

House Red Hunters Defend 1971 Probes

WASHINGTON (AP) — House subversive-seekers summarized and defended their past year's probes in a 55,000-word report today that a critic claimed contains "thousands of totally unsubstantiated libels."

The House Internal Security Committee claimed credit for publicizing what it termed Communist organizational influence in antiwar demonstrations.

"In the future, one has reason to believe, fewer innocent citizens will swell the ranks of mass outpourings concocted by our Communist enemies," wrote Rep. Richard H. Ichord, D-Mo., committee chairman.

While Students for a Democratic Society and the Black Panther Party are withering since committee probes in 1969 and 1970, Ichord added, development of the pro-Maoist Revolutionary Union which the panel investigated last year shows "the birth of revolutionary groups is constantly recurring and requires our eternal vigilance."

But Rep. Robert F. Drinan, D-Mass., in dissent, said the report sets forth "grossly irresponsible libels upon the groups which led last May's Washington peace demonstrations, the National Peace Action Coalition and the People's Coalition for Peace and Justice, and upon the peace movement in general."

The peace-group hearings and this part of the report, he added in a 6½-page general attack on the committee and its activities, "make a mockery of the 1st, 4th and 9th amendments to the Constitution and, in my judgment, disgrace the House of Representatives."

Ichord called Drinan's position a diatribe and said it is "apparently consistent with the intent of Congressman Drinan to collapse the committee from within."

In a separate five-page minority view, the committee's four Republicans—John M. Ashbrook of Ohio, Roger H. Zion of Indiana, Fletcher Thompson of Georgia and John G. Schmitz of California—expressed support for Ichord.

"The minority is keenly conscious of the heavy burden borne by the chair (Ichord) as this committee is confronted from many quarters by a well-organized, highly vocal minority of professional antagonists who now scout from an advanced observation post of harassment within our very periphery," they wrote.

The current committee, formerly known as the House Un-American Activities Committee, is "in no respect . . . any less dangerous or wasteful today than it was 20 years ago," Drinan said.