

Colby opposed to assassinations

WASHINGTON (AP) — Director William E. Colby of the Central Intelligence Agency said Thursday that over the years foreigners have suggested assassinations to him and U.S. government employes have discussed the possibility of assassinations with him. Colby said he rejected the ideas every time.

The 55-year-old head of America's spy agency declined to name the suggested or potential targets or the persons who made the suggestions. Nor would he give the dates or locations of these conversations.

Colby said he opposed public disclosure of facts behind these or other alleged assassination schemes involving the CIA, because "I think there is positive harm to the reputation of the country to go into great detail on these things."

He emphasized, "Our policies today are clear ... I am opposed to assassinations because I think they're wrong and because I think they frequently bring about absolutely uncontrolled and unforeseeable results — usually worse results than by continuing to suffer the problem that you're facing."

During an interview of more than an hour in his seventh-floor office at CIA headquarters in suburban Langley, Va., Colby discussed a wide range of issues raised during investigations of his agency by the news media, a presidential commission and several congressional committees.

These were among his major points in the first interview he has given since the Rockefeller Commission last week reported it found some "plainly unlawful" domestic activities by the CIA:

—He cannot envision that agency employes would again feel that the political climate in this country justified their violating the legal limits on CIA domestic activity.

—He does not believe that any CIA employes will be convicted of crimes or even prosecuted for illegal CIA activities.

—He cannot be certain that all the agency's illegal or improper activities have come to light, but argues that no federal agency could give such an assurance about its operations.

—It is up to the congressional committees and the Justice Department to decide whether to make public the

names of persons responsible for the CIA's illegal activities.

—He confirms that foreigners approached others in the CIA with a plot to assassinate French President Charles de Gaulle, and that it was flatly rejected. He does not know whether the French government was advised of that plot, nor can he say that in all instances he would advise a foreign government of a plot that came to his attention.

—He intends to implement the Rockefeller Commission's recommendation that the CIA inspector general's office be enlarged but hopes that efforts to police the agency won't impair its intelligence-gathering mission.

—He has not been asked to resign and intends to stay at his post so long as the President and he agree that he is useful.

—He thinks that a career in intelligence should be neither a bar nor a requirement for the job of CIA director.

—Handing over a copy of recent newspaper clippings on Soviet missile developments, he asserted that America has the best intelligence service in the world and feels a major part of his role is to convince the American people of that.