

Senate Panel on Spying Accepts Compromise on Top Secret Data

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WASHINGTON, April 16—The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence has agreed to accept some top secret material from the White House with deletions of certain paragraphs, and in other cases has agreed to limit the distribution to protect national security, several congressional sources have confirmed.

In general, these sources said, the "degree" of cooperation between the investigating committee and the White House appears to have improved.

Senator Frank Church, the committee's chairman, publicly confirmed after the committee's weekly meeting today that the White House had furnished the committee the report of William E. Colby, the Director of Central Intelligence, and all but three of "several hundred" Presidential directives Mr. Church said he had asked for.

The Idaho Democrat added that a method was being worked out to handle certain portions of the remaining documents so that the committee could be fully informed. Congress will delete certain paragraphs or sentences and paraphrase their substance.

Position Softened

The compromise appeared to soften the committee's earlier position that it could demand and receive documents from the executive branch undeleted or unfettered by conditions.

In other cases, the white House has been assured the committee will not make certain matters public, the sources said.

Senator Church said that he had read the report by Mr. Colby and that he "didn't find it all that remarkable." He said it was merely a starting point for his committee's investigation.

The Senate committee is one of two panels—the other is a House special committee—that are making broad studies of the United States intelligence community, particularly the Central Intelligence Agency.

The Senate committee began trying a month ago to obtain all the directives issued by the President that set up the C.I.A. and gave its operations a legal

base. Last week, Senator Church said his committee had only received the less sensitive portions of this material, but he indicated today that most of the documents had been forthcoming.

Clifford's Testimony

During the three-hour meeting today, the committee heard testimony from former Secretary of Defense Clark Clifford, who had been deeply involved in American intelligence operations under Presidents Truman and Johnson. Mr. Clifford was one of a select group of men who worked on the drafting of the legislation in 1946 that led to the creation of the C.I.A. Yesterday, Mr. Clifford told reporters he recommended that the committee back new legislation to control the intelligence community, a strong Congressional oversight committee and better control of intelligence activities within the White House and the executive branch.

Mr. Clifford said that the National Security Act of 1947 instructed the C.I.A. to conduct all operations that the National Security Council might instruct it to carry out and that his broad mandate had been the base for covert actions. He suggested that this was the area that new legislation might want to tighten.

Mr. Clifford, who was Secretary of Defense in 1968, said the kinds of operations, presumably such things as the secret war in Laos and the undermining of the Allende Government in Chile, were not contemplated by the drafters of the 1947 law nor by the Congress that voted for it.

Mr. Clifford noted that he never heard any discussion of assassinations of foreign political leaders, either during his service under Truman or President Johnson. "There is no merit to that charge," he said.