

Colby's Testimony to Probers

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The Writers on CIA Payroll

Washington

Some occasional overseas contributors to "major American journals" are also on the Central Intelligence Agency payroll, CIA Director William E. Colby said yesterday.

But he said no regular newspaper staff members are paid by the agency.

Colby's comments to the House intelligence committee went beyond any previous testimony to the committee about CIA activity in the news media.

It was his first public appearance since President Ford fired him Sunday and then asked him to stay or until his successor, George Bush, is confirmed by the Senate.

Two committee members, Representatives Robert W. Kasten 2/ Jr. (Rep-Wis.) and Ronald V. Dellums (Dem-Calif.), said last July the committee had what Kasten

called "very limited knowledge" that the CIA had "infiltrated" some news organizations.

At that time, Colby denied there had been infiltration.

Colby said yesterday that "we do not at this time employ any regular staff member of a U.S. daily newspaper."

Committee Chairman Otis G. Pike (Dem-N.Y.) asked, "Do you now have people being paid by the CIA on anything which you refer to as a major American journal?"

Colby replied the CIA "had no staff members" on its payroll.

"That is not the question," replied Pike. He asked if the CIA had anyone "contributing" to the publications.

"Yes we do," replied Colby. "We have several who are in the category of freelancers or stringers abroad."

Pike asked if any of these contributors are operating without the knowledge of the publication's management.

"Yes we do," said Colby. He said in the case of "stringers who are contributing occasional pieces," the CIA does not tell management.

He also said full-time CIA employees submit articles to "major American journals."

But he would name no names or give any details in the public session. He said he would tell more in executive session.

Nor would he publicly answer when asked if CIA people are working for the national news services - the Associated Press and United Press International - saying he would discuss it only in executive session.

He gave the same answer when asked if the CIA had

anyone in the pay of the television networks.

Colby said that the CIA-paid contributors generally provide the agency with information, going through "debriefing" sessions with CIA agents after covering an event.

"They are primarily for intelligence," he said.

But he said they occasionally are used as vehicles for planting stories the CIA wants published.

He said this is only done by CIA people contributing to foreign journals - never for American publications.

Representative Les Aspin (Dem-Wis.) asked if the CIA ever has columns written abroad about some false activity.

"Yes, said Colby, "but very rarely."

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