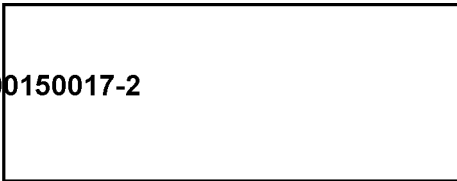


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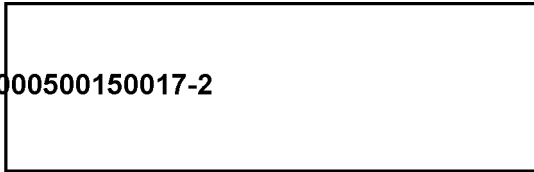
NEWSMAKERS

Saying the honor was "long overdue," President **Reagan** presented former CIA Director **Richard Helms**, 70, the National Security Medal—the country's highest award in the field. The prize marks the administration's rehabilitation of the former head spy, who left the government in disgrace six years ago after being fined by a federal court for misleading Congress about his agency's covert efforts to overthrow Chile's Marxist government. "I suppose it has something to do with the swing of the pendulum," said Helms, who is now a "political-risk consultant" on Middle East investments and has no remorse about his earlier career. "I have no feelings about vindication or exoneration," he added. "I pleaded nolo contendere; I was never accused of lying."



Greg Mathieson—Gamma-Liaison

Helms with medal: A spy is honored



At the Parties, Concern and Questions

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After a day of confusing cables, calls from perplexed constituents and sudden press conferences, after a day of denials and disbelief and "no further statements," Washingtonians lived up to their RSVPs last night and went out and kept talking about what they had been talking about all day. Grenada.

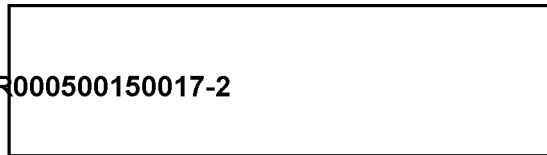
"I don't like it," said Nicaragua's ambassador to the Organization of American States, Edgard Parrales, while joining other envoys for ambassadors' night at the Washington International Horse Show.

"I think it was the right thing to do," former CIA chief Richard Helms said at a dinner given by Bangladesh's head of government.

This story was reported by staff writers Sarah Booth Conroy, Elizabeth Kastor and Phil McCombs.

"The Caribbean Basin countries took the lead and we provided the necessary muscle to do what they wanted to do."

EXCERPTED



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Helms, 'in Disgrace' as C.I.A. Chief, Gets a Medal

By FRANCIS X. CLINES

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Oct. 20 — Six years after he was pronounced "in disgrace and shame" by a Federal court, Richard Helms, former Director of Central Intelligence, was honored by President Reagan today with the National Security Medal.

The ceremony was shrouded from public display, but a brief White House announcement took note of the "exceptionally meritorious service" of Mr. Helms. The former Director pleaded no contest in 1977 to charges of failing to tell Congress the full truth about the Central Intelligence Agency's covert funneling of money to opponents of President Salvador Allende Gossens of Chile, who later lost his life when his Marxist Government was overthrown.

"I have to feel exonerated," Mr. Helms said in an interview in which, however, he still contended that his court troubles reflected this democracy's relentless "dilemma" over the temptation to operate covertly. "The intelligence community has no political constituency, you know," he said. "It's either protected by the President or not."

The White House occasion was taken as a signal of rehabilitation from Mr. Reagan for both Mr. Helms and the intelligence community since their darker time of post-Watergate scrutiny in the 1970's. But the event was not exactly a matter of Mr. Helms's coming in from the cold.

Condemned and Defended

For years he has been a subject of condemnation but spirited defense, too, from a cross section of Washington's ruling figures who still dispute whether there is any room to deal fully with the national principle of open debate.

"It's a grand tradition that has to be altered in specific cases," said Mr. Helms, hardly sounding bruised as "the man who kept the secrets." He said, "There's no way to try and get around it but to hide it."

Mr. Helms told a Congressional committee in 1973 that his agency had not funneled money to Chilean insurgents. Later testimony indicated that, in fact, more than \$8 million had been sent co-

vertly. After plea bargaining in the face of a sensitive national debate, Mr. Helms entered pleas of no contest to two misdemeanor charges of failing to testify fully and was given a suspended sentence of two years and a fine of \$2,000.

The fine was proudly paid by retired intelligence agents who passed around a wastebasket in lieu of a hat.

For Mr. Helms, the short walk today to the White House from his private business office on K Street, where he operates as a business and "political risk consultant" on Middle East investments, ended with a big grin. "It's a great pleasure," he said. "I suppose it has something to do with the swing of the pendulum."

Of his previous career, the 70-year-

old intelligence specialist said gently: "It's a dilemma for everyone, and you live with it," adding that his confrontation with Congress was merely "one of the hazards of working for the agency."

"You just be as much a gentleman as you can be," he said.

In opting to follow the code of his craft rather than the Congressional oath, Mr. Helms later insisted that he wore a "badge of honor." In sentencing him, Federal District Judge Barrington Parker had declared: "From this day forward, let there be no doubt: No one, whatever his position in or out of government, is above the law."

Mr. Helms waved his medal happily today as he stood in the drizzle outside the White House.

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Personalities

Former CIA director **Richard Helms** received the National Security Medal from **President Reagan** yesterday in a private White House ceremony attended by about 100 friends and members of the Helms family. Reagan pointed out that the medal, established by President Truman, is the country's highest award in the national security field. Helms has also received the William J. Donovan Medal and the CIA's highest award, the Distinguished Intelligence Medal.

Some of the guests at the Roosevelt Room presentation included Vice President **Bush**, Sens. **Barry Goldwater** and **Sam Nunn**, **Caspar Weinberger**, **S. Dillon** and **Mary Ripley**, **Edward Bennett** and **Agnes Williams**, **Clayton** and **Polly Fritchey**, **Edwin Meese**, **James Baker** and **Mike Deaver**...