

POWERS TESTIFIES ON U-2 CASE TODAY

Senate Committee to Hear
Pilot's Story of Capture

By RUSSEL BAKER

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, March 5—Francis Gary Powers will testify publicly before a Senate committee tomorrow about his experience as a United States U-2 pilot shot down over the Soviet Union.

Mr. Powers' appearance was arranged by the Senate Armed Service Committee today in agreement with John A. McCone, director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

During the morning Mr. McCone secretly briefed select members of Congress on the findings reported by a special board of inquiry that has interrogated the U-2 pilot since his return to the United States after his release from a Soviet prison a month ago.

Details of the briefing were not divulged. Broadly, however, the men who heard Mr. McCone confirmed earlier reports that the board of inquiry had found that Mr. Powers did his best to carry out instructions and to fulfill his contracts as a \$30,000-a-year aerial reconnaissance agent for the C. I. A.

Pilot Returned Feb. 11

Mr. Powers has been incommunicado since his return to the United States Feb. 11. He was released by the Soviet Union in an exchange for Col. Rudolf I. Abel, who had been serving thirty years in a Federal prison for espionage in the United States.

Mr. Powers was captured May 1, 1960, when his high-altitude jet, packed with photographic and radar monitoring equipment, went down about 1,200 miles inside the Soviet Union. Officials here report that the C. I. A. inquiry failed to determine conclusively how the U-2 went down.

The officials are convinced, however, that the plane was not directly hit by a new high-altitude rocket, as asserted by the Soviet Government.

The subcommittee with which Mr. McCone discussed the case are composed of the senior members of the House and Senate committees on armed services and appropriations. These groups function as watchdogs over the C. I. A. for Congress, which has little other supervisory authority over the secret agency.

Before Mr. Powers testifies at 2 P. M., the Armed Services Committee will issue a statement on the case in behalf of the C. I. A. During the morning Mr. McCone will meet, in secret again, with members of the full Armed Services Committee who will interrogate him.

Thus far, Mr. Powers is the only principal in the U-2 case

Release 2000/08/03 : CIA-RDP75-00



United Press International Telephoto

DISCUSS U-2 PILOT: John A. McCone, left, director of the Central Intelligence Agency, is greeted by Senator John Stennis, Mississippi Democrat. In center is Senator Richard B. Russell, Georgia Democrat. Mr. McCone met with these and other members of Congress yesterday to discuss Francis Gary Powers, pilot, who will testify today.

who has not had a chance to speak freely in his own behalf. Accounts have come from the Soviet Government, from the United States Government and from high officials of the Administration of former President Dwight D. Eisenhower who were questioned in 1960 by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Trial Statements Doubted

The 32-year-old pilot, while in Soviet custody, testified at a show trial in Moscow in the summer of 1960. There is great doubt about how freely he was able to speak under the circumstances.

Within Congress there was considerable criticism of Mr. Powers from the outset, first for being allowed himself to be taken alive with big pieces of his plane intact and then for his conduct at his trial.

Officials close to the case, however, say that Mr. Powers not only did his best to carry out his orders, but also behaved creditably and, perhaps, courageously under difficult circumstances.

One report is that the explosion that felled Mr. Powers' plane sent it into a spin that hurtled the pilot into positions where he could not reach the craft.

Mr. Powers, it is understood,

offered to give his story to the inquiry board under a lie-detector device and the test verified his account.

Administration officials say that Mr. Powers is a free agent who may do as he pleases. His whereabouts remained unknown however, and Mr. McCone said that he did not know where the pilot could be found.

FINIS

25X1A