

Rep. Pike Softens Position

Won't Disclose Data Without Acquiescence

By Stephen Isaacs

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The chairman of the House intelligence committee said yesterday that he has agreed not to make public any further intelligence materials without obtaining presidential acquiescence or a court order.

Rep. Otis Pike (D-N.Y.) has been negotiating with the White House over whether his committee will receive any more classified documents or will be able to question any witnesses it chooses to summon.

Pike said, however, that the public release issue was secondary to the question of access. "The real fight," he said, "is going to be on what information the Congress has in the first place."

"I don't discern any great progress on the subject of what will be available to the Congress," he said.

Questioned on the television program "Face the Nation" (CBS, WTOP), Pike said he has agreed to forgo making unilateral decisions about which materials to make public.

Instead, he said, he has told President Ford he will go along with withholding any documents about which the President certifies in writing that "the release of this language would jeopardize our national security."

"This would be without prejudice to our right to go into court to compel the production of the evidence," Pike said.

Under the compromise, he

said, the President would be unable to delegate his certification responsibilities to anybody else.

Pike said he was speaking for himself in the negotiations, saying, "I'm not speaking for the committee and I'm not speaking for the Congress."

The White House cut the committee off from further documents two weeks ago after the committee voted to declassify four words in a CIA document. The document disclosed that American intelligence agencies were "starkly wrong" about predicting the onset of the 1973 Arab-Israeli war.

CIA Director William Colby argued in vain for the committee to delete the four words

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that, he said, indicated too much about U.S. ability to monitor the electronics of other nations.

Pike said yesterday that he will push forward today with his attempt to have the House pass a resolution "which says that this information [further documents] is necessary, not just to our committee, but to the entire House of Representatives."

If that happens, he says, and the information the committee has asked for is not provided, he intends to move for a contempt-of-Congress citation.

"Who it will be addressed, to is a matter for the committee to decide," he said. "My personal recommendation at this time would be William Colby."

Pike also said he believes Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger is the moving force behind the administration's refusal to cooperate with his committee.

"He's trying," said Pike, "to get the Congress to agree to stationing 200 people out in the Sinai desert, and it doesn't really help in that political effort when we demonstrate that we haven't got any ability to predict a war out in the middle of the Sinai desert that we just failed completely with all of our sophisticated equipment to predict the war."

Pike said further that the committee has some, although not conclusive, evidence to



REP. OTIS PIKE
cites compromise

back up former CIA official Ray Cline's assertion that American intelligence analysis has broken down since Kissinger assumed control of the National Security Council.

"I think that this may be some of the embarrassment as opposed to the revelation of great secrets which has caused some motivation to stop us," Pike said.

Asked to assess American intelligence capabilities, he said:

"If an attack were to be launched on America in the very near future, it is my belief that America would not know that the attack were about to be launched."

The country, he said, has thousands of dedicated intelligence gatherers but, "above the gathering level, it just bogs down every single time. It is not absorbed, it is not delivered."

Later in the day, a CIA spokesman said that "Mr. Colby obviously disagrees with Chairman Pike's assertion that our country is open to surprise attack."