

War Debate

Senate Doves' Sharp Reply to Agnew Attack

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Senate backers of the McGovern-Hatfield "amendment to end the war" lashed out anew yesterday at Vice President Spiro Agnew, accusing him of "false" statements about their proposal and a "deliberate" attempt to intimidate the Nation's press.

Senator Mark Hatfield (Rep-Ore.)—singled out by name Monday when Agnew blasted the amendment as a "blueprint" for "chaos and communism in Vietnam—said in an emotional Senate speech, "What kind of men have we at the helm of government who would deliberately coerce the public into accepting their policies on the threat of being branded traitors?"

He recalled that he had criticized the Johnson Administration with the same words three years ago.

Senator George S. McGovern (Dem-S.D.), in an address to the Association for Education in Journalism at American University in Washington said, "The deliberate effort of the Nixon-Agnew Administration to harass and intimidate the press is a serious threat to our free society . . . the President himself (as well as Agnew) has joined in the attack on the press . . . it has created a climate of fear, designed to intimidate the media."

REVISED

The "amendment to end the war," as now being revised, requires removal of U.S. forces from Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos by Dec. 31, 1971. While Hatfield — with the support of Senator J. William Fulbright (Dem-Ark.) — was ticking off what he called Agnew's "misleading, false and inaccurate statements" about the amendment, the Senate was preparing to vote today on another amendment to the defense procurement bill.

Today's vote will be on the Brooke amendment, which bars Administration - sought expansion of the Safeguard anti-ballistic missile system to two new sites, but permits the \$322 million expansion money to be used to beef up

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Safeguard at two earlier sites authorized last year.

SENATORS

Anti-ABM Senators, defeated 52 to 47 last week in an attempt to block expansion of Safeguard and wipe out the authorization of the \$322 million, have rallied behind Brooke's proposal as a fallback measure. But whether they will do much better than last week is questionable.

In a speech for his amendment, Senator Edward W. Brooke (Rep-Mass.) said his proposal would allow ample protection of the American Minuteman deterrent while leaving the United States its "bargaining chip" for the U.S.-Soviet arms limitation talks. He said it would give as much protection as extension of Safeguard to new sites, while providing technical equipment to meet shortcomings in the existing Safeguard.

Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John Stennis (Dem-Miss.) said expansion of the Safeguard to four sites "is the minimum that is needed for protection of our land-based deterrent" (Minuteman intercontinental retaliatory missiles). The Administration opposes the Brooke amendment. Stennis also attacked another Hatfield amendment, which proposes going over to a volunteer army. He said its costs would be at least \$4.3 billion a year.

Hatfield, in the sharpest criticisms of Agnew yet made on the Senate floor by a Republican, said the "reckless rhetoric" used in attacks on the "amendment to end the war" certainly "does not represent the kind of Republicanism" for which Hatfield himself had worked and campaigned since as long ago as the 1930s.

He accused Agnew of "a direct attack on our constitutional process" because of his insistence that the Senate should not assert its will in seeking to end the Vietnamese war. "He is making the war 'Nixon's war.' He is implying that the President's policies for the war must be exercised without regard for the Congress, just as President Johnson's were," said the Oregon Republican.

Fulbright — the object of numerous attacks by Agnew in the past — said, "I know of no precedent for the President of the Senate personally attacking members of this body." He called Agnew's tactics "very subversive and very dangerous" to the democratic process.

SOURCES

Several Senate sources said privately they believed Agnew's speech may have represented the kickoff of a deliberate effort to use criticism of the Senate anti-war block as an election device in the Congressional campaigns this year. Senator Alan Cranston (Dem-Calif.) called Agnew's speech "partisan polit-

ical bomb-throwing . . . florid rhetoric."

Hatfield said Agnew had the McGovern-Hatfield measure in many respects. For example, said Hatfield, the amendment calls for phased withdrawal of U.S. troops from Indochina, not "precipitous . . . abandonment of South Vietnam."

It would not restrict military aid even after U.S. troop withdrawal, said Hatfield, and it would not restrict the President's power as commander in chief to protect U.S. troops.

Hatfield said the Agnew speech also ignored the provision allowing for extension of the timetable for withdrawal, and a provision allowing all actions necessary to protect U.S. lives during withdrawals.

McGovern, in his American University speech, said Agnew's public criticism of newspapers whose views he does not like, coupled with the attorney general's decision to subpoena reporters' notes and unused television film and radio tapes in order to obtain information in certain situations, showed clearly that whenever the press told news unfavorable to the Administration "it is accused of purveying 'seditious drivel.'"