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New Intelligence Panel OKd

Washington

The Senate Government Operations Committee voted 12 to 0 yesterday to establish a new committee to oversee intelligence activities.

The committee also approved tough, new procedures to investigate senators or staff members suspected of leaking information about secret intelligence activities.

A provision permitting a majority of the Senate to disclose classified information over the objection of the President was also approved. President Ford has strongly opposed this provision.

The new disclosure provision requires the Senate Ethics Committee to

investigate an alleged disclosure of intelligence information at the request of five members of the new 11-man intelligence committee, or of 16 members of the Senate.

If the Ethics Committee determines "there has been a significant breach of confidentiality or unauthorized disclosure" by a senator, it can recommend censure, removal from committee membership or expulsion from the Senate. The committee could recommend that a staff member be fired.

The Government Operations Committee will ask that these provisions be made applicable to all Senate committees that handle intelligence information.

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