

Decision Near on Disputed Aid to Zaire

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 20— State Department officials are expected to decide in a few days whether to go ahead despite objections from key Congressional leaders with an emergency loan of \$10 million to Zaire, according to Government officials.

The Congressional leaders are concerned that the aid would allow Zaire to release a comparable amount of funds to its allies fighting in the Angolan civil war. The Central Intelligence Agency has been funneling covert military aid and cash through Zaire to the two Western-supported Angolan liberation groups fighting the group supported by the Soviet Union.

Administration officials informed several committee chairmen last night the intention of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to give the aid immediately. The chairmen objected, and high State Department officials suspended the order to execute the loan.

One official said: "We have not gone ahead—yet; we're trying to see if we can meet Congressional objections."

Officials of the Africa bureau of the State Department argue that the \$10 million in industrial credits is urgently needed to meet the deteriorating economic situation in Zaire.

Other officials in the State Department are less concerned about Zaire than about the danger of a new rupture in relations with Congress if the wishes of the representatives are ignored.

The State Department is legally entitled to provide the aid without specific legislative authority, but Congressional leaders said that they would regard this as a breach of a two-year working relationship. Congress has not passed a

new foreign-aid bill this year. In the absence of new legislation, aid programs are continued by means of a resolution continuing spending authority based on last year's aid bill.

Aid Can Be Redirected

Operating within these resolutions, the Administration can redirect aid from one country to another or increase aid to a country without Congressional approval. It is merely required to inform Congress 15 days before carrying out its decision.

Under an arrangement in effect for the last two years, however, the State Department has invariably been responsive to objections by committee chairmen, either modifying decisions or reversing them in accordance with the wishes of the chairmen.

Senator Daniel K. Inouye, Democrat of Hawaii and chairman of the Senate appropriations subcommittee on foreign operations, was informed of the decision to send the aid yesterday afternoon. He immediately registered his objections with Mr. Kissinger.

In a telephone interview today, Mr. Inouye said he had assumed that the aid had already been given, but said that he was pleased to hear of the reconsideration, given the fact that "the Administration has honored the working relationship until now."

Assurances Sought

Representative Clement J. Zablocki, Democrat of Wisconsin, and a key member of the House International Relations Committee, said that he might favor certain kinds of aid to Zaire if there were assurances that the aid would not directly or indirectly find its way into Angola.

He added: "But if the State Department does not follow Congressional desires on this

matter, we will rewrite the law to require prior approval" of every decision to redirect or increase aid.

Representative Otto E. Passman, Democrat of Louisiana and chairman of the House appropriations subcommittee on foreign operations, said in an interview today that he gave his approval to the aid yesterday, "But I'm protesting it today; I don't think they've justified it."

Mr. Passman and Mr. Inouye objected to a similar State Department request for Zaire in October. At this time, Mr. Kissinger was seeking \$22.7 million in long-term loans for Zaire, but did not go ahead with the loan because of Congressional objections.

Action Called an Affront

Representative David R. Obey, Democrat of Wisconsin, a member of Mr. Passman's subcommittee, called yesterday's notification by the Administration "an attempt to slip one by before Congress has a chance to act."

"It's stupid and an affront to the express concerns of Congress," he said.

So far this year, Zaire has received \$15 million in Government-sponsored commercial credits. The State Department is seeking \$19 million additional in military credit sales, and a \$20 million loan by the Export-Import Bank.

President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire has been a supporter of United States policy in Africa in recent years. On Monday, following the emergency meeting of the Organization for African Unity, Mr. Mobutu charged Moscow with "intolerable intervention" in Angola.