

Ex-Head of C.I.A. Backs Its Training Of Domestic Police

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 7 —

The former director of the Central Intelligence Agency, Richard Helms, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee today that it was "perfectly legitimate" for the agency to provide training to domestic police forces.

Senator J. W. Fulbright, Democrat of Arkansas, the chairman of the Senate committee, said Mr. Helms had testified at a closed meeting that the agency's training in the use of explosives, and detection of wiretaps and organization of intelligence files had

not violated a legal ban on C.I.A. involvement in law enforcement activities within the United States.

"I don't think there was any great harm done" in the training of officers from about a dozen city and county police agencies, Senator Fulbright said. "But I am against the whole concept of the C.I.A. getting involved, even in an innocuous way, in police business." New York City policemen were among those trained.

The agency's activities came to light earlier this week when Representative Edward I. Koch, Democrat of Manhattan, made public a letter from John M. Maury, legislative counsel for the C.I.A. The letter acknowledged that the training had been undertaken during the last two years.

According to Mr. Fulbright,

the committee did not pursue the issue at any length with Mr. Helms because he is now the Ambassador-designate to Iran.

Other members of the committee said, however, that they would seek assurance from the new C.I.A. director, James R. Schlesinger, that the agency will end the training program.