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Senators Propose New Panel To Oversee Intelligence Units

By Laurence Stern

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A bipartisan campaign was launched on Capitol Hill yesterday to tighten congressional policing power over the entire U.S. intelligence community.

It was announced by Sens. Howard H. Baker Jr. (R-Tenn.) and Lowell P. Weicker (R-Conn.), both veterans of the Senate Watergate investigation, which abounded in domestic applications of classic foreign espionage techniques.

With co-sponsorship by senators from both parties, Baker and Weicker introduced legislation to establish a 14-member congressional oversight committee for all federal agencies with intelligence functions. It would cover not only the Central Intelligence Agency but also the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Secret Service, Defense Intelligence Agency and National Security Agency.

As Weicker and Baker were outlining their new legislative proposal, Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger, in another hearing room, was defending the CIA's covert programs against the late Chilean President Salvador Allende.

Kissinger told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that Allende, after his election in 1970, was moving toward establishment of a "one-party government" and seeking "to throttle all the opposition parties and the opposition press." This was essentially the justification cited by President Ford at his Tuesday night press conference for covert U.S. activities against Allende.

During the three years of Allende's government all opposition parties and news media continued to function. The military junta that seized power on Sept. 11, 1973, banned all political parties, closed the legislature and shut down all opposition news media.

Kissinger's remarks at the Foreign Relations hearing on detente were prompted by efforts on the part of Sen. Frank Church to inject the issue of U.S. efforts to undermine the Allende government into the hearing.



Associated Press

Senators Baker and Weicker describe bill tightening reins on intelligence groups.

The Idaho Democrat asked the Secretary of State how the policy toward Chile could "be squared with our traditional values of the right of self-determination for other people." He also described the policy of CIA actions in Chile as "one of unfettered intervention... designed to destabilize a government that had been freely elected."

Church was interrupted by chairman J. W. Fulbright (D-Ark.), a lame duck who has been prominently mentioned as the administration's choice for ambassador

to Britain. Fulbright protested that Church's question "has nothing to do with detente, which is the subject of this committee hearing."

Church replied that detente had "a hollow ring" when applied to countries, such as Chile, where the United States was engaged in "unfettered intervention."

Chile and covert operations were also the subject of a 90-minute White House meeting yesterday morning between Mr. Ford, Kissinger and congressional leaders, including the chairmen and ranking Republicans on the House and Senate Armed Service committees who ostensibly oversee CIA operations.

The White House gave no details of the closed meeting. Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.) told reporters that there was little enthusiasm at the White House session for establishment of a joint intelligence oversight committee, such as he has proposed repeatedly with no success. A joint committee would dilute whatever influence the Armed Services chairmen hold as intelligence overseers and they have successfully blocked its creation in the past.

One major theme of the meeting, it was learned from reliably informed sources, was to deplore the leak of CIA Director William E. Colby's testimony to

a House subcommittee detailing for the first time last April the authorization of some \$11 million in U.S. covert action funds against Allende over an 11-year period.

The gist of Colby's testimony surfaced in the press two weeks ago, based on letters sent by Rep. Michael Harrington (D-Mass.) to the chairman of the House and Senate Foreign Relations Committees calling for further investigation of the intervention in Chile.

It was the Harrington letter that precipitated the current public controversy over covert CIA operations in Chile and elsewhere.

The White House characterized the morning session as a "full and frank" discussion of CIA covert activities in Chile and other countries. Actign press secretary John W. Hushen gave no further details. Two participants said the meeting was confined chiefly to the administration's justification of the CIA role in Chile.

In announcing the introduction of their bill for a joint intelligence oversight committee, Weicker and Baker said the proposed panel would pass on authorization of funds for all intelligence functions and would be armed with subpoena power.

Asked why the two senators consider the prospects for the new bill better than similar unsuccessful efforts in the past, Baker pointed-

ly noted that it would bypass the previously unfriendly Armed Services Committees and go, instead, to the Senate Government Operations Committee. Sen. Sam J. Ervin (D-N.C.), another veteran of the Watergate inquiry, is chairman of that committee and Sen. Charles H. Percy of Illinois is ranking Republican.

Both Baker and Weicker said they disagreed with President Ford's defense Tuesday night of covert activities by the United States on grounds that other countries carry out similar programs.

"It was not in the best interests of the United States," Baker said. It would have been much better, he added, if President Ford had said that the covert actions were carried out "by a previous administration."

At the start of yesterday's round of events, Church told a breakfast meeting of newsmen that "this intelligence craft surfaces only on rare occasions. Once it surfaces, we must board it quickly or we will lose the opportunity."

The effort to board the craft began within an hour in the form of the Weicker-Baker measure.

At a meeting of the Senate Democratic Caucus yesterday Kissinger was challenged on the CIA's policies in Chile by Senators Walter F. Mondale (D-Minn.) and James Abourezk (D-S. D.).