

UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL

11 February 1987

STAT

## Group asks for disclosure of Gates's testimony&lt;

By JUDI HASSON=

WASHINGTON (UPI) - A public interest group urged the Senate Intelligence Committee Wednesday to reveal secret testimony by CIA Director-designate ~~Robert Gates~~ on the Iran-Contra affair before his confirmation hearings begin next week.<

In a letter to the committee, Common Cause said it was important to have a thorough review of Gates's qualifications to replace William Casey as director of the spy agency and to have his prior testimony scrutinized in public.<

Gates was mentioned in the committee's report which detailed the most extensive investigation to date of the secret sale of U.S. arms to Iran and the alleged diversion of profits to the Nicaraguan rebels.<

The 65-page report said Gates, second in command at the CIA under Casey, learned last October of the possibility that money from the Iran arms sale had been funneled to the Contras and raised questions about how he handled that information.<

The diversion was first revealed publicly more than a month later by Attorney General Edwin Meese.<

In view of the information already known about the CIA's role in the Iran-Contra affair and the serious questions that remain unresolved, it is critical that the committee engage in a comprehensive examination," Common Cause president Fred Wertheimer said.<

Wertheimer urged the committee to make public Gates's testimony before the Senate Intelligence Committee as well as any relevant documents.<

The Iran-Contra affair has been characterized by government secrecy, lack of candor and abuse of power," Wertheimer wrote.<

At this time, the Senate Intelligence Committee has a special responsibility to ensure that the decision whether to confirm Mr. Gates as the next head of the Central Intelligence Agency is one that the public can be fully confident is solidly supported by a fair and complete record," he said.<

The committee, which has scheduled one day of hearings next week, had no immediate comment on the request.<