



## Senate Stage Is Set For Blow to President

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WASHINGTON—The widening breach between President Nixon and the Senate over the use of U.S. troops in Cambodia was quietly revealed one day last week when a Republican senator abruptly canceled an appointment in his office with a White House aide. The senator, a political moderate from the Midwest, gave a "scheduled conflict" as the reason, but the real reason was more fundamental. He did not want to waste time explaining to the presidential aide that nothing could change his mind about supporting the amendment to compel Mr. Nixon to withdraw all U.S. troops from Cambodia by June 30.

Another Republican moderate, also from the party's Middle West heartland, told us that he had no qualms at all about voting to impose the June 30 deadline in the amendment of Republican Sen. John Sherman Cooper of Kentucky and Democratic Sen. Frank Church of Idaho to the Military Sales Act.

"Sure it'll hurt the President," he told us, "but damn it, he brought it on himself."

Even such conservative pillars of the Republican establishment as Sen. Norris Cotton of New Hampshire are now leaning toward the Cooper-Church amendment, partly to protest the Cambodian intervention, partly to assert senatorial prerogatives.

Furthermore, all but overlooked in the bitter political struggle over the Coop-

er-Church amendment is the fact that the increasingly hostile Foreign Relations Committee has made other, far-reaching changes in the Military Sales Act, drastically cutting the power of the Executive Branch. These were slipped into the House-passed bill last week.

All these amendments were passed by the Foreign Relations Committee after the Cambodian intervention, and all passed without any opposition vote.

As a legal restraint on President Nixon, this amendment is meaningless. It will never pass the more conservative and hawkish House. But as a political blow, passage by the Senate would be more damaging even than the President's rebuff by the Senate on two successive nominees to the Supreme Court.

Accordingly, the stage now seems irretrievably set for the Senate to deliver a punishing blow at the President.