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That Probe of CIA-FBI Scandals



Jack Anderson

THE SELECT Senate committee, which is investigating the CIA and FBI, has imposed airtight security on its operations. We have learned, nevertheless, that the committee has been riven by dissent, has hired few real investigators and has scarcely scratched the surface of the CIA-FBI scandals.

So serious is the situation that a responsible senior committee worker has composed an explicit memo for us on the problems

Chairman Frank Church (Dem-Ida.) "is under a delusion he will be able to conclude the probe within the next few months," declares the handwritten report. "He lacks investigative staff to do it and has no way of knowing if the preliminary information given is either accurate or complete.

"If it is not, it means the committee will have to start from scratch again, with competent investigators to find out what the true facts are."

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THE MEMO complains that the committee has virtually ignored the military and anti-drug agencies it also is supposed to investigate. "The main preliminary work done so far has been in reference to the FBI and CIA with virtually nothing else being done concerning the rest of the committee mandate," states the memo

At "virtually every step of the almost nonexistent investigation," it concludes, "Church has bent over backward to please the CIA."

Church is one of the most able, conscientious members of the Senate. But we have confirmed, at least, that some of his committee colleagues have complained to their staffs that Church, in his zeal to be fair-minded, has sided most often with the under-the-rug views of Senators Barry Goldwater (Rep-Ariz.) and John Tower (Rep-Tex.)

They have taken a stern stand against the senators who favor an open as possible probe. Those who can be counted in this category are Senators Howard Baker (Rep-Tenn.), Gary Hart (Dem-Colo.), Phil Hart, (Dem-Mich.), Walter Mondale (Dem-Minn.) and Richard Schweiker (Rep-Pa.)

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FRIENDS of the committee have insisted to us that sweetness, light and unanimity have prevailed in the secret sessions. But this ambience apparently can be attributed to the traditional Senate civility

At one tightly closed meeting, for example, Senator Robert Morgan (Dem-N.C.) strongly urged that any details of CIA assassination plots should be kept from the American public, our sources report. Another source said Morgan, after speaking about the assassinations, left it up in the air whether the facts should be suppressed.

There have been complaints that Church and Tower confer secretly on a wide range of subjects with the CIA but don't fully share their information with other senators.

(Written with Les Whitten)