

2 Full-Time Reporters Said Still

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The Central Intelligence Agency was still paying two full-time American reporters for overseas undercover work in February, three months after former CIA Director William E. Colby told the House intelligence committee that "such relationships . . . have in fact been terminated."

According to the Senate intelligence committee report released Monday, staff

investigators found that two staff members of "general circulation, U.S. news organizations" were still functioning as "paid undercover" contacts for the CIA.

Last Nov. 6, Colby assured the House committee: "We do not at this time employ any staff members of regular U.S. general circulation journals."

"I undertook the commitment to terminate any such relationships and over these past two years we have in

fact terminated those relationships."

In a telephone interview yesterday, Colby said that when he appeared before the House committee, "I was pretty sure we had terminated them. I don't recognize what the (Senate) committee is talking about."

Colby added: "I know it was supposed to take a couple of years to unhook one or two of them."

Sources on Capitol Hill and within the CIA pointed

out that Colby in his 1975 House testimony said he had terminated employees of "U.S. general circulation journals," which would not include reporters for radio, television or the wire services.

Colby said yesterday that he had not intended to make such a distinction.

Other sources said, however, that CIA officials with knowledge of the agency's media program were disturbed when Colby made his

on CIA Payroll in February

categorical statements to the House committee.

"There was no intent to deceive," one CIA source said yesterday, "but it is possible some contracts had to run out." He suggested that perhaps anyone waiting for a contract to run out had already stopped actually working for the CIA.

Congressional sources were more skeptical. "All those distinctions matter," one Senate aide said of Colby's choice of words.

The committee was not given the names of the two full-time reporters still employed nor the organizations for which they work.

It was told, however, that the two were "being terminated" under a CIA policy, announced Feb. 11, that the agency would end "any paid or contractual relationship with any full-time or part-time" reporter "accredited" by any U.S. news-gathering organization.

According to the committee report, "approximately

50 U.S. journalists or personnel of U.S. media organizations were employed by the CIA or maintained some other covert relationship" at the time of the February statement.

"About half . . . were paid relationships," according to the Senate committee report.

Within the 50 were fewer than 10 who posed as writers for limited-circulation trade journals or newsletters or representatives of book publishers, but who

were, in fact, full-time CIA agents.

Most of the journalists with CIA ties, according to the Senate report, were stringers (part-time reporters) who work abroad for some U.S. publications.

Although the CIA's February statement indicated that all stringers would be dropped from the CIA payroll, the committee reported that it had been informed that "fewer than one-half [of the 50] will be terminated under the new guidelines."