Fodor Denies Being Agent But Says He Helped C.I.A.

By LAWRENCE VAN GELDER

Eugene Fodor, president of Fodor's Travel Guides, Inc., conceded yesterday that he had cooperated with the Central Intelligence, Agency but denied his portrayal by E. Howard Hunt Jr. as a former agent for the C.I.A. in Austria.

Describing Mr. Hunt's state-ments about him as "largely in-accurate," Mr. Fodor, also de-nied that the agency had helped to found and fund his publish-ing organization ing organization.

ing organization. Replying to Mr. Hunt by a written statement given to a New York Times reporter and in an interview, he conceded, however, that "financial ar-rangements" between himself and the agency had existed. And while he asserted that neither he nor his company had ever participated in any domes-tic activities of the C.I.A., he declined to comment on Mr. Hunt's assertion that the well-

declined to comment on Mr. Hunt's assertion that the well-known series' of travel books bearing Mr. Fodor's name had provided "cover" for C.I.A. agents eager to travel to foreign countries disguised as travel writers.

'All Ancient History' 1

He also said that despite his association with the C.I.A. he, personally, "was never engaged in intelligence activities of any kind, and was devoting my full efforts exclusively toward the creation, production and pro-motion of my travel guide-books."

books." In any event, he wrote, "My relationship with the agency ended many years ago. It is enough to say that it is all an-cient history, far removed and completely irrelevant. to the events of today." The allegations by Mr. Hunt

events of today." The allegations by Mr. Hunt were made before Senate Watergate investigators in late 1973. Mr. Hunt, a Watergate burglar who pleaded guilty, re-tired in 1970 after serving more than 20 years with the C.I.A. In his testimony before the Senate Watergate committee, "he said that he had strved as the first chief of covert action for the C.I.A.'s Domestic Operations Division, which was established in 1962.

Division, which was established in 1962. Explaining his involvement with the C.I.A., Mr. Fodor, who was born in Hungary in 1905 and is now an American citi-zen, said that shortly after he founded his publishing compa-ny in 1950, he was approached by fold Army friends who, in-vited me to cooperate with the C.I.A."

'Glad To Be of Help

"The nature of the relation-ship and the assistance I ren-dered remains confidential as far as I am concerned, he said. "Suffice it to say that I

was glad, and proud, to be of help." Citing the reasons for

Citing the reasons for his cooperation, he emphasized the political climate of the times-"Stalinist totalitarian terror," his exposure in his postwar years in the Army "to orthodox Communist methods and takeovers in Eastern Europe," and his knowledge that world War II had not brought an end to "concentration camps, police terror and political tyranny." He said, "C.I.A.'s role in this struggle appeared to be vitally important. This awareness, together with my feelings of in-debtedness to my adopted

debtedness to my adopted country, America—which had treated me so well—strongly motivated me to be useful if I could."

Mr. Fodor added that he had

never met or had any dealings with Mr. Hunt,"whose testimo-ny was published in The New York Times last Dec. 31.

There are 48 titles in the Fodor's travel guide series, of which more than 25 are pub-lished annually in revised editions, according to Mr. Fodor. He is listed as the "creator and chief editor" of the series.

An editor at Fodor's Guides said, "We have writers either in the country or that we have dispatched to the country that write the articles, submit them to Mr. Fodor and the rest of the editorial people, and they are edited " edited.

He likened these writers to newspaper "stringers" and said that they were "very moderate-



view here yesterday.

ly" recommended. He also said that Mr. Fodor continues to travel and write.