men later arrested in the Watergate case are

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known to have been in Washington.

"There didn't seem to be any limitation to the amount of burglary [proposed]," Symington told newsmen. A Senate source quoted the senator as saying in a closed Senate Armed Services Committee session, "This is the most fantastic document I've ever read."

Symington disclosed the existence of the written proposals after listening to Huston testify for about two hours late yesterday afternoon. Huston is also a former speech writer on the President's staff.

Symington said he had obtained copies of memoranda containing the proposals on Saturday and called Huston to the committee because the documents had been signed by the former White House aide. Symington would not say how he obtained the memoranda.

Symington refused to disclose details of the intelligence-gathering plan, saying that to do so would have an "adverse impact" on national security because it would disclose sources and methods used in legitimate U.S. foreign intelligence collection.

But he said Huston's memoranda deal with "certain studies, recommendations and decisions in the Executive Branch."

The written plans, Symington said, "appear, on their face, to reflect recommendations, and possibly decisions, to permit violations of the law in the domestic collection of intelligence on U.S. citizens."

He said the reason for the plans apparently stemmed, in part, from a "dissatisfaction with the intelligence they [White House officials] were receiving."

Huston, a former national chairman of the conservative-oriented Young Americans for Freedom, left yesterday's closed hearing without commenting to newsmen about his testimony.

But Symington said the apparent thrust of the plan was to increase the espionage roles of the Central Intelligence Agency and the Defense Department within the United States.

"It is the philosophy of the documents that I think you will find quite interesting," the acting chairman of the committee said. He indicated that after the memoranda have been "sanitized" (censored) for national security purposes, portions will be made public.

Symington emphasized that the burglary plans contained in the memoranda did not include Watergate or the Beverly Hills office of Pentagon Papers defendant Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist. He said he does not know of any burglaries that were actually carried out as a result of Huston's proposal.

He also said they did not specifically include plans for burglarizing or spying on political candidates, going only so far as to characterize the purpose of the plans as "breaking in places for domestic intelligence."

The suggestions contained in the memoranda, however, touched off disagreements between the nation's major intelligence agencies, Symington said.

He said that because Hoover was insistent that his agency not become involved in foreign intelligence operations, the White House proposal created "quite a bit of disagreement." Symington apparently was alluding to the suggestions of breaking into foreign embassies.

Also, Symington said, Hoover was anxious to retain all domestic intelligence activities within the FBI, while the White House officials were making approaches for such assistances to the CIA.

Symington said some of Huston's proposals have been hidden until now by John W. Dean III, the White House counsel who was fired by President Nixon on April 30.

The senator said the first set of memoranda bearing Huston's name was provided to the Armed Forces Committee last Wednesday by intelligence officials of the Defense Department, the FBI and other agencies who, he said, had sought guidance in determining which portions had national security implications.

He said the documents obtained last week were among the papers that Dean had kept locked in a bank safety deposit box and which U.S. District Court Chief Judge John J. Sirica ordered released last week to the Senate select committee investigating Watergate.

There was some overlap in the espionage proposals contained in those Huston-written documents and the ones that the Armed Forces Committee obtained Saturday, Symington said.