

Proposal for Aid to Cambodia Stirring Criticism

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WASHINGTON, Nov. 19 —

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee agreed today to hold hearings on the Nixon \$1-billion in additional military aid. A major debate appeared to be building up over \$155-million for Cambodia that was included in the request.

Whether the Administration proposal, submitted to Congress yesterday by the President, will be acted upon during the postelection session was regarded by Congressional leaders as doubtful.

Some elements such as additional aid to Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, South Korea and Indonesia, seemed likely to be approved before Congress adjourns.

'Vital' Link to Vietnam

As for the fund for Cambodia, the question raised, particularly by Senate critics of the war in Vietnam, was whether the United States, by embarking upon new military and economic aid to Cambodia, might be in danger of repeating the Vietnam pattern.

In asking for \$70-million in

economic support and \$85-million in military assistance, the President linked the program to Vietnam by saying that Cambodia's ability to defend herself "is a vital element in the continued success of Vietnamization."

Senator Javits, of New York, observed that the result could be to give Cambodia a "built-in veto" over American withdrawal from Vietnam.

While not directly opposing the request, Senator J. W. Fulbright, committee chairman, found the proposed aid to Cambodia "so similar to the way we became involved in Vietnam."

Senator Frank Church of Idaho, another dovish member of the committee, termed the request "just a further step in the direction of an expanded American involvement in Cambodia."

On Monday Senator Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania, the Republican leader in the Senate, suggested that the Administration request be deferred until the new Congress meets in January. Today, supporting the request, he said that "the choice here is between dollars and

blood" and that it was cheaper to give military assistance than to supply soldiers.

To that comment to reporters, Senator Church responded in a separate interview that "it was dollars that lead to blood in Vietnam."

Little Enthusiasm Seen

In a Congress increasingly skeptical about foreign aid, the President's request has not appeared to arouse much enthusiasm. After the Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird and Secretary of State William P. Rogers briefed Congressional committees late yesterday, no member rose to endorse the Administration's request.

It was regarded as likely that the House of Representatives would approve the request. The Administration's problems are expected to come in the Foreign Relations Committee, which must pass upon the legislation. For the moment the reaction there was more skeptical than contentious.

After the closed meeting Senator Fulbright said the committee had decided to hold hearings "as soon as reasonably feasible." Because of other

commitments, including a Thanksgiving recess, hearings next week seem unlikely. The following week Mr. Laird plans to go to Europe.

White House officials have argued that the aid package is essential to the Nixon Doctrine of reducing American military commitments and that Congressional delay could jeopardize the requested \$500-million in credit aid to Israel for the purchase of weapons.

Senator Scott told reporters today: "If they want aid to Israel, they had better support the whole bill."

It is possible, however, for Congress to break up the package. In the opinion of some Democratic leaders, it will probably appropriate the funds already authorized for Israel but defer consideration of the rest until next year.

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