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(ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE)

(BY DANIEL GILMORE)

WASHINGTON (UPI) - THE SENATE INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE TODAY APPROVED AND SENT TO THE FLOOR A BILL REQUIRING A COURT ORDER EACH TIME ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE IS USED TO GATHER FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION IN THE UNITED STATES.

THE VOTE OF THOSE PRESENT AT THE CLOSED HEARING WAS 9-0, WITH THE TALLY FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE 18-MEMBER COMMITTEE TO BE RECORDED LATER.

MEANWHILE, THE HOUSE INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE STUDIED FOUR SEPARATE BILLS ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

UNDER THE ADMINISTRATION-BACKED SENATE BILL, U.S. INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES COULD NO LONGER "TARGET" AMERICAN CITIZENS OR RESIDENT FOREIGNERS SUSPECTED OF ENGAGING IN EITHER SPYING OR TERRORIST ACTIVITIES WITHOUT FIRST GOING THROUGH A COMPLICATED PROCEDURE DESIGNED TO PREVENT PAST ABUSES.

THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION IS AIMED AT PROTECTING THE CIVIL RIGHTS OF PERSONS SUBJECT TO WIRETAPS AND OTHER FORMS OF SURVEILLANCE.

UNDER THE BILL, PROCEDURES FOR CARRYING OUT ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE FOR FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE WOULD REQUIRE:

- A FEDERAL OFFICER TO SUBMIT A WRITTEN APPLICATION TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.

- THAT THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, IF HE APPROVED, MUST APPLY TO ONE OF SEVEN SPECIALLY APPOINTED FEDERAL JUDGES FOR A COURT ORDER, SPELLING OUT WHY THE SURVEILLANCE WAS REQUIRED AND A SPECIFIC TIME PERIOD DURING WHICH IT WOULD BE CONDUCTED.

- THAT IF THE APPLICATION WAS DENIED BY THE SEVEN JUDGES, WHO WOULD BE APPOINTED BY THE CHIEF JUSTICE, THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH COULD TAKE ITS APPEAL TO A SPECIAL THREE-JUDGE COURT OF REVIEW OR, IN LAST RESORT, TO THE SUPREME COURT.

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