

CIA chief plans only 'urgent' police

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By Morton Kondracke
Sun-Times Bureau

WASHINGTON — Central Intelligence Agency training for local police, a program with murky origins worthy of the nation's top agency, will continue "only in the most compelling circumstances and with my personal approval," the CIA's new director said Monday.

Director James R. Schlesinger's statement came in a two-paragraph letter sent to several members of Congress and released by Rep. Chet Holifield (D-Calif.), chairman of the House Government Operations Committee.

Holifield had suggested the "compelling circumstances" limit for CIA training and he approved of Schlesinger's adoption of it. Rep. Edward Koch (D-N.Y.), who had urged Holifield to investigate the program, said that any CIA involvement in internal affairs is illegal under the 1947 law that set up the nation's foreign intelligence agency.

According to Holifield and others who have received CIA briefings, the police training program started in New York last year at the suggestion of a

representative of the Ford Foundation, but an effort by The Sun-Times to track down the program's origins proved inconclusive.

Wayne Kerstetter, former head of inspection services in the New York department and now director of the Illinois Bureau of Investigation, said in a telephone interview that he could not remember who first suggested asking for CIA help in setting up an intelligence evaluation system for N.Y.

Kerstetter said his salary in New York was paid by a Ford Foundation subsidiary, the Police Foundation. He said he did not attend CIA training sessions and that "I have never in my life met a CIA agent."

Kerstetter's former superior, First Deputy Police Commissioner William H. T. Smith, did attend a training session last September in Arlington, Va. Smith said it was his impression that the first suggestion of asking for CIA training came from Don R. Harris, a former CIA analyst serving as a New York police consultant under a grant from the federal government's Law Enforcement Assistance Administration.

Harris, who could not be contacted for an interview, is co-author of LEAA's basic textbook on police intelligence systems. He wrote the text with E. Drexel Godfrey Jr., former chief of the CIA's current intelligence office and now public safety adviser to the governor of Pennsylvania.

Godfrey has denied any knowledge of CIA training for local police, as has another former agency official now in police work, Robert Kiley.

Kiley was special assistant to former CIA Director Richard Helms, who left in 1971 to join the Police Foundation and last year became public safety adviser to Boston Mayor Kevin White.

Kiley and another former Police Foundation official now in Boston, Mark Furstenberg,

said they could find no indication that Boston police received CIA training, but an aide to Holifield said the CIA had named the Boston department as a beneficiary of the program.

According to the aides the CIA said Boston police participated in a training session of two or three days' duration.

Holifield said nine departments received training in such techniques as record-handling, clandestine photography, surveillance of individuals and identification of explosive devices.

In addition, he said, six departments received briefings

of an hour or two on specific techniques.

The Chicago Police Department is known to have received advice on a technique for determining whether a suspect has handled metal objects.

The correspondence between Holifield and Director Schlesinger did not reveal who in the CIA made the decision to assist local police.

The CIA had defended the decision on the grounds that police training was not explicitly forbidden by the 1947 National Security Act and was implicitly authorized by the 1968 Omnibus Crime Control

training

Act.

In his letter to Schlesinger Holifield suggested that, to avoid controversy, the agency should discontinue training "except in unusual or compelling circumstances."

In a House speech commenting on Schlesinger's response, Holifield said that "provision for assistance in exceptional circumstances is warranted, in my judgment."

"I can conceive that in special situations, such as those involving foreign criminals or international drug traffickers, the President might call upon the CIA to assist in a particular effort."