

Fulbright Reports C.I.A. Confirms Use Of Laos Aid Cover

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WASHINGTON, March 13 — Senator J. W. Fulbright, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, said today that he had confirmation that the Central Intelligence Agency was using the Agency for International Development as a screen for its operations in Laos.

The Senator's office said that Richard Helms, Director of Central Intelligence, had generally confirmed the accuracy of press dispatches from Laos reporting the C.I.A. activity. Mr. Helms testified before the committee in a closed session this morning.

Congressional sources said that most of the hearing had been devoted to Laos, particularly on the foreign aid mission there. They declined to reveal details of the testimony but said that Mr. Helms had been forthright in answering the Senators' questions.

"The Senators were seeking information," one source said, "and they got it." The sources also said Mr. Helms emphasized that his agency did not make policy but only executed it as best it could.

Senator Fulbright said after the hearing that he placed the responsibility for the intelligence operations under the foreign aid cover on the National Security Council, which is President Nixon's chief advisory group on foreign policy.

Press reports from Laos for some time have referred to C.I.A. activities in general terms. They have focused on the training, supplies, and financing furnished by the agency to the clandestine army of Maj. Gen. Vang Pao, who leads a force of Meo tribesmen.

More recently, dispatches in The Los Angeles Times have pinpointed certain intelligence operations within the foreign aid mission. A unit known as the Rural Development Annex has reportedly been recruiting and training guerrilla soldiers and clandestine agents for operations against the North Vietnamese invaders and the Pathet Lao, the pro-Communist Laotian insurgents.

The Special Requirements Office, also in the foreign aid mission, has reportedly been responsible for supplying the clandestine units. According to the dispatches, both units are staffed largely by former American military men attracted by the high pay of the intelligent operation.