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JOINT STUDY MAPS MOVE TO REFORM INTELLIGENCE ARM

Aides of White House and
Senate Panel to Confer
on Drafting Legislation

CLOSED SESSION IS HELD

Attempt to Find Compromise
Is Sparked by a Desire to
Revise '47 Security Act

By NICHOLAS M. HORROCK

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 10—The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the Ford Administration have agreed to try to work out joint legislative proposals for the reform of the intelligence community, according to Senate and White House officials.

The plan to try to draw up legislation satisfactory to both the Senate and President Ford emerged during a series of private meetings among Senator Frank Church, Democrat of Idaho, who is chairman of the committee, Senator John G. Tower, the vice chairman; their key staff aides and senior White House officials last month and early this month. The plan has the approval of President Ford.

Series of Orders

It was one of the announcements at a top level White House meeting today on intelligence. The closed session, attended by the principals of the affected agencies, is the first time that the vast options for reform and reorganization

of United States intelligence operations were presented in one briefing for the top-level officials and the President.

A series of executive orders, some of which will remain secret, may follow shortly, senior White House officials said.

Joint sessions between officials of the executive branch and Congressional committees to prepare major legislative proposals are unusual and such a procedure has been mainly to deal only with the technical details of legislation.

'Divide and Confuse'

The House Select Committee on Intelligence refused to agree to a similar proposal for joint sessions. A. Searl Field, the committee's staff director, said the House committee wanted to prepare "its own proposals, independently, uncolored by influences of the executive branch."

Aaron Denner, the committee counsel, said the chairman, Representative Otis G. Pike, Democrat of Suffolk, told White House officials "there was no way, never," his committee would want to enter into such an agreement.

Some staff-level sources in both the House and the Senate were chary about the joint sessions. "If you start off with strong recommendations," one aide said, "these meetings will

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just give the intelligence community and the White House a chance to water them down to nothing."

Several sources said the White House had attempted to "divide and confuse" the committees in the report-recommendation stage of their work by these manipulations.

Senator Church characterized the arrangement as a "feeling out" of the extent of common ground between the committee and the Administration as one step down the road to reform.

"We reserve for the committee the right to propose reforms even though the White House may take a different view," he said. Senior White House officials said that the Ford Administration also "reserved" its rights to disagree with some of the committee's legislative proposals.

The joint work sessions, staff working with staff, will take place next month, according to committee sources. The suggestion for working together first came more than a month ago during a luncheon attended by Mitchell Rogovin, counsel to the Central Intelligence Agency, and William Miller, counsel of the Senate committee.

"It was pointless for the committee to put fourth a series of bill Mr. Ford would have to veto and for Mr. Ford to offer legislation Congress flatly couldn't live with," one source said.

But even joint work sessions may not be able to resolve the problems presented in reorganizing and reforming the intelligence community. The vast range of questions is underscored by the three-inch thick, white loose-leaf binder that each participant in the conference received today.

The meeting was attended by Vice President Rockefeller; Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger; Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld; William E. Colby, outgoing director of the C.I.A.; Gen. Brent Scowcroft, the President's national security adviser; Attorney General Edward H. Levi, and Gen. George S. Brown, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. This is the first time that the Joint Chiefs have been directly in-

involved in the planning to reshape the intelligence community.

In the year of investigations of the intelligence apparatus two clear motives in the inquiries have emerged. At first, the intelligence investigations were conceived of as merely an effort to halt abuses, such as the domestic spying by the C.I.A.

To Adjust the Role

But later, the Congressional committees and many in the Ford Administration saw the inquiries as an opportunity to reshape the entire intelligence role for the first time since the National Security Act was enacted in 1947. They have brought up to date reorganization plans begun by James R. Schlesinger Jr., when he was in the Office of Management and Budget, as early as 1971.

The reformers complain that the officials of the intelligence community—the C.I.A., the Defense Intelligence Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the National Security Agency and others—have seen the last year as merely a "damage control exercise" and have not faced the reality that President Ford and Congress plan to make permanent, fundamental changes in their operations.

Today's White House meeting was partly to "galvanize people into action," one source said.

Three separate positions must be coordinated in the next few weeks: those of Congress, the Ford Administration and the professional intelligence community.

Interviews with Congressional, intelligence and Administration officials disclosed several main areas of serious controversy. John E. Marsh-

counsel to President Ford, was designated to brief officials at today's meeting on such problems as the following:

¶The Senate committee has already prepared a proposal for Congressional oversight of intelligence that would require the President to inform Congress of covert activities and other highly sensitive moves before they are carried out. The present law requires only notification in a timely fashion afterward. Administration officials oppose this proposal as an encroachment on Presidential power since Congress could move to halt the action by making it public.

¶Members of Congress serving on the oversight committees, White House officials believe, would have an inordinate power over intelligence activities. If they did not like a program they would simply make it public and, thus, compromise it. Many in Congress believe that is the risk the Administration must accept because Congress is an equal branch of Government and as such is entitled to the information.

¶The intelligence agencies have urged new secrecy acts to prevent leakage of national security information. At present the only clearcut law covers some aspects of communications intelligence. The intelligence officials want some sort of "official secrets act" that would punish present and former government employees for leaking information. Possible sanctions against members of the news media that made the material public have also been suggested.

Some Congressional and intelligence officials have suggested that the Central Intelligence Agency or possibly a newly created separate agency be given responsibility for counterintelligence in this country and abroad. This system would be patterned on the British security apparatus and the F.B.I. would get out of the counterintelligence business. It would handle only cases in which prosecution is imminent. Supporters of the plan say it is "only logical" because the barriers to C.I.A. operations in the United States were set up for bureaucratic convenience in 1947.