

HOUSE, BY 219-188, VOTES DOWN FUND TO BOMB CAMBODIA

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Nixon Rebuff on War First
in Lower Chamber—Senate
Is Expected to Concur

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WASHINGTON, May 10 —

The House of Representatives, in a rebuke to President Nixon's Indochina policies, voted 219 to 188 today to block the use of defense funds for the continued bombing of Cambodia.

The action marked the first time in six years that the House has supported an end-the-war amendment. It is considered likely that the action will be endorsed by the more dovish Senate. This would set the stage for a constitutional confrontation between the White House and Congress over the President's war powers.

But even before the House vote, which came on an amendment to a supplemental appropriations bill, the Administration made it clear that the bombing would continue even if Congress refused to provide additional funds.

G.O.P. Leaders Are Bitter

Embittered Republican leaders considered the House action a vote of no confidence in the Nixon's policies in Cambodia. It also appeared to reflect a Congressional challenge to the President's authority as Commander-in-Chief to continue military actions in Indochina in the absence of Congressional approval.

Today's vote was the first on the war issue since the Vietnam cease-fire agreement of Jan. 27 and the withdrawal of American forces from Vietnam.

It came on an Administration request to transfer \$500-million from one Defense Department account to another. It was included in a \$28.5-billion supplemental appropriations bill. The House Appropriations Committee had reduced the transfer authority to \$430-million.

The Defense Department said that it planned to use \$25-million of the transfer funds for bombing in Cambodia through the rest of the fiscal year, which ends June 30. The department also said that it would find funds to finance the bombing even if Congress refused to approve the transfer.

But the issue was posed by critics of the Vietnam war as a clear-cut test of whether Congress would endorse the policy of continued bombing.

Throughout an afternoon of debate unusually tense for the House, the critics argued that if Congress approved the re-

Continued From Page 1, Col. 1

quest, it would be giving approval to the President to continue bombing.

Republican supporters of the Administration asked continuing support of the President, particularly as Henry A. Kissinger, Mr. Nixon's national security adviser, planned new discussions with the North Vietnamese in an attempt to bring a cease-fire in Cambodia.

At one point, Representative John J. Rhodes of Arizona, chairman of the Republican Policy Committee, said, "The President is asking for only a six-week vote of confidence."

The rallying point for the administration critics became an amendment by Representative Joseph P. Addabbo, Democrat of Queens, to delete the fund-transfer. A 219-to-188 vote was far greater margin of defeat than had been expected by the White House, which had been predicting a close vote that could go either way.

Vote Followed Closely

Members were standing on the House floor as they followed the vote tally on the House's new electronic scoreboard.

Half way through the 15-minute count, the Administration was about 20 votes ahead. But then the majority melted and the Administration ran behind throughout the rest of the tally.

As the vote for the amendment reached the 200 mark—30 ahead of the Administration at the time—cheers went up from the Democratic side. When the vote reached 218, a majority, the Democrats began jumping with glee.

Then, as the scoreboard showed 10 seconds left for late votes, Democrats, led by Representative Frank Thompson Jr. of New Jersey and Representative Ronald V. Dellums of California, hugged each other in the back of the chamber and began shouting off the final seconds.

When the vote was announced, Representative Gerald R. Ford, the Republican leader, took the floor and said:

"I have lost before and I will probably lose in the future. But I can't help saying that this is a very, very sad day in the House of Representatives. The House which had a track record of strength and firmness, is now cringing and crumbling."

In reply there was a chorus of moans from the Democratic side.

The Watergate scandal appeared to contribute to the outcome, since the Administration had evident difficulty holding in line some Republicans and Democrats who have normally supported the President on his war policies.

Coalition Fails to Hold

Voting for the amendment were 184 Democrats and 35 Republicans, and against it 45 Democrats and 143 Republicans.

In the past, the Administration has been able to count on a coalition of Republicans and conservative Democrats to defeat any end-the-war amendment.

Reflecting the swing of House opinion on the war issue, Speaker Carl Albert voted for the first time for an end-the-war amendment.

Even Representative George H. Mahon, who as Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee has unflinchingly supported the President on the war issue, admitted he now had "some doubt and skepticism."

But Mr. Mahon pleaded with the House to "give the President a little more time" to achieve a cease-fire, rather than "to rush in with precipitate action that could lead to the collapse of Cambodia."

"Wouldn't that be something to brag about to your grandchildren?" he asked. The answer was a few jeers from his Democratic colleagues.

Mr. Addabbo and his supporters argued that the President had no constitutional authority to continue the bombing in Cambodia and that the request for funds represented an attempt by the White House to have Congress put a "stamp of approval" on the President's military actions in Cambodia.

With even more force, the same argument is being raised in the Senate, which will now consider the supplemental appropriations bill as passed by the House.