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Senate Told Of Vietnam

'Game Plan'

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Washington

Senator Thomas F. Eagleton (Dem.-Mo.) yesterday quoted two top U.S. generals in Vietnam as saying the American "game plan" calls for keeping a residual force there "indefinitely" and for maintaining a high level of U.S. air activities for a "protracted period" after U.S. ground-combat operations cease.

Eagleton spoke before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

He said that when he was briefed by U.S. officers during an April 7-14 visit to Vietnam, "unanimously these military men told me that the plans under which they were operating called for a residual American force indefinitely into the future and for a protracted period of massive American air power, including helicopters, based in Thailand and Okinawa and various places in Indochina."

Eagleton specifically identified General Frederick Weyand, deputy U.S. commander in Vietnam, and Major General Albert Milloy, deputy commander of the First Corps, as two of those who had given him this report on U.S. plans.

DEBATE

On the Senate floor, meanwhile, senators plunged into a three-pronged debate on NATO force levels, the President's emergency war powers, and Mr. Nixon's plans for Vietnam withdrawal.

Majority Leader Mike Mansfield of Montana, in a move given special emphasis by the troubles of the U.S. dollar in European currency markets, called up as an amendment to the draft-extension bill his proposal to chop U.S. European troop levels from 300,000 to 150,000. GOP policy committee chairman Gordon Allott (Rep.-Colo.) promptly warned that the administration opposes the Mansfield amendment. He said it would "destroy all confidence in NATO."

Senate armed services chairman John Stennis (Dem.-Miss.) called the Mansfield move "precipitous" and "drastic" and said tourism and U.S. purchases

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of European goods were as much responsible for balance-of-payments problems as the cost of keeping troops and dependents in Europe.

COUNTER

Senator Charles M. Mathias Jr. (Rep.-Md.) then offered a counter-amendment designed to nullify Mansfield's proposal.

Still a third NATO amendment was proposed by Senator Peter Dominick (Rep.-Colo.) as a middle-ground between the Mansfield and Mathias proposals. It declares the sense of the Senate that U.S. NATO forces should be reduced, without specifying how much.

Stennis introduced his bill defining the situations in which the President may use armed forces without the prior consent of Congress. The bill — stemming from a general congressional fear that some President might commit the nation to a major war without the backing of the nation — permits the President to act in emergen-

cies to repel attack against the United States, or against U.S. forces, or to prevent an imminent nuclear attack or rescue U.S. citizens in serious danger abroad.

CONGRESS

But he must come back to Congress within 30 days for approval or cease the use of the military forces. Stennis said that in all other cases than the enumerated emergencies, congressional consent must be obtained prior to using the armed forces, even pursuant to a treaty obligation.

On the Senate floor, Senate Minority Leader Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania clashed with Mike Gravel (Dem.-Alaska) over the President's intentions on withdrawal from Indochina.

"We know that this President is getting us out," shouted Scott in a heated exchange. "By next year at this time we'll be down to a minimum support force, and maybe not even that if we can solve this prisoner situation."

Gravel insisted that Scott

say whether the President also intends to withdraw all use of U.S. air power and naval power from the Indochina conflict, as well as ground combat troops.

"If we're bombing them into oblivion you can't really say that we're out," he yelled back at Scott. "Does out by definition include out air force, no American bombing, no American planes ... out army, out navy, out marines, out everybody but the ambassador and two maids?"

REPLY

"The President has said his objective is total American withdrawal and I share that commitment," replied Scott.

At the foreign relations hearing, both Eagleton and John Gardner, head of the citizen lobby Common Cause, endorsed the idea of imposing a December 31 legislative deadline for withdrawal from Vietnam.

Gardner said, "I have just about given up the notion that Mr. Nixon will move in the war situation without strong pressure from Congress and public opinion ... the evidence grows that the President contemplates a continued presence in southeast Asia for a long, long time, perhaps without ground troops, it's impossible to say, some continued pressure, from aircraft carriers, Thailand, somehow ..."

Eagleton said the all-pervasive briefings during his Vietnam trip ("morning, lunch and dinner, and if you're still breathing, they brief you after dinner") had revealed the United States is using Okinawa-based B-52s for Indochina bombing. He said that in his opinion, if the U.S. gets entirely out of Vietnam, "best odds I can quote you are 50-50" that a non-Communist government can survive, but he said the same would be true later on, and "we're going to have to bite that bullet sometime."

BACKLASH

Eagleton, Gardner and Senator James B. Pearson (Rep.-Kan.), all raised the possibility that should the U.S. get entirely out of Vietnam and the Communists then prevail in the south, there would occur in the United States what Pearson called a "hawk" backlash over the loss of Indochina.

"If ARVN (South Vietnam) fell and North Vietnam took over, sure there's going to be a backlash, a new Joe McCarthy, but the American people aren't going to listen to the extent they did to McCarthy," said Eagleton. He said South Vietnamese President Thieu is "an adroit politician with powerful clout going into the October election, and the fact that he's bought and sold and owned by us doesn't necessarily mean he'll lose the election."

Senator Stuart Symington (Dem.-Mo.) repeatedly raised the issue at the committee hearing of America's "expensive secret war" in northern Laos, saying it might prove a greater threat to world peace even than Vietnam.

'FUTILITY'

Pearson, voicing what appears to be a growing Senate mood, said, "the level of frustration and sense of futility (over the war) is reaching new heights with my constituents, even in Dodge City."

In the general debate over NATO, THE WAR AND THE WAR POWERS, RELATIVELY LITTLE ATTENTION WAS PAID ON THE Senate floor to the ostensible subject of Senate debate, the draft bill.

Senator Richard S. Schweiker (Rep.-Pa.) called up his amendment limiting draft extension to one year, instead of the two sought by the Administration and approved by the House and by the Senate Armed Services Committee. But he had barely finished a statement saying one year more should be enough to phase out the draft and go over to an all-volunteer Army when he withdrew the amendment temporarily so Mansfield could offer his NATO-cut proposal as the pending business.