

U.S. Aides Tied To Air Attacks

Washington

Senator Stuart Symington said yesterday the U.S. embassy had secretly directed air strikes in Cambodia, presumably by Cambodian air forces, "within the last year."

He said this was learned only recently by members of Congress and is typical of "deceitful" maneuvers that have made Congress suspicious of the entire conduct of U.S. foreign policy.

In a televised interview (ABC-TV's "Issues and Answers"), Symington also said CIA Director William E. Colby told him his agency had discussed the possibility of assassinating unidentified foreign leaders but had never done it.

Symington, who said he opposes any further military aid to Cambodia or South Vietnam, was asked whether he knew of "anything the U.S. is doing now" to influence the course of the fighting in Cambodia.

"One thing we found out recently was that the war in Cambodia, the air strikes, were being directed by the embassy in Cambodia, and that was not known by the then-secretary of state.

"We can't go on with this type and character of operation in Cambodia . . . and maintain the credibility of the administration with the Congress," he said.

"As these facts unfold," Symington added, "Congress is getting increasingly suspicious of our whole foreign policy."

ABC correspondent Steve Bell asked: "Do you mean to say that at this time the U.S. embassy in Phnom Penh is actually controlling the bombing?"

Symington replied: "Within the last year they've been controlling it."

He did not elaborate on his reference to the "then-secretary of state."

Henry A. Kissinger suc-

ceeded William Rogers as secretary in 1973.

In response to questions, Symington said he considers such embassy direction of air strikes "a violation of the Paris accords" and it indicates U.S. foreign policy is being conducted "in a deceitful way."

As part of its efforts to force the United States to disengage itself from military involvement in Southeast Asia, Congress has forbidden U.S. troops or planes from participating in the Cambodian fighting.

Symington is a member of both the Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services committees, and sits on the Senate panel that oversees CIA operations.

Asked whether he had ever heard evidence that CIA agents participated in plots to assassinate foreign leaders, as alleged in recent news reports, Symington said he had checked that point recently with "the present director" — Colby — because he could not recall whether it ever came up in CIA briefings.

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