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Biden asks probe of ex-agent's deals

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WASHINGTON — Delaware Sen. Joseph R. Biden Jr. is urging his colleagues on the Senate Intelligence Committee to look into the activities of renegade CIA agent Edwin P. Wilson and a former top CIA official associated with Wilson.

Biden said he sent the letters to his Democratic and Republican colleagues after reading newspaper stories about Wilson's complicated arms and business dealings.

The chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, Rep. Edward P. Boland, D-Mass., has already announced that his committee will conduct an investigation into Wilson's activities.

Biden's letter, sent to his committee colleagues, contradicts Sen. Barry Goldwater, R-Ariz., the committee chairman, who has told reporters that such an examination by the committee would be fruitless.

A Sunday News Journal report detailed Wilson's involvement in bribing members of Congress to get contracts for his network of companies, the misuse of a secret Naval task force to destabilize the Australian government in 1975 and an elaborate CIA-approved swindle of the Iranian Treasury masterminded by Wilson.

Meanwhile, Wilson's lawyer, John A. Keats, told the Boston Globe that Wilson may soon open a business in Washington. Wilson is under federal indictment for his part in an alleged conspiracy to murder a Libyan critic of Libyan strongman Col. Moammar Khadafy.

"I don't know what the company would be called, but certainly there's a lot of business that can be carried on with Libya,"

Keats said in an interview.

"He's not doing this to spite the government," Keats said. "If he opens a place, it will be purely for business reasons, and the business would have nothing to do with the prosecution."

Biden, a Democrat, is being backed in his call for a probe by Senator William V. Roth Jr., R-Del., also a member of the Intelligence Committee.

"I am certainly aware of the recent press reports concerning the activities of Edwin P. Wilson," said Roth. "I understand that the committee di-

eral years ago, and I would think it would be appropriate to update that examination."

Biden said one of the areas he wants examined is the possibility that Wilson and Theodore G. Shackley are using "graymail" to avoid possible criminal charges. Shackley is former head of clandestine operations for the CIA. "Graymail" is a phrase lawyers coined to describe how government officials with access to secrets might use that knowledge to escape prosecution.

Shackley was a key figure in a major graymail case involving perjury before Congress concerning the activities of the CIA in Chile in the early 1970s.

Biden has developed national reputation as an expert on "graymail."

Biden said that the Wilson case had come up before the committee in 1977 when an internal CIA probe ordered by then-Director Stansfield Turner ended in the dismissal of two employees who had assisted Wilson in transferring high-level technology to the Khadafy government.

Biden said that during the 1977 probe he was not aware that someone on Shackley's level at the CIA had such a close relationship with Wilson.

Wilson, 54, was indicted in April 1980 on federal charges for his part in a conspiracy to murder the speaker of the Libyan parliament.

The indictment alleges that Wilson and an associate, Frank E. Terpil, met with two Cuban nationalists, whom Wilson had trained during his CIA days, and offered them \$1 million to kill the Khadafy political foe.

Wilson and Terpil were also indicted for their part in exporting explosives into Libya.

Biden said that he believes the Wilson revelations also require the committee to examine the need for controls on what work intelligence employees do after they leave the CIA.

Biden said that what he is asking for from his colleagues is approval for committee staffers to look into

would be taken up at the next regular meeting this week.

Goldwater was unavailable for comment on Biden's letter.

[Boland told the Associated Press that the committee may want to consider legislation governing the business activities of former CIA employees and how much involvement current agency employees can have with people who have left the agency.

[The Washington Post has reported that the CIA is already redrafting the rules governing former employees' activities.

"I wouldn't call it a full-scale investigation but we'll be looking at whatever recommendations the staff comes up with on whether legislation is needed to take care of abuses over the past few years," Boland said.]