

Joint Oversight Panel Proposed by Kissinger

By Walter Pincus

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Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger yesterday brought his sharp criticisms of Congress to the Senate Government Operations Committee, which is seeking his views on future oversight of the intelligence community.

Kissinger suggested a joint House-Senate intelligence committee with tight security laws to protect secrets and permit public disclosure of information only with presidential "concurrence." However, he added that he hoped whatever was adopted would bring a rapid end to "the divisive debate over the intelligence community which has been so harmful over the past year."

He wrapped his reform package proposals in a running series of complaints about congressional leaks, "official publication of highly classified material," members of Congress "levying unsubstantiated charges and personal attacks against the executive," the House intelligence committee and lack of congressional leadership.

This lack, he said, makes it "very difficult now to know who to consult and how to build congressional support" and means "there is not one group of leaders that can reliably report what the sentiment in Congress is."

Congressional relations, Kissinger said, "is the most preoccupying problem I have now." He added: "it will not

be solved by Congress rubberstamping the executive."

In another development, Sen. Frank Church (D-Idaho), chairman of the Senate intelligence committee, urged appointment of a new special prosecutor to investigate and, if necessary, prosecute past unlawful activities by the CIA and FBI.

In a Senate speech, Church listed a variety of incidents that have been publicized by his committee and the Rockefeller Commission.

Among them, Church said, were the FBI's "cointelpro" program to disrupt domestic black student and antiwar groups; the FBI campaign against Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.; CIA mail openings; National Security Agency interception of overseas cables of Americans, and the "possibility of perjury by intelligence officers."

Church argued that the Justice Department, the FBI and the CIA have had special relationships that make both the appearance and actuality of impartiality impossible.

Kissinger conceded that "the executive has to change" from its past dealings with Congress, but argued that if Congress turns into "one great investigation into motives, it may achieve purity but may also achieve paralysis" of the government.

At one point, after decrying lack of congressional leadership, Kissinger suggested that "some limit" ought to be placed on charges made against the executive.

He suggested that legislators should not be allowed to accuse individuals of "deliberately misleading the President" or "deliberately misleading Congress" — two charges that recently have been leveled against him.

Kissinger said that through unauthorized disclosures "we have deprived ourselves of covert activities at this time." Kissinger said "as a practical matter" notice of a covert operation "would be ahead of its implementation," but he did not want that written into the law.

On Angola, Kissinger's complaint against alleged congressional disclosure of that covert operation was not the breaking of secrecy, since it was in a "gray area," but that "the manner in which it became public complicated the way it was handled." The critics' views rather than the administration's came out first.

Kissinger told the senators that the President is considering, among his reforms, strengthening the inspectors general of the various intelligence agencies and "giving them a body to which they can report directly" outside their own organizations.

The secretary refused to say whether he favored that idea because "it would show how little my influence is felt" should his view be rejected.

Kissinger was firm, however, in saying a new congressional oversight committee should deal primarily with heads of agencies. If it had access to lower-level personnel, Kissinger said, it would open the way for "soreheads."

One major fight between the House intelligence committee and Kissinger centered on the committee's desire to take testimony from lower-echelon State Department officers.