

[~~Filed Nix Ad~~]Clements Won't Rule Out A-Bomb Use

by Anthony Ripley

[Story on Senate hearing on confirmation of William P. Clements as Deputy Secretary of Defense.]

Washington, Jan. 11 -

In a discussion of the heavy December bombing raids over North Vietnamese cities, Mr. Clements startled the Senate Armed Services Committee, where he was testifying, by saying that Adm. Thomas H. Moorer, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, had suggested the heavy bombing as "a contingency plan."

"Moorer was consulted," Mr. Clements said. "He did understand the whole operation."

"Admiral Moorer helped make the plan for the Dec. 18 bombing." *

Dec. 18 was the date the heavy raids began following a breakdown of the peace talks in Paris.

Mr. Clements added, "In my new capacity, I may have said something I shouldn't have said, but I don't think so."

Senator John C. Stennis, Democrat of Mississippi who is the committee chairman, said, "It was inferred to this committee that the President acted unilaterally" in ordering the bombing.

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