

# How U.S. Vetoed Invasion of North

## Washington

Invasion of North Vietnam to surround and cut off its forces in the South was recommended several times by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, but rejected by the White House, their chairman has told congressmen.

The chairman, Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, said the joint chiefs at first recommended an invasion by U.S. forces but later by South Vietnam forces.

Moorer made the disclosure under questioning at a closed-door hearing before the House defense appropriations subcommittee January 9. A censored transcript of the testimony was released yesterday.

### DISCLOSURE

The disclosure came when Representative Clarence D. Long (Dem - Md.) asked why allies had not invaded North Vietnam and "cut them off, tried to wipe them out" — and Moorer replied he had asked the same question.

"The Joint Chiefs of Staff have advocated a land invasion there?" Long asked.

"Yes, sir," Moorer replied. "On occasion we have recommended the flanking movement you talk about."

"I have always thought an invasion of North Vietnam would be a desirable move from a strictly military viewpoint, sir," Moorer continued.

"But as you know, there were many, many political complications that the United States struggled with in connection with this war, which was affected by the Geneva accords, the



AP Wirephoto

ADMIRAL MOORER  
He made the disclosure

Laos agreements, things of this kind. The war was not fought in accordance with basic military principles alone."

Moorer did not say when the invasions were recommended but said that proposed use of U.S. forces was changed to use of South Vietnamese forces after President Nixon began reducing U.S. troop strength in Vietnam in 1969.

He said the invasion recommendations were rejected "by those that were making the decisions" whose objective "was to do everything they could do to contain the war in the smallest sense possible."

### JUDGMENT

"I do not think I am one to pass judgment," Moorer added.

"Under our system of civilian control, I give the best

military advice I can and when I get an order I execute it to the best of my ability."

Moorer also told the congressmen that he expects smallscale warfare to continue for years.

"I would expect that guerrilla-type action, assassinations, blowing up bridges and so on will continue in that unhappy area for many, many years," he said.

### INVASION

But Moorer said he believes North Vietnam is no longer capable of mounting an invasion of the South like the one last March 30 — and said he believes South Vietnam would be able to defend itself if one came.

Much of the questioning during Moorer's appearance concerned the joint chiefs' role in the decision that led to 12 days of B-52 bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong in December.

Moorer said the chiefs had drawn up a contingency plan

for the bombing raids and, under orders from the President, executed it. But "I do not participate directly" in the deliberations on such matters, he said.

A.P. & U.P.