Twining's Book Backs

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Air Force Gen. Nathan F. Twining, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, allies himself with Sen. John L. McClellan (D-Ark.) in the TFX airplane battle in a hardhitting new book which will escalate the current debate on United States military policy.

Gen. Twining contends "our Air Force would have possessed better all-around fighting capability across the spectrum of war" if the $6 billion to $9 billion slated to go into the TFX went for "two different aircraft: (1) a relatively simple and inexpensive direct support aircraft tailored specifically for support of our ground forces; (2) a modern bomber to follow the aging force of B-52s and B-58s."

McClellan, in an interview, read the above and other passages about the TFX from Twining's book and said they reflected his own views. Twining might be called as a witness in the coming McClellan committee TFX hearings.

Assails Military Policies

Twining, who retired from the service as chairman of the Joint Chiefs in 1960, also assails Johnson Administration military policies in other parts of his book entitled, "Neither Liberty nor Safety, A Hard Look at U.S. Military Policy and Strategy." Publisher Holt, Rinehart & Winston plans to put the book on sale soon.

Such congressional military leaders as Chairman Richard B. Russell (D-Ga.) of the Senate Armed Services Commit-
not perform any one of its missions in an optimum manner."

Former Secretary of the Air Force Eugene M. Zuckert testified during the 1963 hearings that one reason for rejecting the Boeing design was that it showed "excessive optimism." He believed that titanium could not be used in structural members. Twinning in his book accuses the Defense Department of giving this "misleading information" to the Congress at the very time the Air Force had the Lockheed A-11A-11 Navy plane—built almost entirely of titanium. McClellan repeats his attack on this point in the hearings.

Despite the misjudgments of McClellan and Twinning about the original TFX contract award, neither is now trying to stop the production of the Air Force's TFX, designated the F-111A. McClellan figures it is too late for that. While Twinning believes the experience with the swing wing will be valuable,

This relaxed attitude of McClellan's, however, does not extend to the overweight Navy version of the TFX, designated the F-111B. He will argue in the hearings that the new hearings, posing the question whether the aircraft's performance will be good enough to justify the cost.

The Defense Department's public estimates for the TFX are $7 million a copy for the Air Force's F-111A and $10 million each for the Navy's F-111B. But the Department will not say on how big a production run these unit costs are based.

The Navy has said it will decide next spring whether the F-111B's performance is good enough to justify production. - McDonnell Aircraft Co. has been briefing the Navy on a swing-wing version of its F-4 fighter which could become an alternative to the F11B.