

Helms' Hands-Off Order Is Bared

Washington

The Central Intelligence Agency said yesterday that Richard M. Helms, while serving as its director in 1972, issued orders prohibiting the agency from playing any role in foreign assassinations.

The disclosure of the Helms directive was the agency's first public acknowledgement that CIA agents may have participated in assassination plots in past years.

CIA spokesman Dennis Berend said Helms' orders were later reinforced in August, 1973, by William E. Colby, the president CIA director. Colby ordered that no one at the agency assist in or encourage foreign assassinations, Berend said.

Berend said Colby was prepared to discuss the 1972-73 directives when he appeared last week before a subcommittee of the House

Select Committee on Intelligence Operations.

Colby's testimony, however, was abruptly canceled when the subcommittee's three Republican members boycotted the hearing, forcing it to be called off. They did so at the request of Representative Lucien N. Nedzi (Dem. Mich.) who told them a short time earlier he was resigning as committee chairman.

Berend said Colby was also prepared to confirm that CIA operatives, in years past, may have been in contact with dissident foreign nationals who were planning assassinations.

It was understood that a text of Colby's prepared testimony did not go into specifics.

Colby wanted to emphasize to congressmen, Berend said, that the CIA's current policy was clear and that to probe possible ties with past assassination plans would

only sensationalize the issue.

Asked about CIA directives prohibiting assassinations, Senator Frank Church (Dem. Ida.), chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Activities, told reporters that such a ban should be spelled out by Congress with penalties provided for violation.

"This ought not to be left to executive decision," Church said.

Los Angeles Times

Getty Case Switch

Malibu

J. Paul Getty III has won transfer of his case from Malibu to Santa Monica because Malibu's only municipal court judge, John J. Merrick is the father of the man whose truck Getty is accused of taking.

Associated Press