

SF Chew

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# Congress Cool to Ford Troop Plan

## Washington

Congressional resistance developed yesterday against President Ford's request for authority to use American troops, if necessary, to protect the evacuation of South Vietnamese citizens.

Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield predicted "great reluctance" by Congress to give the President the authority that he requested in his foreign policy speech Thursday night.

In addition to "clarifying" his authority to use troops in the evacuation of American citizens from Saigon, Mr. Ford asked for congressional permission to use the troops to protect the evacuation of "those Vietnamese to whom we have a special obligation and whose lives may be endangered, should the worst come to pass."

Senator Robert Byrd of West Virginia, the Democratic whip in the Senate, who has taken the lead in drafting the necessary legislation, said he is flatly opposed to using American troops to help evacuate Vietnamese citizens. Such a step, he said, would be "impractical and dangerous"

and "if we started that, we would just be getting back into the war."

The two Democratic leaders suggested that the United States should quietly begin evacuating American citizens from Saigon to avert the possibility that American troops might have to be used to rescue them.

A similar suggestion came from Senator Frank Church (Dem-Ida.), who said in a statement that leaving the Americans in Saigon "exposes them to the imminent danger of direct attack, possibly from within as well as from without the city."

In the House, a "sense of

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Congress" resolution urging the President to evacuate all Americans from South Vietnam within seven days picked up considerable support at a meeting of freshmen members.

"We're saying by this resolution that he knows Congress is not going to approve that military aid, so he should get those people out of there and stop playing political games with them," said Representative Bob Carr (Dem-Mich.), one of the sponsors of the resolution.

Opposition continued to mount in Congress to the President's request for \$722 million in emergency military aid for the Saigon government — a request that administration officials linked to plans to evacuate all Americans and tens of thousands of South Vietnamese citizens.

One of the principal justifications advanced by administration officials, in amplifying on the President's speech, was that the addi-

tional military aid might create a stabilized situation permitting withdrawal of the Americans and South Vietnamese whose lives might be endangered in a Communist takeover.

The President also asked for \$250 million in economic and humanitarian aid for Saigon, and while Congress may approve at least a portion of this, there was a nearly unanimous opinion among legislators that Congress would reject any additional military assistance.

As privately acknowledged by officials, the administration is in somewhat of a dilemma over what to do about the Americans remaining in Saigon. It is reluctant to announce even a partial evacuation for fear of a demoralizing effect on the Saigon government; at the same time, as was evidenced in the President's speech, the administration realizes that it must begin making plans for evacuation in the light of the increasing likelihood that the Saigon government will collapse.

New York Times