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Senators to Sift Military's Role in Foreign Policy

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 3 — The Senate Foreign Relations Committee announced today plans for a potentially far-ranging investigation into the power of the military to dictate or influence foreign policy.

The study will be carried out by a special seven-man subcommittee, to be headed by Senator Stuart Symington, Democrat of Missouri.

In announcing formation of the subcommittee, Senator J. W. Fulbright of Arkansas, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, said that the purpose "will be to make a detailed review of the international military commitments of the United States and their relationship to foreign policy."

"It is hoped," he said in a statement, "that this review will result in constructive recommendations concerning

the involvement of United States armed forces abroad and the relationship between foreign policy commitments and the military capacity to honor them."

The Vietnam situation will be excluded from the review.

Wide Latitude Seen

The mandate is sufficiently broad and intentionally vague so that the subcommittee will have the latitude to investigate not only the whole postwar trend in foreign policy but also the foreign and domestic influence that has been accumulated by what former President Eisenhower once described as "the military-industrial complex."

From a committee that was a hotbed of resistance to the Johnson Administration's Vietnam policy, therefore, the Nixon Administration now finds pressure building up for a basic re-examination, and

perhaps reversal, of the nation's postwar foreign policy.

However, for the moment, at least, the committee's relations with the new Administration are markedly more harmonious than they were with the Johnson Administration.

On the presumption that President Nixon is intent on achieving a negotiated settlement of the Vietnam war, the committee has been withholding its criticism and to a certain extent its advice.

But beyond Vietnam, the Nixon Administration will have to contend with a committee intent on reasserting what it regards as its constitutional prerogatives in the formulation of foreign policy.

To a certain extent, the committee's policy study represents a reaction to the Vietnam war.

But the situation in Vietnam will be excluded from the sub-

committee study because, Senator Fulbright explained, this "raises a number of complicated and unique questions which will continue to receive the close attention of the full committee."

In a deeper sense, however, the study is a reaction against the whole postwar trend of a global extension of American military power.

The underlying question being asked by such committee members as Senators Fulbright and Mike Mansfield of Montana, the Democratic leader, is whether in this extension of military power the Defense Department has not been given inordinate influence over foreign policy.

They also want to know, whether the nation has been drawn into informal or unintentional commitments that can lead to dangerous foreign crises.