

# Senate Votes to Let Ford Use Troops in Evacuation

NYTimes

By DAVID E. ROSENBAUM

Special to The New York Times

APR 26 1975

WASHINGTON, April 25 — The Senate, by a vote of 46 to 17, gave its final approval today to legislation that would let President Ford use combat troops to evacuate Americans and, in limited circumstances, South Vietnamese from Saigon.

The House was not in session today, and final action there on the measure is not planned until Tuesday or Wednesday.

The Senate vote came after Senate-House conferees formally adopted a compromise measure that, in addition to the authority to use the troops, would allot \$327-million to pay for an evacuation operation and provide humanitarian relief for South Vietnamese.

## Ban Casts Some Doubt

A provision of the bill, forbidding the channeling of any money through the North Vietnamese or the Vietcong, make it unlikely that relief money will be spent if South Vietnam falls.

Moreover, the bill contains no money for Cambodian refugees, though the conferees unanimously adopted a resolution urging the President to use existing food-assistance laws to help Cambodians.

The bill would command the Administration to reduce the number of Americans still in Saigon to a bare minimum. Specifically, the bill states, "Other than the minimum number of personnel determined by the President to be essential to carry on critical functions of the United States mission or to carry out such evacuation, all such citizens who are employed by, or in the service of, the United States, and all such dependents, shall be evacuated as rapidly as possible after the date of enactment of this act."

## Withdrawal Issue Pressed

To add further emphasis to their desire that the pace of evacuation of Americans be accelerated, the conferees adopted a separate resolution that expressed concern over the number of Americans and dependents still in Saigon and urged a rapid withdrawal.

tration to evacuate Americans, if possible, without engaging in combat, and states, "In the event that such evacuation cannot be accomplished without involving such armed forces in hostilities or in situations where involvement in hostilities clearly indicated by the circumstances, such evacuation shall, if feasible, be accomplished in a single operation."

Pentagon officials have said that 1,500 persons could be flown out by helicopter from Saigon in about nine hours.

## The Limits, in Detail

The conferees took pains to limit the circumstances in which troops could engage in combat to evacuate South Vietnamese, the restrictions set were as follows:

¶ "The number of such United States armed forces will not be required beyond those essential to and directly connected with the evacuation of citizens of the United States and their dependents."

¶ "The duration of the use of such United States armed forces to hostilities will not thereby be extended:

¶ "Such evacuation will be confined to areas where United States forces are present for the purpose of protecting citizens of the United States and their dependents while they are being evacuated."

## An Allusion to Vietnamese

The language means that Vietnamese could be in a combat operation as long as it was ancillary to the evacuation of Americans.

President Ford asked Congress for \$722-million in military aid, \$250-million in humanitarian assistance, and broad authority to use troops as he saw fit to evacuate Vietnamese.

The \$327-million approved in the bill is merely a ceiling on appropriations. No money can be spent until it is appropriated. Congress is expected to appropriate some, if not all, of the money next week.

## Direct Link to Pullout

At least \$150-million can be spent only for relief aid. The rest can be spent either for relief or to pay for an evacuation operation, according to the legislation.

Money for military use would have to be tied directly to an evacuation effort.

Other provisions would require the President to report to Congress daily on the pace of evacuation, and would command him to give Congress, within four days of enactment, "his general plan for the evacuation from Vietnam."

Senator Dick Clark, Democrat of Iowa, said on the Senate floor that there were still more than 1,600 Americans and Vietnamese dependents in South Vietnam, and that there was "no justification" for their presence there.

Senator James Abourezk, Democrat of South Dakota, said it was "obvious" that he Administration was "holding Americans in South Vietnam hostage so that more Vietnamese could be evacuated."

The bill orders the Adminis-