

CIA Fund Disclosure Defeated

By Mary Russell

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After rejecting an attempt to make public the Central Intelligence Agency budget, the House Appropriations Committee yesterday approved a 15-month, \$112 billion Defense Department appropriations bill.

Though the committee refused to divulge the CIA's budget as recommended by the Rockefeller Commission, it did announce that a 15-month total of \$344.2 million has been cut from the budgets of the CIA and other intelligence agencies.

The committee report also assured Congress that all funds for the CIA, the National Security Agency and the Defense Intelligence Agency are in this bill, and not hidden in other departmental and agency appropriations as they sometimes were in the past.

After defeating 34 to 18 a move by Rep. Robert Giaimo (D-Conn.) to make public the total CIA appropriation, the committee rejected 31 to 19 a move by Rep. David Obey (D-Wis.) to tell only the committee members what the CIA budget was.

Prior to the votes on disclosing the CIA budget, Appropriations Committee Chairman

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George Mahon (D-Tex.) announced new rules which he said would allow all members of the committee to have access to "all committee information concerning the CIA."

But Giaimo and Obey said the proposed rules were actually new restrictions. Obey said the rules would force members to go to the Defense Subcommittee for all classified information rather than allowing them to seek it directly from the departments. "It would even keep congressmen from getting information about Defense Department projects in their own districts," Obey said.

"Oh, no, that would be ridiculous," Mahon said.

He said he would differentiate between what he considered "highly classified" material, such as that relating to intelligence community budgets, and "anything they stamp classified but isn't all that sensitive." Mahon said each member of the House could come to the subcommittee room to look at "highly classified material" about the CIA, but could not take the material out and could not take notes.

Giaimo said he would continue his fight to publicize the CIA budget when the appropriations bill comes up on the House floor next week. While Congress is going in the direction of greater control of the CIA, the Appropriations Committee is going in the opposite direction," he said.

The \$112 billion Defense Appropriations Bill cuts a total of \$8.97 billion from the administration's request. But the sum appropriated for fiscal 1976 of \$90.3 billion is \$6.2 billion above the sum appropriated in fiscal 1975.

"Some people say we're liquidating the Defense Department. Others say we're only making token cuts and we ought to cut deeper," Mahon noted. "My view is it's a rather balanced approach."

Budget Committee Chairman Brock Adams (D-Wash.),

praised the Appropriations Committee action, saying the totals were only \$700 million in budget authority and \$1.3 billion in outlays over the targets set by his newly formed committee, whose job it is to set spending ceilings and get Congress to adhere to a budget as the Executive Branch tries to do.

But Obey called the reductions "paper cuts" because no major weapons system was affected. He noted one of the largest cuts, \$1.29 billion, came in Southeast Asia assistance; the fall of South Vietnam eliminated the need for the funds.

Republican Whip Robert Michel (Ill.), a member of the committee, said it could be "assumed there was some fat in the budget request. I don't think the cuts mean much. The easing of tensions around the world probably justifies the cuts."

One surprise was a committee decision to deactivate a Safeguard system ABM site at Grand Forks, N.D., which would have cost \$60 million over the 15 months.

Safeguard, a missile designed to protect Minuteman, is subject to attack by Soviet MIRV and was of limited value, the committee said, but the department wanted to operate the Grand Forks site for one year, for experience. The committee concluded it wasn't worth the cost.

The committee recommended cuts of \$31.4 million in developing the Airborne Warning and Control System plane until NATO decides whether it will purchase the controversial craft.

For fiscal 1976, there were reductions of \$60 million for the nuclear strike cruiser, \$145 million for communications equipment, \$116 million for civilian personnel strength and \$80 million for military personnel strength.

The Trident submarine missile system was cut \$48 million for fiscal 1976 and the B-1 bomber was cut \$30 million.