

# Leeway in Secret Operations Of CIA Approved by Panel

WASHINGTON (AP) — Declaring there are secrets Congress needn't know, a House committee voted Thursday to give President Carter substantial leeway in keeping undercover CIA operations quiet.

The Foreign Affairs Committee voted 14-10 to allow a president to ignore rules on advance notice of operations if he thinks even the leaders of congressional intelligence committees should not be told for either of two reasons:

"To meet extraordinary circumstances affecting the vital interest of the United States or . . . to avoid unreasonable risk to the safety of the personnel or methods employed."

The committee chairman, Rep. Clement Zablocki, D-Wis., said Congress must ask itself now in times of dangerous

world unrest: "Do we want an efficient intelligence agency or do we want to be informed?"

He said allies sometimes refuse to go along with U.S. operations out of fear that word will leak out in America, a contention CIA officials have made numerous times.

However, Rep. Lee Hamilton, D-Ind., quickly objected that he knew of no leaks from either intelligence committee. And Rep. Donald Pease, D-Ohio, called the wording of Zablocki's amendment "an open invitation to abuse if a president wanted to

do it."

Rep. Floyd Fithian, D-Ind., said he feared that if Congress goes along with Zablocki, "we run the risk of going back to the days when someone gets it in his head to assassinate the leader of a foreign state."

Congress has no right to change or stop undercover operations, but a number of legislators argue that they should be consulted in advance of important "covert actions."

There has been constant disagreement about whether that is required by a 1974 law that

forbids spending federal money for secret operations "unless and until the president . . . reports in a timely fashion" congressional committees.

The Foreign Affairs Committee's action Thursday was an attempt to change wording in pending bill that would require a president to give advance warning of undercover operations at least to the top Democrat and Republican on the House and Senate intelligence committees — no matter what.