

Tiny Listening Device Is Found In House Panel Meeting Room

NYTimes

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Feb. 15—The chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee said today that a tiny, "sophisticated" listening device had been found in the committee's main hearing room.

But neither the chairman, Thomas E. Morgan, Democrat of Pennsylvania, nor anyone else had any ready explanation how the self-contained electronic transmitter got there.

The transmitter, measuring 4 inches long, 1 3/4 inches wide and 3/4 of an inch deep, was discovered on Monday in plain view atop a press table in the hearing room.

Mr. Morgan said, in a statement issued by the committee staff, that the device was first thought to be a telephone paging "bellboy" of a type commonly used by Government officials and journalists to alert them to call their offices.

State Department Role

The committee staff, assuming the device had been left behind by an aide to William P. Rogers, the Secretary of State, when Mr. Rogers testified before the committee a week ago, turned it over to the department's security office.

The State Department returned it on Tuesday after determining, Mr. Morgan said, that it was "a sophisticated transmitter with self-contained microphone and batteries."

Mr. Morgan said that the instrument had been turned over to the Federal Bureau of Investigation Tuesday night and that, at his request, the bureau had searched the com-

mittee's offices yesterday but failed to find "any other devices."

An F.B.I. spokesman said today that the agency was "looking into this to see if there is any possibility of a Federal law violation."

So far, however, no apparent motivation for leaving the transmitter in the committee room has been determined and no one has come forward to claim ownership of the device.

Not TV Transmitter

Officials of the three commercial television networks said that the description of the transmitter did not match the wireless microphones that their correspondents occasionally use.

"We're making a cursory check," said Frank Jordan, the Washington bureau chief of the National Broadcasting Company, "but from the description it couldn't be one of ours."

Clyde Wallace, who sells electronic equipment at a downtown Washington store, the Spy Shop, said that there could be legitimate reasons for someone to own such a transmitter.

Stock brokers use similar devices, Mr. Wallace said, to keep a record of hectic transactions on the stock exchange.

Priests use them, he added, to transmit prayers from the altar to the public address system and thus to parishioners in a church.

The common assumption on Capitol Hill was that a budding, but perhaps careless, undercover agent had misplaced the transmitter.