



U.S. POLITICAL NEWSLETTER

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Congress Begins to Fight CIA-FBI Takeover

March 12 (IPS) — Rep. Otis Pike (D-NY), chairman of the now-defunct House Intelligence Committee charged on March 9, that the CIA's chief counsel Mitchell Rogovin had issued a warning to Pike's staff director, "Pike will pay for this, you wait and see — we'll destroy him for this." Pike declared that the CIA was running a "domestic covert operation" to discredit him and Congress to cover up the findings of the House Intelligence Committee.

Pike's revelations came as Congress began to shake itself out of the tightly-controlled terror environment which has enveloped it. In the weeks following the leak of the Pike Committee report and the ensuing creation of an FBI-run House Ethics Committee investigation for the source of the leak, Congress had capitulated again and again to demands which would turn it into an impotent, rubber-stamp Parliament — a modern version of Hitler's Reichstag.

In an abrupt turnaround this week, numbers of Congressmen declared openly that they had been wrong in voting to classify the Pike report, or in voting to establish the Ethics Committee investigation. Other Congressmen attacked Attorney General Levi's "guidelines" for the FBI and the fascist criminal code revision formerly known as S.1. The press began to pick up on the same attacks.

Congress' sudden outburst against a self-imposed inquisition and further police state measures occurred amidst developing opposition to Wall Street policies on several fronts. Over the past ten days, liberal Senators and think-tankers have begun to hit at the dangers of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's wildly provocative statements against the Cubans and the Soviet Union. Others have charged that CIA estimates of Soviet military spending are greatly exaggerated.

Pike, who had last week voted for the Ethic Committee appropriation, may have initially thought that the attack on him and his Committee would be pro-forma, something that would pass away. As it became obvious over the last several days that the Ethics Committee operation was part of a much broader attack on Congress that would likely claim him as one of its first victims, Pike decided to fight back - publicly.

Enemy Escalates

In response to this weeks threatening developments, the Wall Street cabal has launched a counterattack of its own. The CIA and the FBI have made clear their intentions to escalate their attacks on Congress. Yesterday's Washington Post carries a front-page story, as well as a Jack Anderson column, which reports that Rep. Henry Helstoski (D-NJ) hired an underworld character (and government informer) to investigate and possibly murder a witness who had

testified against Helstoski's aide. Next to this allegation, the Washington Post reports that a double- and possibly triple-agent involved with the FBI and the KGB worked for conservative Democratic Senator James Eastland (Miss.) in the late sixties.

These stories are intended to keep the legislators in line by letting the Congressmen know that the FBI is committed to using its Congressional "sex and scandal" files to keep the legislators quiet. The just-appointed chief counsel for the House Ethics Committee investigation, David Bowers, was the FBI's Capitol Hill liason until his "retirement" three weeks ago, and no doubt has a file cabinet-full of "Wilbur Mills-type" stories at his disposal.

In a March 9 column entitled "CIA Coup in the House" in the New York Post, Mary McGrory goes to the heart of Congress' dilemma. "Always ready to abdicate the responsibility for seriously overseeing or reorganizing the CIA, Congress jumped at the chance to avoid the issue by opening up the House Ethics Committee investigation, and was manipulated by the CIA to go to war against itself, like some ignorant Third World country." McGrory's column followed by one day, a similar jab at Congress by conservative New York Times columnist William Safire. Safire counterposed Kissinger's mild reprimand of the State Department officials who leaked classified Mideast transcripts which made Kissinger look good, to Kissinger's outrage at the Pike Committee CIA report. Safire declared that "all the Congressmen.. who guiltily voted for a self-investigation by the House Ethics Committee, have just been slapped in the face with a large wet fish" with the Mideast leak.

Pike's speech on the House floor, coming after these press jibes, began to jolt Congressmen out of their stupor. After exposing the CIA threats against him and detailing the CIA and State Department-run "media event" which leaked the story that the Pike Committee had lost 232 classified documents, Pike reported that his staff had accounted for 200 of the 232 documents in several hours work.

Pike has since asked two moderate members of his former Committee — Reps. Teno Roncalio (R-Nev) and Lehman (R-Fla) — to read the still-classified Pike report, and to comment on it. The two Representatives reported yesterday on the House floor that there was absolutely nothing in the report which damages national security. Pike is now charging that the Administration leaked the report in an effort to discredit the House of Representatives.

More importantly, Congress has resumed steps aimed at attacking and investigating the intelligence community:

*Rep. Bella Abzug (D-NY), whose subcommittee on In-

dividual Freedom has subpoenaed the National Security Agency for documents related to telex wiretaps, may get the backing of the full Government Operations Committee in a vote on Mar. 17.

*Rep. Abner Mikva (D-Chi) in a guest editorial in the Mar. 9 Washington Post, attacked the gestapo criminal code revision, S-1 as a "monster which cannot be defanged." Senate Majority leader Mike Mansfield (D-Mon) has announced that he will kill the bill on the Senate side unless liberals back down from their demands for major revisions — Given the current climate, this is unlikely and the bill is close to death.

*Rep. Herman Badillo (D-NY) and Robert Drinan (D-Mass) blasted Attorney General Levi's FBI guidelines, in a front-page article in the Mar. 9 New York Times. Badillo charged that "we are right where we were before they (the CIA-FBI investigations) started." Drinan called the guidelines "feeble and ineffectual."

Because of "public pressure," Levi has been forced to withdraw the guideline which enables the FBI to take "preventative action" against a group or individual which "will be prone to violence." Despite this public backdown, Levi will implement the rest of the guidelines which include broad powers of surveillance, infiltration and disruption of groups on Mar. 17 without Congressional approval.

Levi's actions pose the problem now facing Congress. Unless it moves to prohibit and dismantle the intelligence community, the police state operation against them and the population will not only continue, it will escalate.

Nixon Fingers Kissinger On Wire-Taps, Chile Coup

In a series of depositions proved to former State Department official Morton Halperin, and made public over the past several days, former President Richard Nixon has declared that Secretary Henry Kissinger was responsible for selecting wiretap targets, including Halperin. Nixon has further denied authorizing the CIA to aid in the 1971 Chilean coup

attempt and has implicitly fingered then-CIA Director Richard Helms and his then-National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger as the instigators of the attempt. On both counts, this contradicts Kissinger's testimony and depositions.

The New York Times provocatively covered Nixon's statements in major front-page articles which were counterposed to Kissinger's March 11 war-mongering speech before the Boston World Affairs Council.

On March 11, the New York Times lead article reported Nixon's disclaimer on choosing wiretap targets. Nixon admitted to authorizing the wire-tapping of potential security leaks, but claimed "I, of course did not select the names myself, because I did not know them. I told Dr. Kissinger that he should inform Mr Hoover (FBI Director) of any names that he considered to be prime suspects."

Kissinger has denied any detailed knowledge of the wire-taps or their authorizations.

The following day, the New York Times again carried front-page coverage of Nixon's depositions on U.S. intelligence involvement in Chile prior to and during the Allende government. Nixon, while testifying that he authorized covert aid to anti-Allende groups in the form of money and propaganda backing, denied any knowledge of a CIA mandate to support a coup against Allende. Kissinger had denied any involvement in the 1973 coup which murdered Allende, but admitted CIA attempts to foment a coup prior to Allende taking office in 1971. He has claimed that the President authorized such operations.

Halperin at a news conference in Washington on Wednesday, said that despite Kissinger's "differing memory" on the question of the wire taps, Kissinger "had political and moral responsibility" for ordering the taps.

Nixon's statements remain unsubstantiated. However, when examined in the light of the Senate and House Intelligence Committee's investigation (which Halperin played a key behind-the-scenes role in), Nixon's testimony is a potentially powerful club to be wielded against Kissinger.