

GOP Asks Wider Bugging Probe Role

Senators Seek Impartiality

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Senate Republicans demanded a larger role yesterday in the proposed Senate investigation of the Watergate bugging case and allegations of political spying.

Sen. John Tower (R-Texas), chairman of the Senate Republican Policy Committee, said his party wanted to offer amendments to a resolution calling for the probe "to make sure that the investigation proceeds in an impartial and objective manner."

The resolution, by Sen. Sam J. Ervin (D-N.C.), calls for an investigation by a five-member select committee. The Senate began considering it yesterday and is expected to take up the proposed amendments today.

Sen. Tower indicated that the Republicans want to insure that the minority party has its own separate staff for the proposed investigative commission. In addition, he said that some Republican senators have voiced concern over the broad subpoena power that the resolution would grant the special committee.

"We don't want a narrow, partisan witch hunt," Tower said.

As drafted by Ervin, the resolution would grant the committee the power to subpoena some of President Nixon's closest aides.

The Democratic majority leadership has selected Ervin to head the select com-

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mittee. Ervin, a conservative Southern Democrat of relatively nonpartisan reputation, said on the Senate floor yesterday, "I shall not participate in any witch hunts."

Ervin has asked for \$500,000 to investigate the Watergate bugging incident and numerous charges of political spying and sabotage conducted against Democrats by the President's re-election committee.

As Republicans moved yesterday to offer amendments to the resolution, it was unclear what role the White House was playing, if any.

Sen. Tower told reporters yesterday that the Ervin resolution was the "principal" topic of discussion at a luncheon of the 15-member Policy Committee yesterday.

He said the group took no official position on the Ervin resolution.

At a White House Republican leadership meeting yesterday morning, Tower said, President Nixon did "not mention" the proposed Ervin investigation.

Tower also said flatly that the White House has "no official" position on the investigation. Asked if the White House had an "unofficial" position, Tower declined to answer, and smiled as he turned away the question.

Federal sources have said that the FBI established that an elaborate campaign

of political spying and sabotage was conceived in the White House against the major Democratic presidential contenders during 1971 and 1972.

According to these sources, Dwight L. Chapin, the President's appointments secretary who announced his resignation last week, has been implicated in the spying operation and Herbert W. Klambach, the President's personal attorney, helped finance it.

While speaking on behalf of his proposed resolution yesterday, Sen. Ervin offered several amendments to it that he said were essentially "housekeeping" to insure the financial procedures conformed with Senate rules.

One Ervin amendment would give the ranking Republican member of the select committee the power to obtain investigative information directly from government agencies and departments. The resolution grants the same power to the chairman.

The Democratic majority leadership of the Senate has already selected Ervin to be chairman of the committee. With a 57 to 43 majority in the Senate, the Democrats are virtually assured of obtaining approval of the resolution in some form.

However, under Senate

procedures, the Republicans could postpone a vote on the resolution though various delaying tactics.

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) established in questioning on the Senate floor that Ervin does not plan to investigate the practices and procedures of those government agencies that probed the Watergate case.

Though Ervin had earlier indicated that he would "investigate the investigator," he said yesterday that a Senate probe ought to confine itself to the spying and sabotage. However, he indicated that he would not overlook any wrongdoing or unethical conduct that might be turned up during the course of the investigation.

According to the Ervin resolution, three committee members would be selected by the Democratic majority and two by the Republican minority. A special select committee of the Senate is one appointed for a specific purpose and ceases to exist after its work is complete.

Some of the more famous Senate investigative committees, including the one that probed the activities of former Teamster President James Hoffa, have been special, select committees.