

SFChronicle MAY 12 1973 MAY 12 1973

CIA Involvement-- 'Helms Assented'

N.Y. Times Service

Washington

General Robert E. Cushman Jr. said yesterday that Richard M. Helms, his superior at the CIA in 1971, had "assented" to agency assistance to E. Howard Hunt Jr., one of the conspirators in the Watergate case.

Helms, now ambassador to Iran, was CIA director at the time the agency, in the summer of 1971, provided disguises and equipment to Hunt, upon the request of the White House.

The materials supplied to Hunt were used for the break-in at the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist on Sept. 3, 1971, in Beverly Hills.

Cushman, now commandant of the Marine Corps, confirmed that as deputy director of Central Intelligence, he had ordered agency materials made available to Hunt.

But he said that a few days after doing so, he reported his actions to Helms and "he assented to what I had done."

The general's account of CIA involvement with Hunt was made in a three-page sworn affidavit that he personally presented to three separate congressional committees. He cut short a European tour to appear before the committees.

Earlier this week, current CIA officials had disclosed that agency preparation of a personality assessment on Ellsberg had been made with the approval of Helms.

But, until yesterday, it had been widely assumed that Helms may have been unaware that Cushman had agreed to a request of John D. Ehrlichman, at that time

key White House aide, for CIA assistance to Hunt.

Cushman appeared first before a House Armed Services subcommittee, then before a Senate Appropriations



UPI Telephoto

GENERAL CUSHMAN Testimony about Hunt

subcommittee and finally before the Senate Armed Services Committee.

All three committees are inquiring into the issue of whether the CIA exceeded its authority by becoming in-

involved in domestic undercover operations. The agency's charter precludes it from internal security functions.

The committee meetings were closed, but the general's sworn affidavit was made public after each session.

CALL

In his affidavit, Cushman said that on July 7, 1971, Ehrlichman called him from the White House and said Hunt had been made a consultant on security matters. He said that Ehrlichman asked that the agency give Hunt some assistance.

"I knew that he (Ehrlichman) was one of the three chiefs of staff, as it were, to the president and that therefore he spoke with the authority of the President's name," Cushman said.

He said Hunt appeared in his office on July 22, 1971, and said he had "a very sensitive one-time interview that the White House wanted him to hold" but that he

dared not reveal his own identity.

UNREASONABLE

About a month after giving Hunt a wig and other disguise materials and various equipment and alias identification papers, the general said, he found that Hunt "was becoming more and more unreasonable and demanding" and going far beyond what seemed necessary for "a one-time interview."

At that point, Cushman said, he stopped "all relationships" with Hunt and so informed Ehrlichman.

Chairman Lucien N. Nedzi (Dem-Mich.), chairman of the House subcommittee, said he believed the significance of the testimony was that even after Cushman told Ehrlichman he questioned Hunt's judgment, Hunt remained as a White

House consultant. The Watergate break-in came nine months later when Hunt was an employee of the Committee for the Re-election of the President.