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Senate Considering Investigation of CIA

If the Senate goes ahead with a proposed investigation of the Central Intelligence Agency, it is expected to evoke "massive resistance" from President Johnson—and we believe rightly so.

Far-flung intelligence facilities are absolutely necessary to the government of a superpower like the United States. And the operations of such an agency as the CIA must be secret or they become worthless. How long CIA affairs would remain secret under the stress of a Senate enquiry is hardly worth estimating. But the need for secrecy is no excuse for allowing

the CIA to function as a sort of invisible empire getting mixed up in such things as the Bay of Pigs fiasco and foreign coups d'etat. Neither is there an excuse for its operating in policy independence of or even opposition to such government branches as the State Department.

The CIA is a branch of the Executive Department and directly responsible to the President. The threat of a Senate investigation may have the desirable effect of tightening the President's control of an organization which can be of the utmost value in the making of foreign-policy decisions.