

4 IN HOUSE PLAN HEARINGS ON WAR

Democratic Panel to Conduct Inquiry on U.S. 'Atrocities'

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 6—A group of liberal House Democrats, in defiance of the House leadership, announced plans today to conduct public, informal hearings into the "command responsibility" for United States "war atrocities" in Vietnam.

Representative Ronald Dellums, a freshman Representative from California, said the group was proceeding with the plans for the four days of hearings in a Congressional hearing room because of the refusal of the Congressional leadership and committee chairmen to a full-scale Congressional inquiry into American war crimes in the Indochina war.

Joining in the move were Representatives Bella S. Abzug Manhattan, John Conyers Jr. of Michigan and Parren J. Mitchell of Maryland, all of whom have been identified with the outspokenly dovish wing of the Democratic party in the House.

Their move may provoke a confrontation with the House leadership over how to proceed with a war crimes issue that has come to the fore in Congress with the conviction of First Lieut. William L. Calley Jr.

Representative Dellums told a news conference that he had received permission from Speaker Carl Albert, Democrat of Oklahoma, to use the Caucus Room—the large hearing room that has been the scene of many Congressional inquiries—for the war crimes hearings beginning April 26. But Mr. Albert told reporters that he could not recall granting permission for such use of the Caucus Room.

Doves See Opportunity

With the war crime hearings, the doves see an opportunity to crystallize public opinion against the war by highlighting what Mrs. Abzug described as the "sickening realities of our war policy in Southeast Asia."

"We believe it to be the function of Congress to undertake open study of the responsibilities for war atrocities," Mr. Dellums said. "Of course, we would rather have official in-

quiry, but Congressional leadership has ignored all our requests. So, we are calling ad hoc hearings."

Even among some of the doves who have supported a war crimes inquiry there is a private concern that the planned informal hearings could turn into a mock trial within the halls of Congress but outside the established procedures of the House. These reservations are expected to be even more pronounced among the House leaders, particularly since one of the announced goals of the hearings is to demonstrate that the responsibility for any war crimes is linked to policies set forth by high-ranking military officers and elected officials.

Veterans Bring Pressure

The pressure on the Congressional doves for war crimes hearings has come from two Vietnam veterans groups—the Citizens Commission of Inquiry on United States War Crimes in Vietnam and Vietnam Veterans Against the War.

Present at the Dellums news conference were two West Point graduates who served in Vietnam, Ronald Bartek and Greg Heyward. The Citizens Commission will offer them as witnesses at the hearings.

Mr. Bartek told reporters that he had once overheard Gen. Julian J. Ewell, when he was commander of the Second Field Force in Vietnam, complain to division commanders that they were "killing only a number of these little bastards and had to kill more to be successful." General Ewell is now chief military adviser to the United States negotiating team in Paris.

The other former officer, Mr. Heyward, a decorated veteran of two tours in Vietnam, said he would testify about "indiscriminate killing of civilians by white phosphorus artillery shells, the general staff's planned and systematic destruction of a Vietcong hospital complex in Cambodia, and about direct orders from the high command to forcibly remove hundreds of civilians from their homes and the destruction of their villages."

As a step toward promoting a Congressional inquiry into "the moral consequences of our actions" in Vietnam, Senator Mark O. Hatfield, Republican of Oregon, introduced into The Congressional Record 900 typewritten pages of testimony taken earlier this year by Vietnam Veterans Against the War at a war crimes hearing in Detroit.

Even by Congressional standards, the Hatfield insertion in The Congressional Record was unusually voluminous and, at the cost of \$128 a page, the cost of insertion could run to at least \$40,000.

'War Crimes' Testimony

Special to The New York Times

ALBANY, April 6—A small group of legislators sat impassively today as, one by one, a half dozen young veterans of the Vietnam war quietly told of their "war crimes."

The former soldiers, members of Vietnam Veterans Against the War, told their stories in an alcove of the Capitol in an effort "to bring the horror of the war closer," one of them said.