

Rogers Sees a Long-Term Need For Military Aid to Cambodia

By JOHN W. FINNEY DEC 9 1970

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WASHINGTON, Dec. 8— Secretary of State William P. Rogers told Congress today that the United States must assume a long-term program of assistance in Cambodia, but he emphasized that the Administration was intent on avoiding direct military involvement there.

The Senate, meanwhile, approved a \$66-billion defense appropriations bill containing a provision prohibiting the President from introducing American ground troops into Cambodia without the consent of Congress.

The defense bill—\$2.3-billion less than the Administration had requested—was approved by the Senate by a vote of 89 to 0 after one day of discussion and sent to a Senate-House conference committee.

Along with Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird, Mr. Rogers testified before a generally sympathetic Senate appropriations subcommittee in support of the Administration's request for \$1-billion in supplementary military aid, including \$255-million for Cambodia.

The request for Cambodia, which could become a major controversy of this session of Congress, is running into opposition from some members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee who are fearful that an American commitment to support the Lon Nol Government could lead to a United States involvement in Cambodia equal to that on South Vietnam.

Fund Burt Is Approved

In a climax to the long controversy in the Senate over imposing Congressional restraints on the President's authority to undertake military activities in Cambodia, the Senate, with a minimum of debate, accepted a Senate Appropriations Committee provision in the defense appropriations prohibiting the use of any of the funds to finance the introduction of American ground combat troops into Laos, Thailand or Cambodia."

The Administration made no attempt to oppose the prohibition in the Senate. This appeared to increase the likelihood that the Senate provision would be accepted by a Senate-House Conference Committee that will be assigned to reconcile differences between the Senate and House bills.

A similar structure on ground troops in Laos and Thailand was incorporated, with Administration approval, in the defense appropriations act last year, and included in the de-

fense bill again this year by the House.

At the suggestion of Senators John Sherman Cooper, Republic of Kentucky, and Frank Church, Democrat of Idaho, the co-sponsors of the Cambodian amendment in the Senate, the prohibition was broadened by the Senate Appropriations committee to include Cambodia.

President Nixon, he said, "has made clear he has no intention of using combat forces, or military advisers in Cambodia."

Two Areas Left Open

In the course of their testimony, however, Mr. Rogers and Mr. Laird left open the possibility of two areas of military involvement in Cambodia by American forces. Mr. Laird said it would be necessary to have a military mission in Cambodia, "which we hope to hold to a minimum," to account for the use of the military equipment supplied by the United States. And Mr. Rogers, without any cross-examination by the subcommittee, talked in terms of American planes providing bombing support for the Cambodian Government forces.

In addition to the Cambodian aid, the Administration request includes \$500-million in military credits for Israel, \$30-million for Jordan, \$5-million for Lebanon, \$150-million for South Korea, \$65-million for South Vietnam and \$13-million for Indonesia.

With the exception of the Israeli aid, which has already been authorized, the rest of the program normally must be authorized in separate legislation before any money can be appropriated. The authorizing legislation is handled by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

If the Foreign Relations Committee delays action on the authorizing legislation in the closing days of the session, there were suggestions by Republican members to have the appropriations bill passed by the House and then accepted by the Senate in a Senate-House conference committee.

Through this route they hoped to overcome any last-minute objections in the Senate that the aid had not been authorized by Congress.