

2 Georgians in House Shift To Opposition to the War

By JOHN W. FINNEY APR 2 1971

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 1—A Republican colleague, Senator Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania, the Senate Republican leader, suggested that some of the Democratic critics were engaging in "irresponsible mud-slinging" and "giving comfort to the enemy" by "crying the same line of Moscow, Peking and Hanoi."

Representatives John J. Flynt Jr. and Phil M. Landru announced that they would vote against extension of the draft because they could no longer approve the sending of American boys to fight in an undeclared war that the United States did not have the will to win or to end.

In the Senate, meanwhile, the Republican leadership opened a counterattack against Democratic critics of the Nixon Administration's Vietnam policies.

Backed up by several of his

From the general Congressional reaction, it was becoming apparent that the conviction of First Lieut. William L. Calley Jr. was becoming a major new element in the Vietnam debate, with the ironic effect of bringing the hawks and doves together in opposition to the war.

Meanwhile, Vice President Agnew, in a speech to volunteer workers for Veterans Administration hospitals, called

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critics of the Vietnam war "home-front snipers" and said they had fostered a negative attitude toward combat veterans.

Within the House, Mr. Flynt and Mr. Landrum—both 10-term veterans from suburban and rural districts in Georgia—had been regarded as typical of the Southern hawks, and their public shift brought surprised cheers from the doves clustered on the floor for the debate on the Selective Service Bill.

Speaking from a prepared speech, Mr. Flynt observed of the war that "many Americans like myself and my constituents have supported it because it has been the official position of our country and we have been taught to support our country."

Draft Vote Called Key

But now, he continued, "My conscience will not let me vote to continue to conscript young Americans to fight a war which most Americans do not want and a war which the United States government apparently lacks the courage to either win or stop."

"The time has come for us to take a realistic approach to and a hard new look at what the Indochina war is doing to our country and our people," he said. "Our people are more divided than at any time in the last 100 years. I believe the Vietnam war is the reason."

Mr. Flynt said he was voting against extension of the Selective Service Act—which he has supported for the last 20 years

—because it is probably "the nearest thing to a vote that we will have in the 92d Congress to vote in support of or opposition to an indefinite continuation of the war in Indochina."

As Mr. Flynt finished, Mr. Landrum arose to announce that he supported his colleague's position. He noted that it was the first time that he had publicly stated his opposition to the Vietnam war.

In the last six months or so, Mr. Flynt said he had detected a major shift in sentiment about the war among his constituents from an initial attitude of "win the war" to "win the war or get out" to an attitude now of "get out."

Since the Calley conviction for the murders at My Lai, Mr. Flynt said he had received hundreds of telephone calls and telegrams, virtually all of them protesting against the verdict. A common theme among the callers, he said, is that if Lieutenant Calley is to be treated that way, then young men should not be compelled to fight in Vietnam.

Moral Issue Stressed

The effect of the Calley conviction, as seen in Congressional circles, was to bring to the fore the issue of the morality of the American involvement in the war—an issue that the doves in recent months have been trying to stress.

The hawks were upset over the conviction, and in the process were turning against a military that could hold a platoon leader responsible for his actions in combat.

Meanwhile, Senator J. W.

Fulbright, appearing on a Columbia Broadcasting System news interview this morning, raised the question of whether under the principles laid down in the Nuremberg trials after World War II high-ranking officials, such as President Johnson and Gen. William C. Westmoreland and Gen. Creighton W. Abrams should not also be brought to trial.

The Arkansas Democrat, who is chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, made clear that he was not advocating such a course. But he observed that "it seems to me a rather questionable principle to pick out a lieutenant if he's going to be the only one to charge with the war crimes that have been committed in Vietnam."

Senate Republicans were demonstrating increasing sensitivity to the developing Democratic position in favor of total withdrawal by the end of 1972 and the rising criticism of the Nixon Administration policies.

Senator Scott announced that he was reviving the Republican "truth squad," used in recent Presidential campaigns, and would have Republican Senators patrolling the Senate floor "at the ready and on the firing line to straighten out the record and separate fact from fiction."

Six other Senate Republicans assailed the President's critics in an obviously organized move. They were Robert Taft Jr. of Ohio, Lowell P. Weicker Jr. of Connecticut, William E. Brock of Tennessee, J. Glenn Beall Jr. of Maryland, Clifford P. Hansen of Wyoming and William B. Saxbe of Ohio.