

NIXON AIDES URGE G.O.P. SENATORS OPPOSE WAR CURB

Argue Against Restrictions
On Use of Funds to Retain
Troops in Cambodia

AMENDMENT IS DEBATED

Some Stress Constitutional
Issues—Others Fear Harm
to President's Credibility

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By JOHN W. FINNEY
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WASHINGTON, May 14 — The Administration sent three top officials to the Capitol today to warn Republican Senators that proposed legislation cutting off funds for future military involvement in Cambodia could impair the credibility abroad of President Nixon.

The Secretary of Defense, Melvin R. Laird, Under Secretary of State Elliot L. Richardson and Henry A. Kissinger, the President's national security adviser, met for nearly two hours with Republican Senators amidst an increasingly testy debate in the Senate over an amendment to a foreign military sales bill that would prohibit the President from using any funds to "retain" American military forces in Cambodia.

While the advocates of the amendment were casting the debate in constitutional terms of curbing the war-making powers of the President, the Administration was shifting the argument to one of confidence in Mr. Nixon.

Mr. Kissinger is reported to have argued that adoption of the amendment would imply a lack of confidence in the President and his pledge that American troops would be withdrawn from Cambodia by the end of June, which in turn, could damage the President's "credibility" in his dealings with the Communist world.

Scott Calls G.O.P. Meeting

The officials were said to have emphasized that the White House would prefer no Cambodian amendment but would be open to a compromise that would protect the President's right as Commander in Chief to take steps to protect American troops.

Senator Hugh Scott, the Republican leader, called a meeting for tomorrow afternoon to see if an amendment could be drafted that would be acceptable to the Administration as well as to Republicans in the Senate.

Meanwhile, Senator Albert Gore, Democrat of Tennessee, introduced an amendment prohibiting the President from using any funds for an invasion or bombing of Communist China without the approval of Congress.

His purpose, he said, was "to drive home the unprecedented interpretation of the Constitution" offered by President Nixon in using his powers as Commander in Chief for the incursion into Cambodia.

The impetus behind the Cambodian amendment, sponsored by Senators John Sitterman

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Cooper, Republican of Kentucky, and Frank Church, Democrat of Idaho, was increased by indications that South Vietnamese troops would remain in Cambodia after the American withdrawal.

With a flash of indignation, Senator Mike Mansfield of Montana, the Democratic leader, told reporters that if South Vietnamese troops remained, "It means we still will be indirectly involved."

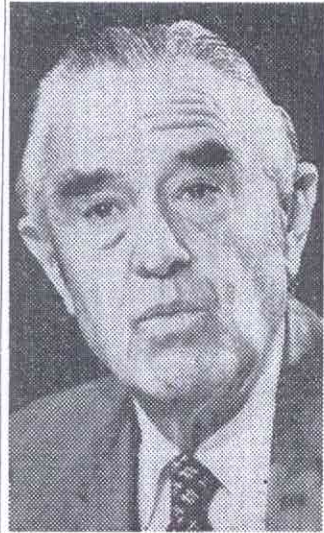
"It is just an illustration of Saigon being the tail wagging and pulling us around," he asserted.

After testifying before the Senate Foreign Relation Committee, Ellsworth Bunker, the United States Ambassador to Saigon, said he did not know whether South Vietnamese troops would be withdrawn.

As for providing American support to South Vietnamese troops remaining in Cambodia, Mr. Bunker said, "That is a problem we have to meet if they are there and if the problem arises."

Secretary Laird, meanwhile, forecast continued though limited South Vietnamese attacks into Cambodia after the current operations have been concluded.

In an informal breakfast talk



Associated Press

W. Averell Harriman, former chief negotiator at the Paris talks, testifying yesterday on war in Vietnam.

with reporters, Mr. Laird also said he would urge continued American bombing of the Communist areas in Cambodia even if the Communist forces took over the Government there and demanded an end to American activity.

Mr. Bunker was reported by Senator J. W. Fulbright, chair-

man of the Foreign Relations Committee, to have told the closed-door briefing that 7,200 M-2 carbines from American stocks had been supplied to the Cambodian Government in addition to the 6,000 captured AK 47 Soviet rifles provided by South Vietnam with American approval. Much of the Bunker briefing was said to have been a defense of the South Vietnamese Government of President Nguyen Van Thieu.

W. Averell Harriman, the former chief delegate to the Paris

peace talks, told a Joint Congressional Economic Committee session that the only way to compel the Thieu Government to undertake serious negotiations was to set a "fixed schedule" for withdrawal of all American troops from South Vietnam.

Lacking such an American timetable, he said, "Thieu has no intention of negotiating."

"He double-crossed President Johnson and he pulled the rug out from under President Nixon," he said.