Historian, at a Seminar for Senators, Urges Curb on President's War Power

By JOHN W. FINNEY

WASHINGTON, March 8-Henry Steele Commager, who introduced generations of students to American history, conducted a seminar at a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing today and rein-forced the senators' fears that the President was infringing on the war-making power of Con-

The 68-year-old Professor of The 68-year-old Professor of History at Amherst sought to prod his new senatorial stu-dents into action by asserting that democratic institutions would be endangered unless some restrictions were placed on the Presidential power to make war make war.

Dr. Commager, who reiterated his opposition to the war in Vietnam, was the first in Vietnam, was the first witness as the committee be-

witness as the committee began hearings on proposals to invoke such restrictions.

Senator J. W. Fulbright, the committee's chairman, said it was embarking upon the task of trying to find some practical means of "maintaining democratic controls over the cal means of "maintaining democratic controls over the most antidemocratic activity known to man."

The hearings are the latest the formula of the formula of the control o

step in the Senate effort over the last four years to reassert the war-making powers of Con-

Stennis Favors Move

The impetus has come not only from the critics of the large scale, that were in fact acts of war, that were on a large scale, that were in distant parts of United States policy, such as the late Senator whose vindication threatened Richard B. Russell of Georgia and his successor as chairman of the Armed Services Committee, John C. Stennis of Mississippi.

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such as the late Senator Richard B. Russell of Georgia and his successor as chairman of the Armed Services Committee, John C. Stennis of Mississippi.

Two years ago the Senate passed a resolution calling on the President not to undertake action was but "a reflection and perhaps a consequence, of foreign committents to war without the sanction of Congress. Now the committee is seeking to enforce that "sense of the Senate" resolution with specific injunctions.

The committee has before it the integrity of our political and incontrovertibly required by the nature of the emergency which the nation faced."

"On the contrary," he said, "in almost every instance the long-run interests of the nation was but "a reflection, and perhaps a consequence, of abuse of power by the American people and nations."

"For the decades now we have misused our prodigious of the Senate" resolution with specific injunctions.

The committee has before it strough the integrity of our political and incontrovertibly required by the nature of the emergency which the nation faced."

"On the contrary," he said, "in almost every instance the long-run interests of the nation would have been better promoted by consultation and delay."

Secretary of State William P. Rogers, addressing the winter conference of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, said that "there's no reason, when the South Vietnamese are as strong the integrity of our political and constitutional system," he said.

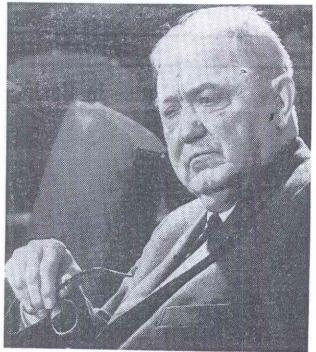
"In almost every instance the long-run interests of the nation would have been better promoted by consultation and delay."

specific injunctions.

The committee has before it bills by Senator Jacob K. Javits, Republican of New York, and Thomas F. Eagleton, Democrat of Missouri, that would specify that except for emergency actions, such as repelling attack, the President and the president addressing itself to the support of the president and the president a Pork, and Thomas F. Eagleton, Democrat of Missouri, that would specify that except for emergency actions, such as repelling attack, the President could not undertake extended hostilities without Congressional consent. A variation by Senator Robert Taft Jr., Republican of Ohio, would prohibit the President from deploying forces overseas without the consent of Congress. In the course of a 45-minute history lecture followed by a 90-minute seminar with committee members, Dr. Commager developed the argument commonly admitted that what he termed abuse of the argument commonly admitted that what he termed abuse of the argument commonly and the argument commonly admitted that what he termed abuse of the force of the horizon can be solved by force. The commager challenged the argument commonly admitted that what he termed abuse of the constant of the course of a 45-minute history lecture followed by a gorman present constant of the course of a 45-minute history lecture followed by a gorman present constant of the course of a 45-minute history lecture followed by a gorman present could not undertake extended bill, he suggested that it was addressing itself to the symptoms rather than to "the fundamese invasion of Laos, he also said that "there was no reason — legally or morally" why the North Vietnamese invasion of Laos, he also said that "there was no reason — legally or morally why the North Vietnamese invasion of Laos, he also said that "there was no reason — legally or morally why the North Vietnamese invasion of Laos, he also said that "there was no reason — legally or morally why the North Vietnamese invasion of Laos, he also said that "there was no reason — legally or morally why the North Vietnamese invasion of Laos, he also said that "there was no reason — legally or morally why the North Vietnamese invasion of Laos.

The course of a 45-minute history lecture followed by force."

Dr. Comman and the proposition of the heavy or equity to let an enemy or equity to let an enemy or equity to let an enemy or equity to



Henry Steele Commager, the historian, appearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee yesterday.

the war powers was a relatively recent development.

"It is only in the last 20 years or so," he said, "that Presidents appear to have thrown caution and even constitutional sequences." stitutional scruples to the wind, as it were, ventured, on their own authority, into military operations that were in fact

ming, a former history professor at his state's University—that in the nuclear age the exigencies of time did not always permit the executive branch to consult with Congress before acting in a foreign chick

before acting in a foreign crisis.
With the exception of the
civil war and the possible exception of the Korea war, Dr.
Commager said, "there are no
instances in our hstory where
the use of war-making powers
by the executive without authority of Congress was clearly thority of Congress was clearly and incontrovertibly required

promoted by consultation and delay."

Secretary of State William P. Rogers, addressing the winter conference of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, said that "there's no reason, when the South Vietnamese are as strong as they are, why they should be under any restrictions militarily" in operations against North Vietnamese forces.

Defending the South Vietnamese invasion of Laos, he