

PULLOUT DEADLINE VOTED BY SENATE

Mansfield's Plan, Linked to
P.O.W.'s, Sets 6 Months

By JOHN W. FINNEY

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Sept. 30—

The Senate, reaffirming its past support of a deadline for ending the Vietnam war, went on record today in favor of the total withdrawal of all American forces from Indochina in six months, provided American prisoners of war were released.

By a 57-38 vote, the Senate adopted an amendment offered by Senator Mike Mansfield, the majority leader, declaring that it was "the policy of the United States" to terminate all military operations in Indochina "at the earliest practicable date," with all military forces to be withdrawn in six months if North Vietnam in return would release all American prisoners of war.

The amendment is similar to one that the Senate attached last June to the draft extension bill. That amendment would have established a nine-month deadline for withdrawal. The original amendment was weakened in a Senate-House conference, becoming a statement of Congressional opinion that the President should set a "date certain" for troop withdrawal, contingent only upon release of the prisoners.

Similar Dilution Predicted

Senator John C. Stennis, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said that the new version of the Mansfield amendment, this time attached to the military procurement bill, would face a similar dilution when it went to conference with what he described as a "hostile" House.

The fate of the new Mansfield amendment depends largely on whether there has been a shift of sentiment in the House against the war and in favor of a fixed deadline for withdrawal. Last June, the House refused by a 219-175 vote to instruct its conferees to accept the original Mansfield amendment.

Within the Senate, sentiment appeared to be shifting slightly against the Mansfield amendment, as both doves and hawks showed weariness about again passing a disengagement amendment that seemed certain to be weakened in conference.

Wins 4 Fewer Votes

The new version received four fewer votes than the original Mansfield amendment, which was approved by a 61-38 vote last June 22 after a preliminary vote of 57-42.

Three Senators—Howard H. Baker Jr., Republican of Tennessee, Ted Stevens, Republican of Alaska, and Herman A. Talmadge, Democrat of Georgia—switched positions to vote against the new amendment. This loss was partly offset by the switch of Senator Norris Cotton, Republican of New Hampshire, to support the amendment, and the vote of Senator Robert T. Stafford, Republican of Vermont, who replaced the late Winston L. Prouty, who voted against the original amendment.

The Mansfield amendment also lost three votes because of the absence of Senators Joseph M. Montoya, Democrat of New Mexico, and Daniel K. Inouye, Democrat of Hawaii, and a paired vote given by Senator Charles H. Percy, Republican of Illinois, who thus withheld his vote.

Opposed by Administration

The Administration once again opposed the Mansfield amendment as an unnecessary Congressional intrusion upon the President's powers that would remove any incentive for North Vietnam to negotiate an end to the war and a release of prisoners. But realizing that it had no chance to defeat the Amendment in the Senate, the White House refrained from putting its political prestige on the line.

The White House did send a letter from Clark MacGregor, counsel to the President for Congressional relations, to Senator Hugh Scott, the Republican leader, quoting recent statements by the President that the Administration was committed to total withdrawal in a way that would obtain release of the prisoners and prevent a Communist take-over of South Vietnam.

In the three-hour debate in the Senate, many of the doves showed little enthusiasm for going through another exercise that they privately said probably would not affect Administration policy.

This mood was reflected in the opening comments of Senator Mansfield, who said he detected in the Senate "a feeling of apathy and of what's the use" and "a general desire to wish these issues away."

"But Vietnam cannot, will not and must not be wished away," the majority leader said, as he pulled out of his pocket the latest Vietnam casualty figures, issued today by the Pentagon.

"I know recitation of casualties gets monotonous," he said, "but these figures represent human beings, fellow Americans." Noting that 55,410 Americans had been killed in Indochina and 301,747 had been wounded since January, 1961, he asked:

"What for? Why. We will never be able to answer those questions to our satisfaction, and we know it."

Less than a dozen Senators were on the floor as he spoke.