

Arends Defends C.I.A. Against Critics

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WASHINGTON, March 26—Representative Leslie C. Arends of Illinois, the assistant Republican floor leader in the House, defended the Central Intelligence Agency today against its detractors.

He described as untrue or as "based on half-truths or distortions" published allegations that the agency had been penetrated by Soviet intelligence.

He also assailed the published proposal of Representative John V. Lindsay, Republican of Manhattan, for the establishment of a new Congressional overseer for the C.I.A.

Mr. Arends, a member of the House Armed Services Committee, is a member of one of the subcommittees for the intelligence agency.

It is "quite understandable," Mr. Arends said, that some member of Congress "might feel we are not as well acquainted with the operations of the C.I.A. as we should be."

"No one, except members of the subcommittee itself, has any knowledge of just how extensively and intensively we inquire into the activities of this intelligence agency," Mr. Arends went on.

"We hold no public hearings. We issue no reports. We cannot do otherwise and preserve the effectiveness of the C.I.A. as a secret fact-gathering agency on an international scale."

Mr. Arends said that "much of the criticism directed at the C.I.A. is not constructive." For example, he referred to what he described as "the irresponsible series of articles concerning the C.I.A. that has been recently published in The New York Journal-American."

In the series, Michal Goleniewski, a Polish defector who was said to have been high in the ranks of the Soviet secret service, was quoted as having said that Soviet agents had infiltrated the Central Intelligence Agency.

Among the "wild accusations" in the articles, Mr. Arends said, was that the intelligence agency had tried to prevent Mr. Goleniewski from appearing before the Senate Internal Security subcommittee.

"That simply is not true," he said.

"Contrary to what has been reported in the press, the postponements of Michal Goleniewski's appearance before the

Senate subcommittee were at the request of the man himself," Mr. Arends said.

"I might add that the C.I.A. subcommittee, of which I am a member, went into every aspect of this case," Mr. Arends continued. "I am personally satisfied that the publicized statements purported to come from Michal Goleniewski are not correct."

Mr. Arends said he had been "very distressed" to read an article in Esquire magazine by Representative Lindsay. Mr. Lindsay has long advocated a joint Congressional committee to supervise the Central Intelligence Agency on the ground that existing subcommittees do not have sufficient authority to do the job.

Representative Arends said:

"Let me assure you, Mr. Speaker, that we have always received the information needed. Also we have been privileged to learn of many events in the secrecy of our meetings before the events happened."

Paper Declines Comment

In New York, The Journal-American said it would have no comment.