

'Little Justification' for Taps, Says Committee

Washington

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee said yesterday it found "very little, if any justification" for the White House-sanctioned wiretapping on the phones of four newsmen and 13 officials from 1969 to 1971.

In a formal report to the Senate recommending the confirmation of Henry A. Kissinger as secretary of state — the vote set for today — the committee harshly criticized the wiretapping.

President Nixon has defended it as necessary to find the source of leaks of sensitive national security information.

GROUNDS

The committee repeated that, in examining the wiretapping record, it found no grounds to bar Kissinger as secretary of state.

It added:

"The committee was deeply concerned, however, over the pattern of casual and arbitrary infringement of individual rights which

this inquiry brought to light."

Kissinger had testified before the committee that his only role in the wiretapping was to provide the names of individuals who had access to information that had been leaked to the press.

The actual wiretapping was carried out by the FBI, with the approval of then Attorney General John N. Mitchell.

REPORT

The committee was permitted to study an FBI report on the wiretaps, but it decided not to make public any of the details of the wiretapping, such as the names of those under surveillance.

These names, however, have appeared in the press, and some of them seemed to have little connection with national security matters.

"Examination of the FBI report on these wiretaps revealed that very little, if any, justification was presented in most instances, and that the attorney gener-

al's review was routine," the report said.

"At the time of the surveillance in question, adequate standards of probable cause were not applied and adequate procedural safeguards with respect to authorizing and terminating the taps were not observed," it said.

The committee, noting that it had decided on Tuesday to launch a study of wiretapping, said it "intends to keep this matter under review to insure that neither officers or employees of the Department of State, the National Security Council, or any other agency, nor private citizens are subjected to the treatment to which officers of the Department of State and the NSC and members of the press were exposed during the recent past and to see what can be done to make sure that under cover of 'national security,' surveillance does not take place which is not related to a bona fide national security situation."

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