

War Study Asks Curb on

NEW YORK, Sept. 6 (AP)—A new study says U.S. involvement in Vietnam was politically and morally wrong from the beginning and that American leaders responsible for it should be barred for at least 10 years from any positions of public trust.

The authors propose congressional action to produce "self-limiting" measures that would prevent the United States from being drawn "into such criminal enterprises as the Indochina war."

The three scholars who made a 20-month study of the involvement, and also drew on the celebrated Pentagon papers, disclaim any tendency toward "reverse, McCarthyism" or witch-hunting. They concede that U.S. leaders could have believed they were doing right, at least at the outset.

The authors lay most of the blame on what they call the "national security bureaucracy," accusing it of deliberately planing escalation of the war for the sake of national prestige and "imperial" designs.

The book, to be published Tuesday by the Vintage Books

Division of Random House, is called "Washington Plans an Aggressive War." It is by Richard J. Barnet and Marcus E. Raskin, codirectors of the Institute of Policy Studies, and Ralph Stavin, a political science professor and fellow of the institute.

The authors imply that public office should henceforth be forbidden to such men as former Defense Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge and such close advisers to Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon

B. Johnson as Walt W. Rostow and McGeorge and William P. Bundy.

The book absolves the U.S. public as a whole of collective

guilt, blaming the war on "individual decisions of identifiable men," who, it says, should be publicly identified as having "brought dishonor to the American people by planning and executing aggressive war," the authors assess blame all the way back to the Truman and Eisenhower administrations, contending that the

whole postwar era was one in which U.S. policy makers "have had a rather clear design for expanding American power."

The Kennedy policy, say the authors, was to "accelerate the war while denying he was doing it . . . to prosecute a private war."

The Johnson administration is blamed for changing the Kennedy "covert war" to an overt one and for adopting massive escalation. Its leading advisers, most of them holdov-

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ers from the Kennedy years, "The elites that control so are pictured as having deliberately distorted facts to influence presidential decisions and having willingly sacrificed American lives in a ritual of commitment."

The "national security bureaucracy," the authors say, did not consider itself guilty of any wrongdoing, but on the contrary had a built-in system of self-absolution that served "to transform reasonably law-abiding professors and bankers into killers."

"The elites that control societies can be expected to suffer punishment if they lose at war or revolution," says the book, recalling principles laid down at postwar trials in Japan and Germany a generation ago.

The question American society now has to face is whether it is possible to move aside an elite group that enforces institutions of war-making on the America people, without resorting to totalitarian revolution."