

Report on House Hearings

Critic Says CIA 'Missteps' Not Significant

Washington

A leading advocate of stronger congressional control over the CIA concluded yesterday that its past domestic spying violated citizens' rights but "was nothing earthshattering or significant."

Representative Robert Giaino (Dem - Conn.), made the comment to newsmen after a closed-door briefing by CIA Director William Colby for the House defense appropriations subcommittee.

Senator Frank Church (Dem-Idaho), meanwhile, said that Colby is right in deploring the "almost hysterical excitement" sur-

rounding reports of the agency's activities.

Church, who heads the Senate committee looking into CIA activities, said he fears an over excited public climate might hamper his probe.

Giaino said Colby has admitted in public testimony that "there have been violations of rights." The congressman also accused former CIA Director Richard Helms of giving congressmen misinformation.

"Fortunately nothing earthshattering or significant has taken place," Giaino said. "But it should serve as a warning to a free people to always be on their guard

against any type of secret agencies."

Giaino said what Colby has called the CIA's "few missteps" also show the need for stronger control over intelligence agencies by the administration and Congress.

He said "a great deal has been accomplished" toward establishing such control as a result of press disclosures of CIA domestic spying, including infiltration of anti-war dissident groups, and as a result of the Watergate-inspired move for government reform.

An example, Giaino said, was the fact that Colby for

the first time delivered his top secret briefing on CIA operations yesterday morning to the full 12-member defense appropriations subcommittee rather than a select group of senior members.

"We're now going to be able to question them, to object to areas of their budget," he said.

Giaino and other members refused to answer any questions on the content of Colby's briefing.

A major area still to be taken up by the House and Senate select intelligence subcommittees, he said, is whether CIA covert opera-

tions abroad are really needed.

"Are they fruitful?" he said. "Are they worthwhile? Should the United States as a free nation morally involve itself in the types of activities that have been alleged to have taken place with our intelligence operations in places like Chile?"

Colby acknowledged after the briefing that the House and Senate investigations may result in some reorganization of CIA activities.

"There might be some changes," he said, "that is up to the legislative committees."

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