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## WASHINGTON TALK

# Briefing

### *Unpunished Disclosures*

The Defense Department has conducted 68 investigations of disclosures of classified material in the past seven years, but has had mighty little luck at finding and punishing their sources.

According to a review of these inquiries by the General Accounting Office, "in no case was there any indication that an individual was removed from a position of trust because of an investigation.

"In most cases, the sources of the leaks could not be determined because of the wide dissemination of the classified information."

On one occasion, the Congressional investigators reported, a Pentagon employee was given a letter of reprimand "for passing classified information to an individual who did not have a security clearance and who passed it on to a third party." A Defense Department official "agreed that the record of success in this area is not good," according to the G.A.O.

This glimpse into the Pentagon's efforts to control damage resulting from disclosures was submitted to the House Government Operations Committee as part of an inquiry that concluded that the Defense Department had not made improper use of lie-detection equipment in attempting to identify the source of an article in The Washington Post last January. That attempt was also unsuccessful.

~~ation" at this point.~~

Phil Gailey

Warren Weaver Jr.