

SENATE VOTES TO CUT OFF COVERT AID FOR ANGOLANS; FORD FORESEES A 'TRAGEDY'

3-DAY FIGHT ENDS

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President Says Failure
to Reverse Action
Would Hurt U.S.

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WASHINGTON, Dec. 19 —

The Senate voted overwhelmingly today for a cutoff of funds for covert military support operations in Angola, a move President Ford immediately deplored as "a deep tragedy for all countries whose security depends on the United States."

The President urged the Senate to reverse itself, declaring, "Failure to do so will

Text of President's statement
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seriously damage the national interest of the United States."

The 54-to-22 vote on an amendment to the defense appropriation bill ended a three-day struggle between a group of liberal Democratic Senators and the Administration and its backers over an involvement in the Angolan civil war that has cost more than \$32 million this year.

Action Not Conclusive

The Senate action is not conclusive, since the House still has an opportunity to reject the amendment.

But in the view of its chief sponsor, John V. Tunney, Democrat of California, approval of the amendment and other moves in the Senate preceding the vote had the effect of denying the Administration any new funds for covert operations in the former Portuguese colony.

The issue pitted those Senators who frequently compared the covert American support for two of three contending movements in Angola with the early United States involvement in Vietnam against administration forces pleading for an obligation for the United States to live up to its responsibilities as a world power.

Key Backing Lost

Those same elements were in contention over the role Congress should play in determining foreign policy, and especially in determining and controlling covert intelligence operations.

The struggle ended with what seemed to be a clear-cut loss for President Ford. Not only was his Constitutional authority over foreign policy apparently weakened, but he also lost the backing of Republicans who support him on other international issues: Clifford P. Case of New Jersey, Bob Packwood of Oregon, Robert Taft Jr. of Ohio and Jacob K. Javits of New York.

It was also a tactical defeat, with the Administration retreating from one position to another in an attempt to meet

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the challenge.

The Senate action moves the defense appropriations legislation back to the House, which is expected to take it up in mid-January. The Administration will make its defense expenditures under a continuing resolution approved earlier this month allowing defense spending at the same level as last year.

"It's absolutely fantastic, we've won," Senate Tunney told reporters when it became apparent that he had enough support to turn back an Administration compromise attempt.

President Ford was somber as he went before the White House press corps after the vote to read a prepared statement.

The President asked how the United States, "the greatest power in the world," could allow the Soviet Union to send large amounts of military equipment and Cuban troops to Angola while leaving the "majority" of the 5 million Angolans without American aid.

"The Senate decision to cut off additional funds for Angola

is a deep tragedy for all countries whose security depends on the United States," the President said. "Ultimately, it will profoundly affect the security of our country as well."

Since Wednesday the President and Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger made a series of tactical retreats before the growing might of the liberal forces assembled by Senator Tunney and his allies—Alan Cranston of California, Dick Clark of Iowa, Mike Mansfield of Montana and Hubert H. Humphrey of Minnesota, Democrats, and Jacob K. Javits, of New York, a Republican.

Yesterday, Robert P. Griffin of Michigan, the Republican whip, tried to substitute an amendment that would have wiped out the Tunney amendment. When that failed, by a vote of 72 to 26, the Administration forces began a filibuster.

Acceptance by Kissinger

A compromise was sought first by John L. McClellan of Arkansas, chairman of the Appropriations Committee and manager of the defense appropriations bill these last six

months, and then by Senator Griffin. In essence it would have given the Administration \$9 million in additional funds for covert operations in Angola while compelling it to submit future requests for such funds to the full Senate.

Senator McClellan's proposal was rejected by President Ford in a telephone conversation, but picked up and accepted later by Secretary Kissinger, who had been invited by Senator Griffin to confer with Senate leaders in the Capitol.

Meanwhile, the filibuster continued, with the Administration hoping that the lure of Christmas vacation would prove stronger than the desire to fight on against the Angola operations.

When Mr. Kissinger left the Capitol at about 7:30 P.M. last night it appeared that he had persuaded some of the wavering Senators to give the Administration more time, and at least some more money for Angola. "I was worried about Javits," Senator Tunney said later, "and about [Pete V.] Domenici [Republican of New Mexico] and Hubert [Humphrey]."

At this stage the Administration gave up its plan to seek \$28 million more for Angola operations. Later Senator McClellan told reporters: "Kissinger called last night after I got home and said the President was ready to accept \$9 million in the bill for Angola."

By morning, however, the Administration's ground had crumbled further. At a closed meeting of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Humphrey and Javits made it plain that the point of the whole effort was to stop funds for covert actions in Angola—all of them.

This setback for the Administration was reinforced at noon when Senator Mansfield, the

majority leader, told Senators Tunney and Cranston that he was now prepared to let the entire defense appropriations bill wait until January with no action at all.