

## SENATE INQUIRY SET INTO THE AIR FORCE

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WASHINGTON, Aug. 29—The Senate Armed Services Committee, after a series of delays, has decided to proceed next month with an extensive and critical look at the command and control structure of the Air Force.

At issue is the unauthorized bombing of North Vietnam ordered by Gen. John D. Lavelle, the retired four-star officer who has admitted ordering between 20 and 28 raids on military targets and falsely reporting them to higher headquarters as officially sanctioned "protective-reaction" strikes.

General Lavelle, along with publicly acknowledging the illegal strikes during a House of Representatives hearing June 12, also stated that he thought Gen. Creighton W. Abrams, then United States military commander in Vietnam, was aware of his actions.

General Abrams and others have emphatically denied the contention, but the question of who monitors what in connection with Vietnam bombing missions has been repeatedly raised by two Democratic members of the Armed Services Committee, Senators Harold E. Hughes of Iowa, and Stuart Symington of Missouri.

In a telephone interview from Iowa yesterday, Senator Hughes said: "I personally believe that we should examine that command structure from top to bottom. There will be extensive hearings, and I think we should thoroughly go into the matter to make a full determination of who agreed to directly violate the orders of the President."

Congressional sources said that Senator John C. Stennis, the chairman of the committee, after some hesitation, agreed within the last few days to schedule the hearings in mid-September. Senator Stennis, a Democrat of Mississippi, initially had announced the hearings June 28, promising then in a floor speech to investigate fully the "very serious questions of command and control."