

Fact Finders

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Favor Aid to

Cambodia

Washington

The Ford administration won partial support yesterday for emergency aid to Cambodia from the eight members of Congress who visited Indochina last week.

Visibly affected by the plight of Cambodia's civilians caught in the war, several anti-war members of the group joined in supporting \$75 million in new food aid for Cambodia. In addition, a majority of the divided eight now reportedly favors \$125 million in new military aid for Cambodia, a little over half of the administration's request.

A combination of these two forms of aid is now likely to be presented as a compromise substitute for the Ford administration's strongly opposed emergency request for Cambodia.

President Ford asked Congress for \$222 million new military aid for Cambodia, and an end to the aid ceiling to permit more food aid to Cambodia.

No agreement was reached yesterday among those who returned from the trip on the President's other request for \$300 million in new military aid for South Vietnam.

The eight, who were gone

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from Washington for periods varying from a week to ten days, returned at 6 a.m. yesterday physically and emotionally strained, and under pressure to reach quick conclusions.

Their recommendations were required, said Representative John Flynt (Dem-Ga.), acting chairman of the group, for a meeting today of a House appropriations subcommittee headed by Representative Otto Passman, (Dem-La.).

The Passman subcommittee is scheduled to review language of last year's delayed foreign aid bill, to which Passman seeks to add the new Indochina emergency assistance.

Among the fact-finders who visited South Vietnam and Cambodia there were

several modifications of position.

Representative Paul McCloskey Jr. (Rep-Calif.), a Marine lieutenant in the Korean war, said he remains basically as opposed as ever to further U.S. support of the wars in either Cambodia or South Vietnam.

"The position that I've reached," he said, "is based on getting the fewest number of Cambodians killed, and getting them through until June, when the rainy season begins."

If the military perimeter now being held around the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh is shattered, McCloskey said, the result can be "hundreds of thousands of people . . . killed."

As "a short-term decision" for what he called "an American-created disaster," McCloskey said, "I will vote for enough rice and medicine and enough ammunition to maintain the perimeter until June 1. I don't believe the United States ought to have one man, one dollar, or one ambassador in Cambodia after July 1."

At a late afternoon meeting in an executive session presided over by Flynt, McCloskey said it was agreed that "we will testify unanimously: before the Passman subcommittee in favor of \$75 million in food aid for Cambodia."

According to Representative Bella Abzug (Dem-N.Y.) and Representative Millicent Fenwick (Rep-N.J.), a majority of the delegation favors the additional \$125 million in military aid for Cambodia, but there is still sharp division over that.

Abzug said she agreed on food and medicine but drew the line on ammunition.

Fenwick told newsmen, "I think all of us have been deeply shaken by what we've learned." While she did not intend to vote for any additional U.S. funds for Indochina before making the trip, she said, the situation is "not that simple" in the present dire emergency for the people involved.

Representative Donald Fraser (Dem-Minn.), who did not make the group's one-day trip to Cambodia, was reported still to be basically opposed to new funds for Vietnam and Cambodia.

Senator Dewey Bartlett (Rep-Okla.), the one senator in the group, came and went as a strong advocate of continuing support for both nations, as did Representative Bill Chappell Jr. (Dem-Fla.)

Both said "a blood bath" by the Communist-led forces in both countries is assured without extensive U.S. aid.

While McCloskey has taken the lead in charging that the trip showed there are "political prisoners" in South Vietnam, including newsmen, both Bartlett and Chappell disputed that description in press briefings.

The State Department announced yesterday that the United States is flying in 20,000 metric tons of rice from South Vietnam to Cambodia to help war victims. This action followed congressional pressure to put more rice in the hands of civilians, with congressional charges that rice in Cambodia is being allocated primarily to soldiers — a charge which the State Department denied.

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