

Carter Silent on Gen. Brown's Remarks

By Warren Brown

Washington Post Staff Writer

White House press secretary Jody Powell greeted with tongue-in-cheek yesterday reports of Gen. George S. Brown's latest controversial remarks.

The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was quoted yesterday as ridiculing Congress for meddling in defense matters and foreign affairs and as defending government spying on American citizens in a secret lecture last year.

Powell, appearing on "Face the Nation" (CBS, WTOP), said President Carter had no comments on Brown's remarks, but speaking for himself Powell said:

"I certainly would hate to have my small opened or my private affairs looked into (by the government). And I don't think it's because I'm any threat to the security of the nation."

In a story by syndicated cartoonist and journalist Ranan Lurie, Brown was quoted as saying: "If any citizen of this country is so concerned about his presence in a meeting being noted, I'd say we ought to read his mail and we ought to know what the hell he has done."

On defense matters and foreign affairs, Lurie quoted Brown as saying that Congress "seems very much . . . like the man who is kibitzing a chess game and occasionally reaches in and moves a piece and thereby screws it all up."

Lurie said Brown's comments were made May 21 in a closed lecture to ranking Defense and State Department employees at Ft. McNair. The Defense Department has confirmed portions of the comments, Lurie said.

Powell said yesterday that the President "will have an opportunity to see the full context in which those remarks were made." At any rate, he said, Brown's comments "came during a previous administration—about the same time as (his) other comments, which have been on the public record for some time."

In 1974, Brown was reprimanded by President Ford for saying Jews had too much influence over Congress, the banks and the media. Ford reprimanded Brown again last year for saying Israel was a defense burden on the United States and for opining that the Shah of Iran may have "visions of the Persian empire."

In the wake of those comments there were calls for Brown's resignation.

But yesterday, Sen. Alan Cranston (D-Calif.) said the general should not be dismissed for his latest remarks. "He criticized Congress," Cranston said on "Meet the Press" (NBC, WRCA).

"Well, that's something we are accustomed to. I believe in free speech, even for members of the government."

On another matter, Powell attempted to minimize a Washington Post report that Carter has placed an undeclared moratorium on U.S. arms sales abroad.

The Post reported in its Sunday edi-

tions that the President is delaying action on about \$6 billion in arms sales to foreign nations.

Powell said there was "not really" a moratorium. Instead, he said the President was reviewing "any major arms sale (proposals) before they are in fact consummated."

"That process is going on," Powell said.