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STATINTL

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HELMS EXPLAINS LETTER

JOSEPH MCCAFFREY: "The CIA Director, Richard Helms, went before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee today and he explained his letter to the editor of that St. Louis newspaper, and then willingly discussed espionage areas that previously had been held back from that same committee.

"After the hearing, the Director and Senator Fulbright talked to reporters about the letter which praised an editorial that was highly critical of Senator Fulbright."

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HELMS: "I'm just simply saying that it was a mistake to sign this letter. I realize that it was a mistake which I regret and I've apologized."

NEWSMAN: "Mr. Chairman, are you satisfied with the CIA Director, Helms' testimony before your committee?"

FULBRIGHT: "I thought his statement was a very forthright and honest statement as he acknowledged that he made a mistake in signing this letter -- that he explained the circumstances, which I think are understandable. And on the whole, I think he did an excellent job of explaining a mistake which any of us might make."