Title
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NEW AMBASSADOR TO THE PHILIPPINES?

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Two months ago President Nixon nominated William H. Sullivan, former ambassador to Laos, as ambassador to the Philippines. Last May 10, Sullivan testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee at a hearing on his nomination. Although scheduled to act in the near future, the Committee has so far hesitated reportedly reluctant to appoint Sullivan because of his identification with previous policies. Their hesitation is understandable.

“VIETNAM VETERAN”

For Sullivan is one of the original architects of the Vietnam War. As head of the “Vietnam War Working Group,” he advocated the bombing of North Vietnam in the winter of 1963-64 before President Lyndon Johnson was ready for such an action. Instead Sullivan went to Laos. There as ambassador, he began the bombing that was to turn Laos into the world’s most heavily bombed country. “It took all my time” Sullivan said later.

The bombing was doubly illegal: it subverted the 1962 Geneva Agreement on Laos, and contravened the Constitutional restrictions on war-making powers, since it was without Congressional authorization. Therefore, Sullivan had to carry it out on the sly. The air force men who programmed bombing reported to work in white shirts and business suits, posing as A.I.D. employees; they were to avoid visiting Congressmen, and fraternization with journalists was punishable by court martial.

PRESIDENTIAL AUTHORITY

Eventually, the bombing became public knowledge. Questioned in 1969 by a Senate subcommittee as to its legal base Sullivan offered “the executive authority of the President.” Pressed by Senator Symington, “Are you saying that the President has the right to put U.S. military troops in airplanes over a foreign country ... and direct the bombing of that coun-try” Sullivan replied, “Yes, sir.” (In the same vein, Sullivan recently declared the legal justification for bombing Cambodia to be the re-election of President Nixon.

Responding to members of the 1969 subcommittee who queried the political justification for the Laotian bombing, Sullivan asked it was fair to be “singing out Laos,” be taking Laos “out of con-