

# Senate Try to Stifle Assassination Story

Washington

Democratic leaders in the Senate prevented the full Senate from voting yesterday on whether to make public the Senate intelligence committee's report on political assassinations, according to several members who attended the unusual closed session of the Senate.

At the end of the four-hour session, the report was released by vote of the committee anyway — an action that angered many Republican senators.

Informed senators said the leadership did not want a vote on the issue because support for releasing the document would not have been overwhelming.

Senator Frank Church (Dem-Ida.), chairman of the committee, was said to believe that a narrow vote in favor of publishing the document might have weakened its impact.

The vote would have been close, according to informants, because many senators would not have voted to publish a report they had not read.

The document was not made available to senators until the session began yesterday morning.

After the doors to the Senate were opened yesterday afternoon, a dozen senators took the floor to denounce publicly the decision not to vote on the issue.

Senator John Tower (Rep-Tex.), the committee's vice chairman, declared that he had disassociated himself from the report because of the Senate's failure to vote to adopt it.

President Ford argued strenuously that the report should not be made public. He contended that its publication might endanger U.S. intelligence operations. Wednesday, William E. Colby, director of the Central Intelligence Agency, held a news conference to appeal to the committee not to publish the names of 12 individuals.

The committee rejected the appeal.

Senator Robert Byrd (Dem-Va.), the assistant Democratic leader, said after the session that he objected on two grounds to a vote on whether to publish the report.

First, he said, it was unfair to require senators to vote to release a document they had not read.

Second, he declared, the Senate had delegated to the committee the responsibility for making a report, and a vote yesterday would have been demeaning to the committee.

At a news conference yesterday afternoon Church defended the publication of the report. He declared:

"There may be temporary injury. But I believe the countries of the world will recognize that our willingness to examine our past and seek a better future openly, without flinching, is an indication of the greatness of our country. Our nation is admired in proportion to the openness of our society. Withholding this report from the public would more closely resemble the practices of totalitarian regimes."

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