

# Senator's Protest Delays Promotion of AF General

## Washington

The Senate delayed construction of the promotion of Air Force Major General Alton Slay yesterday after Senator Birch Bayh, (Dem-Ind.), protested his role in unauthorized air attacks in North Vietnam.

Slay, who was General John Lavelle's deputy for operations with the Seventh Air Force in Vietnam, was nominated by the Air Force for promotion of lieutenant general with the intention that he serve as deputy chief of staff for research and development.

Bayh asked that the Senate hold up on the promotion until it could be fully debated, and Slay's name was passed over as the Senate approved 16 other Air Force promotions. The issue is not expected to come up again until after the August congressional recess.

Bayh noted he and 35 other senators voted against Slay's promotion to major general last spring because of his questionable role in the unauthorized air attacks in 1972. Bayh said Slay knowingly accepted and executed orders to conduct the attacks, contrary to rules of engagement that prohibited such action unless they were in response to hostile action.

Also, Bayh said, Slay "participated in falsification of reports regarding those strikes in order to conceal them in 1972."

"The only real defense for General Slay's action," Bayh said, "is that he was obeying orders. But as we have learned so many times in both military and civilian spheres during the 1970s, such excuses cannot be accepted from those we place in positions of trust."

*Associated Press*