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### Congressional Record S. 984 - Select Committee to Study Government Intelligence Agencies

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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S 984

January 27, 1975

**SELECT COMMITTEE TO STUDY  
GOVERNMENT INTELLIGENCE AC-  
TIVITIES**

The Senate continued with the consideration of the resolution (S. Res. 21)

to establish a select committee of the Senate to conduct an investigation and study of governmental operations with respect to intelligence activities.

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, I wish to state, before proceeding with the discussions and consideration of this resolution, that insofar as the majority leader is concerned, the chairman of the Committee on Armed Services, our colleague from Mississippi (Mr. STENNIS) is owed a vote of thanks because throughout the years he has scrupulously endeavored, to the best of his ability and in line with his other responsibilities, to scrutinize all activities of intelligence agencies related to the defense community. He need not yield to any Member of this body his stance as the preeminent "watchdog" of the Congress in performing this critical oversight function. I commend JOHN STENNIS. The Senate commends JOHN STENNIS for his assiduous and conscientious work in this endeavor.

Mr. President, now that the select committee has been approved by the Senate, the minority leader and I have directed a letter to the heads of agencies

and departments of Government most preeminently concerned with intelligence endeavors. The letter reads as follows:

As you may be aware, the Senate is to conduct an investigation and study of government operations with respect to intelligence activities. The scope of the investigation is set out in S. Res. 21, a copy of which has been enclosed for your information.

We are writing to request that you not destroy, remove from your possession or control, or otherwise dispose or permit the disposal of any records or documents which might have a bearing on the subjects under investigation, including but not limited to all records or documents pertaining in any way to the matters set out in section 2 of S. Res. 21.

Sincerely yours,

This letter is being directed to heads of 19 separate governmental units as listed here:

JANUARY 21, 1975.

Honorable William E. Colby, Director, Central Intelligence Agency, and as Coordinator of Intelligence Activities, Washington, D.C. 20505.

Lt. Gen. Daniel O. Graham, Director, Defense Intelligence Agency, The Pentagon, Washington, D.C. 20301.

Honorable William B. Saxbe, Attorney General, Dept. of Justice, 9th and Constitution N.W., Washington, D.C. 20530.

Mr. John C. Keeney, Acting Asst. Attorney General, Criminal Div., 9th and Constitution N.W., Washington, D.C. 20530.



Mr. John R. Bartels Jr., Administrator, Drug Enforcement Administration, 1405 Eye St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20537.

Honorable James R. Schlesinger, Secretary of Defense, Room 3E 880, The Pentagon, Washington, D.C. 20301.

Honorable Howard H. Callaway, Secretary of the Army, Room 3E 718, The Pentagon, Washington, D.C. 20310.

Hon. J. W. Middendorf, Secretary of the Navy, Room 4E 710, The Pentagon, Washington, D.C. 20350.

Hon. John L. McLucas, Secretary of the Air Force, Room 4E 871, The Pentagon, Washington, D.C. 20330.

Lt. Gen. Lew Allen Jr., Director, National Security Agency, Fort George G. Meade, Maryland 20755.

I add that the administration about the preservation of records, documents,

et cetera, applies as well to all agencies and subagencies concerned but not specifically singled out.

The task faced by the select committee which the Senate has just established is to examine into the intelligence activities of the U.S. Government. No more important responsibility to the people of the Nation can be assumed by Senator than membership on this committee. What is asked of them, in the name of the Senate, is to probe fully and to assess completely, to understand thoroughly and to evaluate judiciously. To the extent that the intelligence agencies have acted correctly and within the law, that must be made known. If there have been abuses, they, too, must be set forth. There can be no whitewash in this inquiry; nor is there room for a vendetta. In the end, the Senate must know what has transpired so that it may seek to close legal

loopholes if there are any. In the end, we must know so that together with the House and the President, we may move to foreclose any demeaning of the basic premises of a free society.

What is at stake in the work of this committee is a resolution of doubts. What is at stake is a restoration of confidence in a large and costly and little known segment of the Federal Government. The Senate must be satisfied that the intelligence community is doing the people's business, to the end that the Nation may be with assurance so advised. The Senate must be persuaded that what is being done in the name of security under a cloak of obscurity is the people's business, as defined, not by employees of a Government agency, but the people's business as defined by the Constitution and the laws duly enacted thereunder.

The committee is called on, furthermore, to elucidate for the Senate the relevance of the intelligence community as it now operates to the Nation's contemporary needs. We need to know what may be required, today, not what might have seemed necessary yesterday.

The fact that a commission is looking into the CIA is all to the good; the responsibility of that group is to the President who created it. Its existence in no way relieves us of our responsibilities. It is appropriate and proper at any time that the Senate so determines, to inquire into any agency and, as necessary, to seek to clarify and redefine its functions and the scope of its activities.

One aspect of the impending inquiry concerns covert activities. These activities have been acquiesced in, to say the least, by the Congress for a long time. No



one should be surprised—or appalled, therefore, to discover their existence a quarter of a century later. In recent years, however, the extent and necessity for them have come under question. Who sets the policy and why? What obtuse intrusions may there have been by these activities into the President's conduct of foreign affairs? What indifference, if any, to the laws passed by the Congress? What damage, if any, to the demeanor of the Nation? What interference in the personal lives of Americans and by whose authority and under what guidelines? What public funds have been committed and to what end? What proliferation of activities and how much overlap and duplication?

It used to be fashionable, Mr. President, for members of Congress to say that insofar as the intelligence agencies were concerned, the less they knew about such questions, the better. Well, in my judgment, it is about time that that attitude went out of fashion. It is time for the Senate to take the trouble and, yes, the risks of knowing more rather than less. We have a duty, individually, and collectively, to know what legislation enacted by Congress and paid for by appropriations of the people's money has spawned in practice in the name of the United States. The Congress needs to recognize, to accept and to discharge with care its coequal responsibility with the Presidency in these matters.

The Senate has begun to address itself to these questions by approving the creation of this select committee. There is a need to understand not only the present intelligence requirements of the United States but also what systems or

procedures for oversight and accountability may be required to keep them within bounds set by the Constitution, the President and the elected Representatives of the people in Congress.

Wisely, I believe, a special committee for handling the investigation has been established by this action today. The scope of inquiry is far larger than can come within the purview of any single committee. Hopefully, within the select committee, the pieces—all of the pieces—can be fitted together. May I say that insofar as the Senate is concerned, I think this action expresses the expectation that the matter will be concentrated in this one committee. In my judgment, it would be most inappropriate for a bevy of studies of intelligence to proceed simultaneously in several others.

May I say, Mr. President, that this in no way conflicts with the legislative jurisdiction of the legislative committees so charged.

The select committee is equipped with a bipartisan membership. The Senators who will be selected for service on this committee are no different than the rest of us. They are not tied with a blue ribbon or a white or pink ribbon. There is no higher or lower order of patriotism in the Senate. There are no first- and second-class Senators. Those who will serve are men of competence, understanding, and decency. They will do the job which the circumstances and the Senate require of them.

The committee has been equipped with full authority to study, to hold hearings and to investigate all activities—foreign and domestic—of the intelligence agencies of the Federal Govern-



ment. In the pursuit of that mandate, I have every confidence that the committee will act with discretion, with restraint and with a high sense of national responsibility. There is no cause and inclination to pursue this matter as a Roman circus or a TV spectacular. There is only the need to see to the sober discharge of very sober responsibilities.

How the committee proceeds is largely up to the members of the committee. They have the authority to make their

rules and to define their procedures, and that would include the question of when to close or open the door to the use of television. As I have indicated, I would not anticipate any great requirements for the latter at this time. Most emphatically, I would express the hope, too, that committee staff would be selected with as much concern for discretion as for other qualifications. What comes to the public from this committee and when, ought to be solely—I stress the word “solely”—determined by the members of the committee.

The Senate is entrusting this committee with its deepest confidence. I know that that trust is secure and that the results of the inquiry will reflect the highest credit on this institution. I submit to the Chair the names of those assigned to the Senate Select Committee To Study Governmental Operations With Respect to Intelligence Activities and ask that they be read and I do so on behalf of the distinguished Republican leader and myself.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the nominations.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Senators Church, Hart of Michigan, Mondale, Huddleston, Morgan, and Hart of Colorado.

Mr. MANSFIELD. The Republicans also.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Senators Tower, Baker, Goldwater, Mathias, and Schweiker.