

Big Debate On Cambodia In Congress

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The Senate Foreign Relations Committee expressed concern yesterday about extended United States involvement in Indochina and the House's usually near-solid support of American war policy fell apart over the U.S.-supported offensive into Cambodia.

In a unanimous bipartisan statement the committee warned that "the deepening American involvement is a grave development."

But it decided to hold up proposed legislation to inhibit future U.S. action in Cambodia.

In the House, some, but not all, hawkish lawmakers praised President Nixon's decision to provide American advisers, artillery and war planes to aid the South Vietnamese offensive against a communist force just inside the Cambodian border.

WEAPONS

The House debated proposed amendments to a \$20 billion military weapons authorization bill that would have restricted use of U.S. troops in Cambodia, Laos and Thailand, but in the end it withheld action to await the President's speech.

Nine House Democrats led by Representative Richard L.

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Ottinger, (Dem-N.Y.), introduced a resolution of censure against president Nixon. Ottinger said Mr. Nixon had "exceeded his constitutional authority to commit American citizens to war."

Representative Clarence Long, (Dem-Md.), who has taken a middle-of-the-road stand on the war, said "the administration has broken both its promises and its constitutional obligation" in committing Americans to fighting in Cambodia.

CRITICISM

Representative Roman Pucinski, (Dem-Ill.), calling himself a "strong supporter" of U.S. Vietnam policy, criticized the administration for its unilateral attitude. The American people, he said, would demand that Cambodia be dealt with by all interested nations in order to avoid dragging the United States alone into another war like the one in Vietnam.

As expected, support for the president was voiced by house GOP leader Gerald R. Ford and Representative L. Mendel Rivers (Dem-S.C.)

chairman of the armed services committee.

Senator George D. Aiken, (Rep-Vt.), Ranking republican on the senate foreign relations committee, rejected the White House contention that the Cambodian raid was limited to communist sanctuaries along the Vietnam border and would not lead to another Vietnam-type war.

The committee took no action on a proposal by Senators John Sherman Cooper, (Rep-Ky.), and Frank Church, (Dem-Idaho), to prohibit the supplying of any arms to the Cambodian government, or giving them American military advisers.

Chairman J. William Fulbright said members wanted to wait until after Mr. Nixon's speech and until the administration answers a long series of questions submitted by committee staff members to the state department.

On the Senate floor, as in the house, Mr. Nixon's decision was both defended and criticized. His allies accused critics of playing politics with the lives of GIs and urged senators to hold their fire pending his speech.