

Clements Calls Secret Raids Legal

HONOLULU, Sept. 19 (UPI)

—Deputy Defense Secretary William Clements contends that the secret 14-month U.S. bombing of Southeast Asia was not only legal, but was also "a high quality operation."

Clements held a news conference Tuesday at the command center at Camp Smith, an operational center for the Vietnam war. He said the clandestine bombing campaign was "conducted under complete civilian control" upon direct orders from President Nixon.

Apparently angry at intense questioning on the subject, Clements said it was "a high quality operation conducted in exactly the method it was supposed to be by the military, and in no instance do I consider that operation to be illegal."

Clements said the chairmen of four key congressional committees, which oversee military affairs, were told "on a privileged basis" of the secret U.S. war operations.