

Senate Bill Retains White House Funds

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The Senate yesterday refused to eliminate a special \$1-million presidential fund despite speculation that it might have been used to finance activities of the White House "plumbers" unit.

In passing a \$5.12-billion appropriations bill, the Senate also rejected an attempt to reduce money sharply for the President's Domestic Council, previously headed by John D. Ehrlichman.

Sen. Walter F. Mondale, (D-Minn.) tried to delete the \$1-million "special-projects" fund and to cut the Domestic Council money from \$1.1 million to \$350,000.

Congress, Mondale said, must "insist on decisions being made by Cabinet departments responsible to the people, and that we will exercise greater control over the expenditure of funds appropriated by Congress which may in the past have been diverted to illegal or improper activities."

The \$5.12-billion bill includes money to operate the Treasury Department, the Postal Service, the White House and various other agencies in the current fiscal year.

The vote on the bill was 87 to 0. It now goes to a Senate-House conference to work out differences between the two versions.

Mondale said the Domestic Council, which was created by Mr. Nixon as an advisory agency, has usurped decision-making power from Cabinet officers.

And, he said, the council has developed "the best-known plumbers organization in American history"—a reference to the special investigative unit established to plug security leaks.

The amendment to cut the council appropriation failed on a 56 to 30 vote.

By a 52-to-36 margin, the Senate refused to delete the \$1-million special-projects fund as the House had done.

The Senate approved by voice vote an amendment by Sen. Joseph Montoya (D-N.M.) aimed at providing congressional oversight when taxpayer funds are used to improve a President's private property. The amendment followed disclosures that \$3.6 million has been spent for what the government says

were security-related improvements at Mr. Nixon's homes at Key Biscayne and San Clemente.

The amendment requires quarterly reports to Congress on such improvements.

House Acts to Ease

White House Relations

In its first vote after the summer recess, the House voted 202 to 172 yesterday to return a compromise housing bill to House-Senate conference because it mandated President Nixon to spend money he has impounded.

The vote followed Republican objections to the measure as previously agreed to by the conference.

And in another move that could ease strained relations with the executive branch, the House dropped from its agenda a \$682 million State Department authorization bill that would have required the department and affiliated agencies to respond to congressional requests for information or lose their funds.

The House was to have acted on the bill this week.