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SENATE COMMITTEE TO OPEN PROBE MONDAY
WASHINGTON

The CIA reportedly will be the first subject of a formal probe by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence of the secret scheme to funnel U.S. arms profits from Iran to the Nicaraguan Contra rebels.

Committee Chairman David Durenberger, R-Minn., and Vice Chairman Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., announced the formal probe Friday in a letter to Reagan and said its goal was to learn the ''extent of and authorization for U.S. intelligence activities in connection with'' the possibly criminal Iran-Contra operation.

Letters also were sent to CIA Director William Casey, who testified before the panel informally last week, as well as Secretary of State George Shultz and Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger.

Their cooperation was requested to ''ensure that the executive branch makes available promptly the necessary witnesses, documents and other information.''

Committee spokesman Jim Currie said the panel is requesting that no documents or other materials possibly related to the investigation be destroyed or removed from government custody. Officials called to testify will do so under oath and all hearings will be closed to the public, Currie said.

Subpoenas may be used if necessary, he said, adding, ''We would certainly expect the administration to cooperate fully with this investigation.''

ABC News reported Friday that the hearings will open Monday with the CIA as the first target. The network said a specific inquiry will study the legality of a CIA flight of weapons to Iran before Reagan approved such a mission.

ABC said Casey told the committee previously that the CIA has only incomplete records of the weapons shipment it secretly flew to Iran in November 1985 and that the agency did not know the cargo included arms.

The intelligence panel emphasized it will call for questioning any members of the administration it deems necessary, including employees of the National Security Council and ''persons acting at their direction.''

National security adviser John Poindexter has left his post as a result of the controversy and his key NSC deputy, Lt. Col. Oliver North, was dismissed.

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