

HOUSE COMMITTEE CUTS \$555-MILLION FROM FOREIGN AID

Expected Approval Would
Make Appropriation Bill
Lowest in Postwar Era

BUDGETARY PINCH CITED

Reduced Total Is \$1.6-Billion
— Economic Assistance
Is Trimmed Hardest

By JOHN W. FINNEY

Special to The New York Times
WASHINGTON, June 1.—The House Appropriations Committee, citing domestic budgetary problems, voted today for a \$555-million cut in the Administration's foreign aid program. The committee approved a bill providing \$1,644,950,000 for foreign aid in the fiscal year that begins July 1. If the committee's recommendation is upheld—and there is every indication that it will be—the foreign aid program will be reduced to the lowest level in the postwar period.

The bill is scheduled to be called up on the House floor later this week, with the expectation that the House will accept the bill presented by its influential Appropriations Committee.

Senate in Similar Mood

In contrast with the past, the Administration cannot safely look to the Senate to restore cuts. In the Senate, the mood also has shifted against the foreign aid program to the point that Senator Mike Mansfield, the Majority Leader, has declared he will vote against any foreign aid appropriations on the ground that they lead only to foreign military involvements.

Foreign aid appropriations, which reached their high point of \$6-billion to \$7-billion in the early years of the Eisenhower Administration, have gradually been declining as first the executive branch and then Congress reduced the program.

The Administration this year submitted the smallest request since the program began. It asked for \$2.2-billion, which was \$509-million below last year's request and \$388-million more than Congress appropriated last year.

Subcommittee Acted

The House foreign aid appropriations subcommittee, headed by Representative Otto E. Passman, Democrat of Louisiana, made a 25 per cent cut, which was endorsed today by the full committee.

The committee pointed to the financial situation confronting the nation. "The committee feels that Federal expenditures must be curtailed wherever reasonably possible, in order to combat the destructive effect of inflation," an accompanying report said.

The reductions were greater in the area of economic assistance for 77 countries. The bill would provide \$1,276,200,000 for economic assistance, \$537-million less than requested by the Administration.

Left untouched was the \$350-

Continued on Page 8, Column 1

Continued From Page 1, Col. 1

million requested for military assistance to 50 countries.

Not included in the bill was \$2.3-billion in military and economic aid for Southeast Asian countries, particularly South Vietnam. This assistance is now included in the defense appropriations bill.

In separate views attached to the committee report, two Republican committee members—Representative Silvio O. Conte of Massachusetts and Representative Donald W. Riegle Jr. of Michigan—criticized a decision by Mr. Passman to delete all the question-and-answer testimony of Secretary of State William P. Rogers.

Mr. Rogers testified in closed session on April 23—seven days before President Nixon ordered the Cambodian operation. At the time, according to the testimony subsequently available without authorization, Mr. Rogers expressed reservations about sending American troops into Cambodia and indicated the Administration would consult with Congress before taking such a step. At Mr. Rogers's request, his testimony was deleted from the printed record of the subcommittee hearings.

Mr. Conte called the action "highly objectionable, completely unjustified and seriously damaging to the interests of the people of this nation."

Contending that Mr. Rogers's testimony was "exactly contrary" to Administration policy as disclosed seven days later, Mr. Riegle said:

"For the Secretary now to erase all his testimony from the record is a very dubious step and can only result in damaging the credibility of the Administration."

The deletion of the testimony was defended by Representative Frank T. Bow of Ohio, the ranking Republican on the committee, who observed the "publishing dated testimony that would only add to the existing confusion on this decision is hardly in the nation's interest."