

'Blundered' on Pueblo

CIA DIRECTOR'S FIRING URGED

Washington

A senator yesterday called the capture by North Korea of the spy ship Pueblo a huge blunder by the Central Intelligence Agency and urged the dismissal of its director, Richard Helms.

Senator Stephen M. Young (Dem-Ohio) said President-elect Nixon, who has said he would retain Helms, should dismiss him as director of the agency.

The senator said the Pueblo was working for the CIA and its mission apparently was to drift along the coast of North Korea intercepting messages.

He said he welcomed the release last month of the 81 surviving crew members, but "the whole affair remains highly messy and unsatisfactory."

The Ohio senator said Helms was responsible for "the humiliation and tremendous loss of prestige" that resulted when the ship was captured by North Korean patrol boats January 23.

He said the ship should not have been operating off the North Korean coast at a time when the U.S., including a third of its Navy, was deeply involved in Vietnam.

Reuters