

CIA Kept a File On Bella Abzug

Washington

Representative Bella S. Abzug disclosed yesterday that the CIA opened some of her private mail, reported on a meeting she had with Viet Cong representatives and collected her speeches and statements against the Vietnam war.

Mrs. Abzug (Dem-N.Y.) held up the CIA file on herself and disclosed some of its contents at a hearing of the House subcommittee on individual rights, of which she is chairman.

The file was provided by William E. Colby, director of the Central Intelligence Agency, who outlined for the

committee the list of files that the agency keeps on U.S. citizens and acknowledged that some material in the files "may not be appropriate."

Mrs. Abzug said that the CIA file on her goes back to 1953, when as a lawyer she represented clients before the House Committee on Un-American Activities.

She said the file shows the CIA opened some of her private mail "involving solely my representation of clients in estate cases."

The file contains a report on a meeting she and another congressman had with Viet Cong representatives, her attendance at a Women's Strike for Peace conference in 1967 and an anti-war speech at a demonstration in New York City in 1971, she said.

Mrs. Abzug said the file also contains minutes of a secret meeting of an unidentified peace group.

"It is a reflection of the kind of activity that has to be ended on the part of the CIA," she said.

During questioning at the House subcommittee hearing, Colby assured Mrs. Abzug that the gathering of data about her would not be continued.

But he said that some of the information on her is still being kept secret be-

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cause it might disclose intelligence sources and methods.

"Are you suggesting that something in my file shows I was involved in anything improper?" Mrs. Abzug asked.

"No," Colby replied.

"Then you violated my right to privacy, did you not?" Mrs. Abzug asked.

Colby said he did not believe the agency had.

Colby said the CIA kept files on four members of the Congress, including Mrs. Abzug, in connection with anti-war activities.

He said there also are references to some former members of Congress.

The letters were opened as part of a CIA program of opening mail from people in Communist countries, Colby said. The program was discontinued in February, 1973, he said.

The file on the meeting with representatives of the People's Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam, the Viet Cong's political arm, resulted from CIA coverage of that organization, Colby said.

"We incidentally acquired the fact that you had contact with them," Colby said. "We were not following you."

The minutes of meeting of the secret anti-war group and a speech Mrs. Abzug gave in New York City were not monitored by CIA agents, Colby said, but were received as reports from another agency. The reports were distributed to "a number of agencies."

Colby also testified that the CIA concluded there was no substantial foreign manipulation of the U.S. anti-war movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

He has said the CIA's infiltration of 22 agents into anti-war groups and development of files on 10,000 citizens grew from an effort to determine if there was manipulation of the anti-war activities.

"We determined to our satisfaction that it did not exist to any substantial degree," Colby said.

Meanwhile, leaders of the Senate committee investigating the CIA and other U.S. intelligence operations met with President Ford at the White House and told reporters they got a qualified pledge of cooperation from the President.

Senator Frank Church (Dem-Idaho), the committee chairman, said that Mr. Ford expressed the desire to help them but would weigh their requests for information on a case-by-case basis.

* Associated Press