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Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY

The President regrets that the Senate Select Committee has publicly
discussed the activity known as "Operation SHAMROCK", which was
instituted over 25 years ago by President Truman, his Secretary of
Defense and Attorney General. Although this was terminated in the
Spring of this year because of allegations that portions of the
National Security Agency activity were improper, the President has
refrained from discussing this publicly in order to avoid any criticism
or any implied criticism of former officials who acted in good faith
during difficult times in the cold war period and to protect legitimate
on-going foreign intelligence activity by the National Security Agency.

Instead, the President has endeavored to make all the information
concerning SHAMROCK available to the Senate Select Committee and the
Department of Justice in order to assure that appropriate legislation
can be developed, if necessary, and the Attorney General can conduct
his investigations. The President has tried to act responsibly by
taking effective actions to stop possible abuses and prevent any recur-
rence without seeking publicity when the activity was terminated.

There are two critically important objectives concerning the
intelligence community investigations:

1. We must develop the appropriate facts so that legislation, if
necessary, can be enacted and any legal action, if warranted, can
go forward.

2. We must do this in a manner which does not unnecessarily damage
our foreign intelligence capabilities.

The national interest requires a careful balancing of these two
objectives.

All of those who are involved with this matter in an official capacity
must take care to permit the investigation to go forward in a reasonable
manner without damage to our ability to develop appropriate foreign
intelligence.

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