

Hearings Open Today On Policy in Vietnam

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee will embark today on a series of public hearings that could become a full-scale public examination of Administration Vietnam policy.

Recognized experts on Vietnam will be invited to testify before the Committee. Possible witnesses include Prof. George Kennan, former U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union, and former Army Gen. James Gavin and Matthew Ridgway—all of whom advocate limited American military involvement in Vietnam.

The hearings will be open to the national television networks, which are still considering whether to do live broadcasts.

The Committee decision to begin hearings was announced by Chairman J. William Fulbright (D-Ark.) yesterday after a meeting attended by 16 of the Committee's 19 members—an unusually heavy turnout. Both Fulbright and Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.) said that there had been no opposition in the Committee to the idea of holding hearings.

The decision to hold public hearings on Vietnam is regarded by many Senators as a victory for those who want a more thorough examination of the Administration's Vietnam strategy. Such a session was the major objective of the 16 Senators who wrote the President last Friday urging a continuation of the pause in the bombing of North Vietnam.

The occasion for the hearing will be President Johnson's request for a \$415 million supplemental increase including \$275 million for Vietnam economic assistance. Both Fulbright and Mansfield indicated yesterday that the hearings would deal with policy questions as well as consideration of the aid increase.

Fulbright said that Secretary of State Dean Rusk may be called as a witness. The Secretary was intensively questioned by the Committee last Friday on Vietnam policy.

After today's meeting with AID director David E. Bell,

the Senate hearings will resume next Monday at 6:30 p.m. This unusual evening time for next week's hearings is necessary because of the current Senate ban on committee hearings while the body is in session.

In other Senate comment on the Vietnam conflict yesterday, Sen. George D. Aiken (R-Vt.), the dean of Senate Republicans, said that he hoped President Johnson would stop, or at least ease, U.S. bombing raids on North Vietnam while the U.N. Security Council debate is in progress.

Sen. Clifford P. Case (R-N.J.) a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, complained in a speech last night that "I do not remember any time in my public experience when the American people were as confused or concerned as they have become by the war in Vietnam."

Case accused the Administration of not giving the American people enough information on Vietnam. The New Jersey Republican said that he did not agree with the report on the Mansfield mission, which offered the twin alternatives of "very slim" hope of a negotiated settlement or an open-ended conflict on the Asian mainland.

Sen. Wayne Morse (D-Ore.) attacked the Administration's Vietnam policy on the floor of the Senate yesterday, as well as the speech given at Northwestern University last Sunday by Under Secretary of State George Ball.

"Under Secretary of State Ball has often been described as the leading 'dove' in the Department of State," Morse argued. "In the light of what Mr. Ball said at Northwestern University last Sunday, he looks more to me like a dove with a hawk's feathers, unless he is a pigeon," Morse argued.

Morse said that Ball's remarks had "a sharp and militant edge . . . This is hardly the language of temperance . . . It is not the language of statesmanship. It is evidence of emotionalism and subjectivity when dispassion and reason are needed."