

WHITE HOUSE AIDES SEEK COMPROMISE ON WAR FUND CURB

Talk With Senate Sponsors
of Amendment to Restrict
Actions in Cambodia

PRESIDENTIAL ROLE KEY

Language to Recognize His
Powers as the Commander
in Chief Being Sought

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WASHINGTON, May 19—The White House was working behind the scenes today in an attempt to reach an accommodation with a bipartisan coalition in the Senate that is seeking to impose legislative restrictions on future military activities in Cambodia.

Apparently sensing that it faces a probable defeat in the Senate, the White House took the initiative in starting talks several days ago with the principal sponsors of a restrictive amendment to the foreign military sales act.

The amendment, offered by Senator John Sherman Cooper, Republican of Kentucky, and Senator Frank Church, Democrat of Idaho, is co-sponsored by Senator Mike Mansfield, the Democratic leader, and Senator George D. Aiken of Vermont, the dean of Senate Republicans and senior Republican on the Foreign Relations Committee.

Sponsors Are Admant

The sponsors are reported to have emphasized to the White House that they will accept no weakening of the substantive provisions of their amendment, which prohibit the President from using funds for "retaining" United States force in Cambodia, supplying military advisers or mercenaries to the Cambodian Government or conducting any combat air activities over Cambodia in support of Cambodian forces.

From the outset, the White House has opposed any amendment that would restrict the President's power as Commander in Chief. It was this power that Mr. Nixon cited in sending American troops into Cambodia.

The amendment's sponsors were said to be leaving the door open to changes in the preamble giving recognition to the President's authority as Commander in Chief.

Would Expedite Withdrawal

The preamble now states that the purpose of the amendment is "to avoid the involvement is "to avoid the involvement in Indochina and to expedite the withdrawal of American forces from Vietnam."

The problem for the sponsors, they feel, is to phrase the reference in such a way that the President could not invoke it to justify further military involvement in Cambodia, without the consent of Congress.

While debate continued inconclusively on the Senate floor with no date set for a vote, Senator Cooper met with White House representatives in an attempt to reach some under-

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standing on a possible change in the preamble.

But if the White House accepted some version of the Cooper-Church amendment, it would be undercutting its conservative supporters who have been encouraged in the last ten days to oppose any amendment.

The President continued to encourage the opposition at a weekly meeting with the Republican leaders.

Senator Gordon Allott of Colorado, chairman of the Republican policy committee, reported afterward that the President

had cautioned against any amendment that would "signal" to North Vietnam that the United States would not take certain steps.

Mr. Nixon was said to have recalled how President Dwight D. Eisenhower used to say that while he never intended to use nuclear weapons, they would lose their effectiveness as a deterrent if he ever publicly renounced their use.

Charge Aided by Mansfield

On the Senate floor, Mr. Mansfield expressed hope that "an accommodation" could be reached with the White House. At the same time he charged

that the Administration, by sending American advisers with South Vietnamese units on periodic raids into Laos, had violated a Congressional injunction in this year's Defense Appropriations Act specifying that no funds could be used for the introduction of ground combat troops into Laos or Thailand.

He said the Administration might try to argue that "advisers" rather than combat troops had been sent into Laos. It is this kind of "double-talk and double thinking," he said, that the sponsors are trying to avoid in their amendment on Cambodia.

Later, the Senator told reporters: "We are open to a compromise so long as it is just as strong as the original amendment."

Delay in Vote Is Hinted

Senator Allott, meanwhile, indicated that Republicans, through extended debate, might seek to delay a vote on the amendment until after June 30, when the President has pledged that all American forces will be out of Cambodia.

The theme was picked up on the floor by Senator Ted Stevens, Republican of Alaska, who charged that there was "a great deal of partisanship"

underlying the amendment. Senator Stevens said the sponsors were seeking to "discredit" the President.

Meanwhile, Nicholas deB. Katzenbach, Attorney General and later Under Secretary of State in the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations, endorsed the Cooper-Church amendment on both constitutional and political grounds.

Mr. Katzenbach said the adoption "would do more than any other immediate action to restore the confidence of the young—and even many of the older generation—in the integ-

rity and capacity of a democratic society to respond through its elected representatives to the passionately held views of many, many people."

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