

Senate Unit to Probe Charge Of CIA Link to JFK Slaying

The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Operations is planning an inquiry into persistent but never proved allegations of Central Intelligence Agency involvement in the assassination of President Kennedy.

According to informed sources, members of the committee's staff feel they cannot ignore the issue even if the prospect of settling it conclusively appears remote.

"I think its fair to say they are sniffing around on that right now," one source said. "But there's no formal investigation yet and I don't know if there will be."

Plans thus far apparently call only for a preliminary staff inquiry. Under the committee's rules, a full-dress investigation cannot be initiated without majority approval from the 11-member panel.

"We might just end up exonerating them (the CIA) on this one," another source said, "but that's all right. That's our business, too."

Recent allegations and disclosures concerning the CIA's domestic activities have encouraged a resurgence of charges that Kennedy was the victim of a conspiracy that involved the CIA in one way or another. A group headed by comedian Dick Gregory has asserted that E. Howard Hunt Jr. was picked up by the Dallas police near the scene of the 1963 assassination shortly after the shooting.

The Warren Commission, which investigated the assassination, said that Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone, was the President's assassin. One of the most persistent critics of the commission's findings, Ha-

rold Weisberg, said Wednesday that he doubted any inquiry by the Senate committee could prove productive, especially in the light of all the other work facing it.

"I feel they will never be able to get an answer," Weisberg said. "At the same time, I don't think they can avoid getting into it. I feel very sorry for them."