

SENATOR POSTPONES HEARINGS ON ARMY

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 2—Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr., Democrat of North Carolina, chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights, postponed indefinitely today public hearings on undercover surveillance of civilian activists by the Army.

The hearings, which had been scheduled to start next Tuesday, were expected to include testimony that the Army, despite its claim to have left the surveillance field, is still keeping detailed files on antiwar, black nationalist and other protest groups to prepare its troop commanders for a sudden call-up to control a civil disturbance.

Asserting that the Air Force and the Navy are also guilty of unconstitutional investigatory infringements of the rights of civilians and servicemen, Senator Ervin has threatened to disclose in the hearings the contents of "secret" policy directives of those services unless the directives are voluntarily declassified.

He sent a telegram today to Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird demanding declassification.

Explaining the postponement of the hearings, a subcommittee staff announcement said that the chairman would be required to be on the Senate floor next week during the scheduled sessions.