

Senate Votes to Conclude 4 National Emergencies

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 7 — The Senate voted today to end four national emergencies dating from the Depression and to curb the authority of the President to govern by emergency proclamation.

The action, by voice vote and without debate, reflected a continuing effort on Capitol Hill to restore to Congress powers that its members have ceded to the White House over several decades.

As approved by the Senate and sent to the House, the National Emergencies Act would end in one year the states of national emergency proclaimed by President Roosevelt in the Depression of 1933, by President Truman to mobilize in 1950 for the war in Korea, and by President Nixon to deal with the national postal strike in 1970 and an international monetary crisis in 1971.

Simplifies Action by Congress

The bill, supported by President Ford, would also establish procedures under which Congress could terminate a future national emergency by concurrent resolution, without being subject to a Presidential veto.

The major effect of the measure would be to suspend all but a handful of the 470 laws that, when invoked by a Presidential declaration of emergency, give the President virtually unchecked powers.

Each of the last seven Pres-

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Presidents and the diminished role of the Congress in making of policy—these factors have all contributed to the erosion of constitutional government.”

The bill was produced by a bipartisan Senate study committee created last year with Senator Mathias and Senator Frank Church, Democrat of Idaho, as co chairmen. A version approved by the Senate Government Operations Committee at their request was revised last week to meet objections of the Ford Administration.

In its final form, the bill specifically repeals seven of the 470 emergency statutes, including a law that permits the jailing of individuals for a year for violating an Executive order in a area designated as a “military zone.”

The termination of the emergencies would be delayed a year from enactment of the legislation to give the Administration and Congress time to devise substitutes for some emergency statutes that are being used routinely by the Government. Moreover, the bill would permit six emergency statutes, including an act governing trade with enemies

of the United States, to remain in force.

The study committee was created to determine the effect of the continuation of the 1950 Korean war emergency. The panel subsequently learned that President Roosevelt's Depression emergency proclamation remained in force, and that none of the four proclamations contained any provision for ending a state of emergency.

Although Presidents have not invoked most of the emergency powers, Senator Mathias said that “permitting this body of potentially authoritarian power to continue in force in the absence of a valid national emergency situation poses a hazard to democratic government.”

The bill provides for a review by Congress every six months after an emergency has been declared to decide whether it should be terminated.

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idents, had he chosen to use the broad authority, could have taken control of private industries, censored news media or imposed martial rule on designated “military zones” that could, in theory, have covered the entire United States.

“For four decades normal constitutional processes have not been the rule,” Senator Charles McC. Mathias, Jr., Republican of Maryland, said today in advocating the legislation.

Erosion of Government

He said that “the wars, emergencies and crisis of various kinds of the past 40 years, in addition to the growth of the executive branch bureaucracy under the leadership of strong