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SENATORS SCORED ON WAR BY AGNEW

Mansfield and Fulbright Say
Cambodia Action Is Failure

By PETER GROSE

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WASHINGTON, May 17—Vice President Agnew and two leading Senate Democrats staked out bitterly opposing positions today for a forthcoming Congressional challenge to presidential power in foreign policy.

Mr. Agnew called the attitude of the Congress "reprehensible." The Senate majority leader, Mike Mansfield, and Senator J. W. Fulbright, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, described the Cambodian operation as a "disaster" and a "failure."

Broadcast interviews were dominated by talk of a pending Senate proposal to prohibit the use of American forces in Cambodia after June 30. This is to be the first of our major Senate debates that Senator Mansfield said he had scheduled in the coming month.

"Amendments that would cut off military appropriations to sustain Vietnam are untenable," Vice President Agnew said in an interview on Metromedia radio news.

Mansfield Disagrees

"We see that Congress, because of the heat of public pressure, attempting — for political gain, mainly, in my judgment — to jerk the rug out from under the Commander in Chief and the troops, by denying them the military assistance that they need to function effectively," Mr. Agnew said. "And I say this is reprehensible attitude on the part of the Congress and those that support those resolutions."

Senator Mansfield said, to the contrary, that passage of a limitation measure by the Senate would only insure that President Nixon keep his word in pulling American forces out of Cambodia by the June 30 target he himself designated.

"We trust the President, but we think this is a protective device which will give him support and strength when he needs it, because there will be other voices, undoubtedly, at that time trying to bring about a change in the situation," Senator Mansfield said on the Columbia Broadcasting System's "Face the Nation."

Move Termed a 'Disaster'

Senator Fulbright said that the proposed restriction on funds "would deter the President from expanding the war any more." Interviewed on the American Broadcasting Company program "Issues and Answers," the Arkansas Democrat called the Cambodian maneuver "a serious international disaster" that would not only prolong the war in Southeast Asia but that had already "clearly weakened our power to influence the situation in the Middle East or nearly anywhere else."

President Nixon, Senator Fulbright charged, "has subverted the Constitution in invading another country without authorization of Congress."

Vice President Agnew lashed out against the congressional criticism of the war, arguing that the Congress "is partly responsible for the presence of these troops in Vietnam," through the Tonkin Gulf resolution of 1964.

Senator Mansfield said that next week the Senate would debate a proposal to rescind that resolution, by which the President was authorized to take "all necessary steps, including the use of armed forces" to assist any member of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization that might request help.

More Debates Planned

Senator Mansfield said that after those two debates he hoped to take up the issue of whether Mr. Nixon acted within his constitutional powers in sending American troops into Cambodia. Finally, he said, the military appropriation bill will be brought up with several proposed anti-Vietnam-war amendments.

Mr. Agnew said that the speakers at least week's anti-war demonstrations in Washington and elsewhere were "the same old tired radicals that everybody in the country's sick of listening to."

The Vice President proposed a cooling of rhetoric. "I think the best place and the first place it should begin is on the editorial pages of some of the Eastern newspapers," he added.

"I certainly don't agree that the demonstrations are really indicative of deep-seated student hostility to the Cambodian decision," Mr. Agnew said.

Asked about that remark in his subsequent interview Senator Fulbright said: "The Vice President is afflicted with myopia—he doesn't see very deeply in any of these things. He has much to learn."