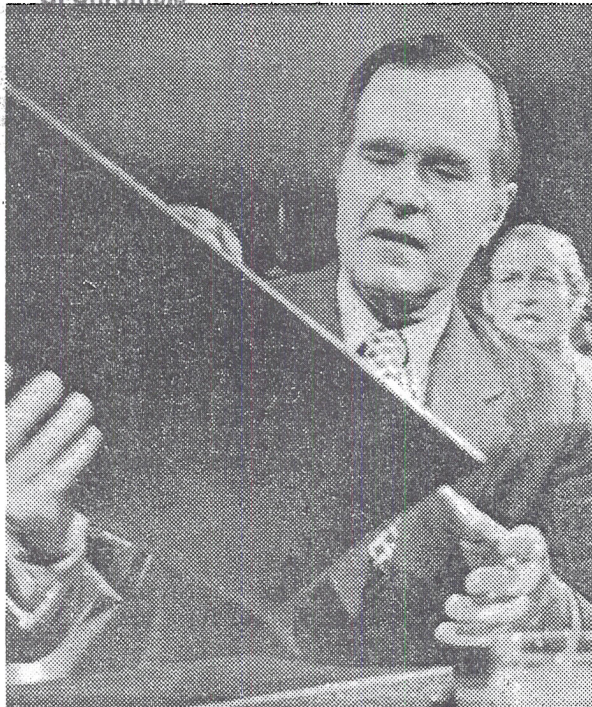


WXP filed Ford Ad.



AP Wirephoto

GEORGE BUSH BEFORE THE HEARING OPENED
He described some abuses as "morally offensive"

Senate Hearing

Bush Won't Preclude Covert CIA Plotting

Washington

George Bush, nominated to head the Central Intelligence Agency, said yesterday he cannot rule out future covert political action or paramilitary operations by the CIA should he become the agency's director.

He said he hasn't been briefed on current CIA aid to anti-communist factions in the former Portuguese colony of Angola but "cannot preclude" that in some cases the United States would be justified in providing arms and money as it is now said to be doing in Angola.

Bush, a former Republican national chairman, also said he cannot "in all honesty" promise to refuse an offer of the GOP vice presidential nomination in order to assure his confirmation as CIA head.

Bush, currently the official U.S. representative to the People's Republic of China, appeared before the Senate Armed Services Committee, which is considering his nomination.

He said that he believes presidents should be completely informed of all CIA activities. He added that he does understand the need for "plausible deniability" should a need exist for the United States not to acknowledge certain covert activities.

He said he believes that some of the abuses committed by the CIA in the past were "outrageous and morally offensive." A presidential order to assassinate a foreign leader would be one issue on which he would be forced to resign if he did not succeed in changing the president's mind, he said.

Some senators have said they believe Bush's background as a political candidate, the head of a major political party and as a four-term member of the House to be a serious handicap at a time when the CIA is under heavy pressure for allegedly having yielded to political influence.

Senator Frank Church (Dem.-Idaho), chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee investigating the CIA, opposes the Bush nomination. Church, whose political career, some say, has been furthered by his own committee's investigation of the CIA, will probably be a candidate for president. Church said last week he is prepared to resign as chairman of the committee if he decides to seek the 1976 Democratic presidential nomination.

Other senators have said that they can see no obstacle to Bush's speedy approval by the committee and confirmation by the Senate.

Bush promised that he will not permit anyone to promote his name for consideration as vice president as long as he is at the CIA and will himself take no role in politics whatsoever.

"I will not permit the CIA to become politicized," Bush said.

He said it might actually be an advantage to have someone at the CIA with political experience in the larger sense.

Such a person might have been able to steer the agency clear of the sort of abuses that any politician knows are offensive to American society, Bush said.

Associated Press