

JAN 17 1975

Ex-CIA Chief Explains the U.S. Spying

Washington

Richard Helms, former director of the Central Intelligence Agency, told Congress yesterday that the CIA had become involved in domestic spying on Presidential authority because of "the sudden and quite dramatic

upsurge of extreme radicalism in this country and abroad" beginning in the late 1950's.

In a four-page statement released by the Senate Armed Services Intelligence Subcommittee, Helms said: "By and in itself this vio-

lence, this dissent, this radicalism were of no direct concern to the Central Intelligence Agency.

"It became so only in the degree that the trouble was inspired by, or coordinated with, or funded by, anti-American subversion mech-

anisms abroad."

"In such event, "he added, "the CIA had a real, a clear and proper function to perform, but in collaboration with the FBI. The agency did perform that function in response to the express

Back Page Col. 1

From Page 1

concern of the President."

Helms, now ambassador to Iran, who served as the agency's director from 1966 to 1973, did not say in his statement which President had authorized what. Nor was it immediately clear which radical groups in the late 1950s had been responsible for precipitating the CIA's domestic activities.

The time period cited by Helms, including his years as CIA director, covered the presidencies of Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard M. Nixon.

In a 45-page statement released Wednesday by another Senate subcommittee, William E. Colby, the present CIA director, acknowledged that the agency had infiltrated undercover agents into anti-war and dissident political groups inside the United States as part of a counterintelligence program that — beginning in 1967 — led to the accumulation of files on 10,000 American Citizens.

Five Senate and House committees and subcommittees have announced hearings into allegations of domestic spying and President Ford has established an eight-member "Blue-Ribbon" commission to conduct its own inquiry for the executive branch.

Helms and Colby testified in secret yesterday morning before the subcommittee

headed by Senator John C. Stennis (Dem.-Miss.) who is chairman of the Armed Services Committee. Stennis later ordered the release of the Helms statement.

Helms' testimony, which acknowledged that the CIA had participated in some domestic operations, appeared to contradict previous testimony on the same subject that he gave before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee during confirmation hearings on his ambassadorial appointment in February, 1973.

Asked whether the CIA had become involved in the widespread domestic spying in 1969 and 1970, Helms replied, "I don't recall whether we were asked, but we were not involved because it seemed to me that was a clear violation of what our charter was." If he had been requested to conduct such operations, Helms further told the senators, "I would simply go to explain to the President this didn't seem to be advisable."

While conceding some domestic CIA activities, Helms repeatedly defended the agency from what he termed "irresponsible" attacks by the press.

"The principal allegations (of CIA domestic spying) remain unsupported," Helms said, "and, to the contrary, have been undermined by contrary evidence identified in the press itself."

It was not immediately clear to what evidence he was referring.

New York Times