

Senate Panel Clears Moorer of Illegal Action

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The Senate Armed Services Committee has absolved Adm. Thomas H. Moorer, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, of blame in military spying on the White House and illegal bombing in Vietnam.

The committee's action took the form of a recommendation that Moorer be retired with the full rank, pension and honors of an admiral when he leaves active duty Saturday. The full Senate is expected to approve the recommendation this week.

The committee also concluded in a closed session that Moorer was "not culpable" in the unauthorized transfer to him of Henry A. Kissinger's private papers in 1970 and 1971.

Also dismissed were charges that Moorer broke the law by accepting bombing orders in which President Nixon allegedly bypassed then Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird and dealt directly with the JCS chairman.

Former White House aide John D. Ehrlichman said in a recent affidavit last week that Nixon insulated the three top military officials from personal responsibility for the illegal

sion to a feud between Kissinger and Laird.

The National Security Act requires the President to pass all his military orders through the civilian Secretary of Defense. But the committee evidently accepted informal assurances from the White House that Laird — despite contrary indications from his former aides — had been kept informed.

Moorer acknowledged he received Kissinger's papers but said he thought they had been sent to him through authorized channels, although presidential lawyer J. Fred Buzhardt testified he had been told by the military liaison officer in the White House that Moorer had been advised they had been obtained "surreptitiously."