

Intelligence Oversight Unit Named

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By Lee Lescaze
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President Carter yesterday appointed new members to the White House panel that watches for improprieties in the intelligence community.

Thomas L. Farmer was named chairman of the Intelligence Oversight Board and former Tennessee Sen. Albert Gore and former Pennsylvania governor and U.N. ambassador William W. Scranton will be the other members, Carter announced.

The board was established by President Ford in February, 1976, just before the Senate voted to establish its own permanent committee to oversee the intelligence community.

The Ford appointees were chairman Robert D. Murphy, 82, Leo Cherne and Stephen Ailes.

In addition to naming a new oversight board, Carter announced the abolition of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, which was established in 1956 to monitor the quality of the intelligence community's product.

Carter said the board had been rendered redundant by the monitoring of intelligence now performed by the National Security Council, the intelligence community itself and the Senate Intelligence Committee.

The Intelligence Oversight Board reports directly to the President and is a channel through which any member of the intelligence community can report abuses without fear that his report will be suppressed by his superiors.

In addition, the board receives reports of irregularities from the inspector generals and general counsels in the intelligence community and can initiate inquiries into covert operations anywhere in the world.

Farmer, 53, said yesterday he has not discussed the board's role with Carter but has talked to Vice President Mondale. He said he is not bringing any specific ideas for changing the board's role to the job.

Farmer is a partner in the Washington law firm Prather, Seeger, Doolittle, Farmer and Ewing. He was a Central Intelligence Agency officer from 1951 to 1954 and has been general counsel of the Agency for International Development.

Farmer said he had not yet talked to his two fellow board members about their new assignment and that he is not sure how much time he will need to devote to the board. He guessed that it would take two or three days a week at first and less thereafter.

The White House press office did not respond yesterday to questions about how much Farmer and the other board members will be paid.