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HATFIELD OPENS VIETNAM DEBATE

Senate to Vote Wednesday
on Amendment for Pullout

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WASHINGTON, June 10 —

The Senate began debate today on the McGovern-Hatfield amendment, which would require the withdrawal of all American forces from Vietnam by the end of this year.

Only a few Senators were present as Mark O. Hatfield, Republican of Oregon, co-sponsor of the amendment with George S. McGovern, Democrat of South Dakota, said in the opening speech that the Senate was debating "the most important decision that the Congress will confront this year."

"We can not 'get away' from this war," he said as he pleaded with his colleagues to join in the debate rather than trying to "enjoy the luxury of a long weekend" until the vote Wednesday on the amendment, to a bill extending the draft.

In the first opposition speech, Senator Robert J. Dole, Republican of Kansas, observed that "a feeling of dreary repetition hangs heavy over the revival" of an amendment that was rejected by the Senate on September by a 55-to-39 vote.

Sees 'Lose-the-Peace' Move

Reviving his theme of last year, he described the proposal as the "lose-the-peace amendment" and said it would give away whatever leverage the President still possessed to obtain the release of American prisoners of war.

It now appears that on next Wednesday both the House and Senate will vote on the war issue and indirectly on the Administration's Vietnam policies.

In the House, the vote will be on an amendment to the military authorization bill, offered by Representatives Lucien N. Nedzi, Democrat of Michigan, and Charles W. Whalen Jr., Republican of Ohio, that would prohibit the use of any procurement funds for the war in Vietnam after Dec. 31.

In both the House and Senate, it appeared the end-the-war effort would be defeated, although by margins that would indicate considerable Congressional opposition to the Administration's Vietnam policy.

45 Backers Expected

In the Senate, it appeared that at most there were about 45 votes for the McGovern-Hatfield amendment, whose supporters were counting upon 39 or 40 "certain" votes and listing 15 other Senators as undecided. Of the uncommitted Senators, McGovern-Hatfield proponents believe about six are leaning in their direction.

In the House, the forecast of Representative Thomas P. O'Neill Jr. of Massachusetts, the Democratic ship, who is leading the "end-the-war" effort, was that there might be 150 members ready to vote for the Nedzi-Whalen amendment.

Reflecting White House opposition, Republicans were fairly solidly opposed, but there was a growing possibility that a majority of the 255 Democrats would vote for the amendment.

As the votes approach, there is intensive lobbying in Congress by such organizations as common cause, a citizens' group headed by John W.

Gardner, former Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare. The McGovern-Hatfield forces also are spending \$100,000 for radio commercials, prepared by te sahtirist, Stan Freberg. They will be broadcast in 25 states in an attempt to influence undecided Senators.

A major element in this year's debate was whether a withdrawal deadline would lead to release of American prisoners held by North Vietnam.

Amendment Modified

The current amendment has been modified to limit the withdrawal to release of the prisoners. It says that the Dec. 31, 1971, deadline can be extended by two months if (North Vietnam) within 60 days after passage fails to make arrangements for release of the prisoners.

It also provides that if North Vietnam does not agree to release the prisoners, Congress may authorize further actions recommended by the President such as suspending the withdrawal deadline.

Through these provisions, Senator Hatfield told the Senate there would be assurance that "the withdrawal of our troops would not be implemented without the certain knowledge that all our prisoners would be returned to us by the time that withdrawal was completed."

But at the same time, he said, the amendment would provide "the vehicle for determining if the North Vietnamese are speaking in good faith" in saying they will negotiate on the release of the prisoners once the United States sets a deadline for withdrawal of its troops.