

Lawyer defends CIA's role in dropping drug charges

By Edmund J. Rooney

The top lawyer for the Central Intelligence Agency has defended the agency's role in getting the Justice Department to drop drug-smuggling charges against a CIA agent.

John S. Warner, the CIA's general counsel, in a Tuesday speech contended the Justice Department, not his agency, decided not to prosecute agent Puttaphorn Khramkhruan and a co-defendant.

"This was an incident where an agent of ours for many years went astray . . . and got caught," Warner told a Chicago Kent College of Law audience.

"We asked the charges be dropped because it would be harmful to our over-all operation to disclose the identities of other undercover agents in Thailand and Laos."

CHARGES OF smuggling opium also were dropped here

against co-defendant, Bruce Hoeft, a Peace Corps worker.

The Daily News disclosed full details of the Kramkhruan-Hoeft case June 18 in a copyrighted article.

The Justice Department later cataloged 22 separate criminal cases in which the CIA intervened to prevent criminal prosecution of their personnel.

DEPUTY ATTY. Gen. Harold R. Tyler Jr. last month set down tough new guidelines to be followed by prosecutors in dealing with federal agencies refusing to co-operate in criminal investigations of their personnel.

Warner described as "utter nonsense" several reports that the CIA had supported drug-smuggling operations.

WHILE answering questions from students, Warner said he "regretted" the ouster Sunday by President Ford of CIA director William Colby. "I'm sorry to see him go, and I

don't know if he is a fall guy in this situation.

"Bill Colby is a man of great integrity," Warner said, "but I look forward to working with George Bush who is succeeding him."

Warner described Watergate as a "national enema and we'll feel better when it is all over."

Museum plans Christmas show

The 34th annual Christmas Around the World Festival will be presented at the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry Nov. 28 to Jan. 1.

Daily concerts by 159 choral groups from schools and churches will begin Dec. 1. The concerts will be staged in the Museums' North Court. Theater programs and dinners will begin Nov. 28 and continue through Dec. 15.