

Big Shakeup in U.S. Intelligence

NYT AND TRANSCRIPT OF FORD
PRESS CONFERENCE FILED CIA (D)-
WXP FILED FORD AD

Washington

President Ford last night announced the most sweeping reform and reorganization of United States intelligence agencies since 1947.

His proposal included strong new powers for the Director of Central Intelligence, apparatus for improved oversight by the executive branch, and curtailment of covert operations abroad.

In a two-page statement read at the opening of a news conference, Mr. Ford said that he is appointing a new committee, with CIA Director George Bush as chairman, to conduct the "management of intelligence." It is expected to have the power to prepare the budget for intelligence agencies and to allocate their resources, White House sources said earlier.

Mr. Ford said he is creating a three-man "independent oversight board" to "monitor the performance of our intelligence operations."

He said the members would be Robert D. Murphy, former under secretary of state who recently directed a study of the country's intelligence system; Stephen Ailes, secretary of the army in the Johnson administration, and Leo Cherne, a well-known publisher of business books and leader of private movements to help rescue persons from totalitarian nations.

Creation of the overnight panel for the executive branch will have no effect on the authority of Congress to oversee intelligence activities and spending.

Mr. Ford said he is also centralizing "over-all policy directions for intelligence" in the National Security Council, which consists of the President, vice president, and the secretaries of state and defense.

The action amounted to a strengthening of the chain of command created by the National Security Act of 1947.

Mr. Ford explained under questioning that the "40 Committee," which has been a section of the National Security Council that for a decade controlled covert operations, would be renamed and reorganized. He did not tell newsmen its new title but said it would now be made up of:

Lieutenant General Brent Scowcroft, his assistant for national security affairs Donald H. Rumsfeld, secretary of defense; Henry A. Kissinger, secretary of state; Bush, and a representative of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Mr. Ford said that the new committee would have two "observers," Attorney General Edward Levi and Richard T. Lynn, director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Mr. Ford said that "to improve the performance of the intelligence agencies and to restore public confidence in them" he is issuing a "comprehensive set of public guidelines which will serve as legally binding charters for our intelligence agencies." He said the charters would provide "stringent protections for the rights of American citizens."

In his statement, Mr. Ford did not enumerate the details of the charters, but White House sources said they would include strong proscriptions against domestic surveillance operations by the CIA, limitations on covert operations abroad, and regulations to prohibit violations of civil rights by any

Back Page Col. 6

From Page 1

federal intelligence gathering agency.

Mr. Ford's creation of an intelligence committee and an oversight board and his "charters" for the various agencies do not require legislation, White House sources said.

He will seek a law to firm up protection against the leaking of government secrets.

He said that today he plans to send to Congress "special legislation to safeguard critical intelligence secrets."

"This legislation would make it a crime for a government employee who has access to certain highly classified information to reveal that information improperly." Mr. Ford did not make clear in the statement whether this would cover former employees with secret knowledge, but White House aides said that it would.

Mr. Ford's statement was the "bare bones" of a wide range of orders and administrative actions, some public, and some private which will take place shortly, one key White House source said.

Mr. Ford's statement carried the tone of strong support for the CIA and the other intelligence agencies and began with sharp criticism of leaks of information.

"For over a year, the nation has engaged in exhaustive investigations into the activity of the CIA and other intelligence units, facts, hearsay and closely-held secrets—all have been spread out on the public record," he said.

Mr. Ford again voiced his concern over the abuses that the investigations of the intelligence community have disclosed, but again pledged that "I will not be a party to the dismantling of the CIA and the other intelligence agencies."

Mr. Ford went before news reporters with his plan some two hours after briefing congressional leaders. He said that he would meet with congressional leaders again to map out legislation to "provide judicial safeguards against electronic surveillance and mail openings."

From the standpoint of protecting against intelligence agency abuses, Mr. Ford's most important step may be the setting up of the oversight board. As it is conceived of by administration officials, it would have the power to monitor all intelligence activities and would receive reports directly from the inspector generals of the various agencies. If it saw a particular abuse, these sources said, it could recommend disciplinary action or prosecution to the attorney general.

Bush will head a three-man committee made up of William Hyland, of the NSC and Robert Ellsworth, an assistant secretary of defense for intelligence that will formulate the budget for the intelligence community and allocate its resources.

New York Times