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Presidential War Powers Limit OKd

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The Senate Foreign Relations Committee yesterday approved 13 to 0 a bill limiting the President's authority to initiate undeclared war without advance approval from Congress.

The bill is the broadest assertion so far of the congressional drive to curb the President's power to start military operations. It is certain to spark a lengthy debate over the President's constitutional war-making powers when it reaches the floor early next year.

The bill was sponsored by Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John C. Stennis (Dem-Miss.) and Senators Jacob K. Javits (Rep-N.Y.), William B. Spong (Dem-Va.) and Thomas F. Eagleton (Dem-Mo.).

It bars the President from initiating combat activities against nations previously at peace with the United States unless he has advance approval from Congress, or unless an emergency arises and it is impossible to consult Congress in advance.

Even when he takes action under the emergency provisions, however, the President is forbidden by the bill from continuing combat activities for more than 30 days, unless he comes to Congress and receives a specific authorization to keep up the fighting. The bill applies only to future wars.

Also approved yesterday, by unanimous committee voice vote, was a bill sponsored by Senator Clifford P. Case (Rep-N.J.) requiring that international executive agreements between the United States and other nations be submitted to Congress within 60 days of the time they are concluded, in classified form if necessary. This bill rose out of disputes between Congress and the White House over the latter's refusal to submit the texts of various agreements demanded by Congress.

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