

House Unit Votes Some Vietnam Aid

Washington

The House Appropriations Committee voted \$165 million in military aid and the same amount in humanitarian aid to South Vietnam yesterday after the administration made another appeal for help in Saigon's fight for survival.

The appropriations com-

mittee acted after Army Chief of Staff Frederick C. Weyand testified that while Communist forces "have the capability to overwhelm" South Vietnam, U.S. aid might deter them from doing so.

"Whether they will try that depends on their view of the cost," said Weyand. If the

United States provides more military aid to South Vietnam, Communist forces might decide they would rather negotiate than suffer the losses needed to capture Saigon and win a military victory. Without more U.S. aid, South Vietnam will certainly fall soon, said Weyand.

Representative George

Mahon (Dem-Tex.), appropriations committee chairman, said the committee voted 36-15 to reduce the military aid figure from the \$200 million he had recommended to \$165 million, and then voted to send it to the House by a voice vote.

Mahon said the committee

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has no assurance the military aid will make a difference, but felt it should be provided so the Saigon government "will not be dealing from a position of total weakness."

The military aid faces an uphill fight in the House, where the caucus of all House Democrats voted last month 189-49 against any further aid to South Vietnam. Mahon said some committee members opposed to more aid voted for the bill in order to let the House vote on the issue.

The \$165 million in military aid was part of \$300 million previously authorized but not appropriated. Similarly, the \$165 million for humanitarian aid came from \$177 million in left over authorization for economic aid. A bill to raise the humanitarian aid ceiling by another \$150 million will come up in the House today, and the House Armed Services Committee will vote on the President's request to increase the military aid ceiling by \$42 million.

There was pessimism in the Senate that South Vietnam could hold at all, even with military aid, as the Senate took up a bill authorizing \$200 million for humanitarian aid to South Vietnam and the costs of removing U.S. citizens and endangered Vietnamese.

Rather than militancy, the mood was one of resignation and relief that the long and costly U.S. involvement is drawing to a close.

"They're down the tube," said Senator Barry Goldwater (Rep-Ariz.) about South Vietnam. Senator Clifford Case (Rep-N.J.), GOP floor manager of the \$200 million measure, said there was a "kind of inevitability about what happened that no change in our policy could have affected."

There is much talk on Capitol Hill of negotiations if South Vietnam can hold out militarily a bit longer, but few seem to believe they can result in the creation of a permanently independent South Vietnam.

Rather, the best that many members believe is

possible through negotiations is creation of a new South Vietnamese government consisting of the tripartite National Commission on National Reconciliation envisioned by the Paris accords. This would include the Viet Cong and probably be dominated by them.

Eventually it would be expected to be taken over by the Communists altogether, but at least it might avert a bloody battle for Saigon and create a "form" of independent government, fleeting as that might be.

Earlier, with only about a dozen members on the floor, the Senate by voice vote approved a resolution asking the President to press for negotiations to attain a political settlement and to carry out the Paris accords.

Both GOP leader Hugh Scott and Democratic leader Mike Mansfield said the administration had been trying for ten days or more to bring about negotiations to end the fighting.

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