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# House Moves Against Schorr Raise the Issue of Freedom of the Press

By MARTIN ARNOLD

A demand was made in the House of Representatives yesterday that the Congressional press credentials of a television news reporter be revoked because he leaked a secret Congressional report to The Village Voice.

At the s maetime, the Justice Department was studying whether the reporter, Daniel Schorr of CBS News, his news source and The Village Voice had violated Federal espionage law in leaking the report, on the ground that the leak allegedly compromised American intelligence message codes.

If the House conducts a full investigation it will be the first formal investigation of a reporter in more than 100 years.

If the Justice Department decides to prosecute it will raise again many of the issues, including First Amendment issues, that were raised in the case of Daniel Ellsberg and the Pentagon papers.

Whatever happens legally, the case has already raised some ethical questions for the press.

Mr. Schorr has acknowledged that he provided the Congressional report to The Village Voice. In its Feb. 16 issue The Voice printed a 24-page supplement of excerpts from the report entitled, "The Report On The C.I.A. That President Ford Doesn't Want You To Read." In its Feb. 23 issue The Voice printed a special 10-page section headed, "How Ford, Kissinger and the C.I.A. Obstructed the House Probe."

On Jan. 30, the House had voted to ban publication of the report until it had been censored of information in it that was still classified. Mr. Schorr obtained a copy of the report and used information from it in reporting for CBS-TV and radio.

When the House voted to keep the report secret, Mr. Schorr, has said, he realized that he might have the only copy of it outside the Government. "I could not be the one responsible for supressing the report," he said, in explaining why he made it available to The Voice.

Yesterday, Represeitative Nilliam F. Walsh, Republican of New York, asked that Mr. Schorr's Congressional press credentials be revoked for what he called the reporter's "contemptible act" in leaking the report. Without such credentials Mr. Schorr would be unable to cover Congress from the press galleries because of an action that some legal experts feel would in itself be in violation of the First Amendment guaranteeing freedom of the press.

Mr. Walsh, in a letter to House Speaker Carl Albert and to Senator Howard W. Cannon, Democrat of Nevada, chairman of the Senate Rules Committee, said that Mr. Schorr "overstepped the bounds of a free press and has violated the code of ethics observed by all professional journalists." Mr. Cannon said that he should have his credentials withdrawn, rather than be held on contempt of Congress, because Mr. Schorr "would only ear the contempt citation like a medal of honor."

On Thursday Representative Samuel S. Stratton, Democrat of New York, introduced a resolution calling on the House's ethics committee to investigate the leak of the report. The resolution passed by a vite of 269 to 115, and hearings were scheduled for next Tuesday.

The First Amendment issues involved in the attack on Mr. Schorr have been obscured by the fact that Mr. Schorr's first idea was to publish the report in book form. Since, he said, he did not want to make any profit on what he conceived to be his journalistic duty, he offered to turn over any profits received from publication of the full Congressional report to the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press. The committee agreed to accept the money—so far there has been no cash involved—if no strings were attached to it.

But the book publisher apparently wanted to print the Congressional report in book form, so Mr. Schorr offered it to the newspapers. Only The Voice, however, agreed to print it, so that is the paper he gave it to.

This led to attacks on both Mr. Schorr and the committee, the latest one being in a column in The Washington Post by Charles B. Seib in which Mr. Seib says that Mr. Schorr should have recognized that "the dollar sign is a danger in journalism."

Mr. Seib saw the issue as one of "the buying or selling of news" rather than the constitutional one involving the efforts of Congress and perhaps the Justice Department to prosecute a reporter for reporting. Yesterday the reporters' committee would only say that it was putting together a "detailed chronology" of its involvement in the case, and that this would be made available when it was completed.

Mr. Schorr said yesterday that he believed the Congressional anger over his leaking the report was because of what he called "the secrecy backlash."

He said he was "disappointed in not being able to convey to other journalists the idea that we—all journalists—are engaged in the same battle for press freedom."

"If they can hold me in contempt," he went on, "or have me charged with a crime, then they can get any reporter next week. That's the real issue, in all this."

In 1848, the Senate cited a reporter named John Nugent for publishing a treaty before the Senate had held secret harings on it, and in 1870 a New York Evening Post reporter, W. Scott Smith, was cited for contempt of Congress for writing that a Nevada Congressman, Thomas Fitch, might have accepted a bribe.

Mr. Schorr's employer, CBS, announced yesterday that Mr. Schorr had been taken off the intellgence asignment, not as a disciplinary action, but because of the network's policy of not having a reporter cover a matter that he is actually involved in—as Mr. Schorr is in this.

CBS said that it was supporting Mr. Schorr's right not to reveal the source that gave him the report in the first place, and it was supporting his use of the report for reports that were used by CBS radio and television. It was not saying, however, what support it would give Mr. Schorr over material that apepared in The Village Voice.