

Joint Senate Panel to Hold Hearings on Origin of War

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WASHINGTON, June 23—

The Senate leadership laid the groundwork today for creation of a special joint panel of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Senate Armed Services Committee to hold public hearings into the origins of the Vietnam war.

In the meantime, the Foreign Relations Committee decided to proceed with its own investigation—probably behind closed doors—of the policy decisions that led to the American involvement in the war. Both inquiries are to be based in large measure on the 47-volume Pentagon study of American involvement in Vietnam that President Nixon agreed today to make available to Congress.

But Senate leaders emphasized that the purpose of the inquiries was not to assess blame for the American involvement but rather to draw lessons from it on how to improve the foreign policy machinery of the executive branch and Congress.

The Senate inquiries were stimulated by publication by The New York Times and then by other newspapers of data from the secret Pentagon study.

Early Proposals

First Senator Stuart Symington, Democrat of Missouri, and then Senator Mike Mansfield of Montana, the majority leader, proposed an inquiry by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee into origins of the Vietnam war.

This proposal, however, ran into jurisdictional problems with the Senate Armed Services Committee, which has become increasingly annoyed at what it regards as the Foreign

Relations Committee's intrusion into its domain.

As a result, a compromise was worked out today by Senator Mansfield with the ranking Democratic and Republican members of the two committees.

An example of the jurisdictional jealousies was a decision by the Senate leadership to turn over custody of the Pentagon study to the secretary of the Senate—thus making it available to both committees—rather than referring it to the Senate Armed Services Committee, as had been planned by its chairman, Senator John Stennis, Democrat of Mississippi.

Under the compromise, a select committee, composed of eight members from the Foreign Relations Committee and eight from the Armed Services Committee is to be created by the Senate. A special committee is to be equally divided between the two parties and is to select its chairman.

Reluctant Acceptance

The Mansfield proposal was unanimously accepted by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee today, although "reluctantly" according to Senator J. W. Fulbright, Democrat of Arkansas, the committee chairman.

Senator Fulbright, reflecting views within the committee, contended that the Foreign Relations Committee had primary jurisdiction in the matter and expressed reservations about the difficulties of managing hearings by a large joint committee that was divided in its views.

The select committee is expected to begin holding public hearings this fall. Just whom the committee would call as witnesses was still not clear.

Before formation of the select committee, the Foreign Re-

lations Committee unanimously approved a Symington resolution calling for an inquiry by the committee into "the making of policy relating to United States involvement in Southeast Asia."

The resolution, authorizing \$250,000 for the committee study, must still be approved by the Senate Rules Committee and then the full Senate.

The expectation, Senator Fulbright told reporters, is that the Foreign Relations committee will conduct its own pre-

liminary study, probably almost entirely in executive session and thus "lay the groundwork" for the public hearings by the select committee.

Among the objectives for the inquiry set forth in the Symington resolution were a study of the machinery for the making and conduct of foreign policy relating to national security.

Institutional arrangements within Congress for handling foreign policy matters involving national security.

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