

CONGRESS CHIEFS AGREE FOREIGN AID SHOULD CONTINUE

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AIM IS STOPGAP ACTION

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Senate Group Plans 30-Day
Measure to Be Followed
by an Interim Program

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WASHINGTON, Nov. 1 — Congressional leaders agreed today that the foreign aid program should have a new lease on life, but there were wide differences about the duration and scope of any extension as well as the shape of any permanent legislation to follow.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee agreed in closed session that the aid program should be continued beyond Nov. 15, the date when the current spending authority is scheduled to expire.

While no votes were taken today and no formal decisions were made, members said an effort would be made to extend the authority for 30 days. During that time, they said, the panel will try to agree on an "interim" program pending development of a new kind of program during next year's session.

'Quickie Stopgap' Move

This conformed to a proposal by Representative George H. Mahon of Texas, chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, to seek approval of what he described as a "quickie stopgap" measure extending aid operations for 30 days while some compromise is being worked out. Mr. Mahon was supported in this by Speaker Carl Albert of Oklahoma, who said such a measure could be brought before the House in a few days or early next week.

Mr. Mahon's proposal would permit continued operation of the economic and military aid programs at the \$2.9-billion annual level that the Senate had agreed to just before its unexpected vote Friday night to kill the new authorizing legislation, 41 to 27.

Some Senate committeemen talked about limiting any 30-day extension resolution to administrative and operating expenses to avoid hardship to overseas and domestic employees of the Agency for International Development.

The State Department said, in

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this regard, that 4,126 employees of the agency would go off the payroll on Nov. 15 unless an extension was voted.

Charles W. Bray 3d, the State Department spokesman, said that with their departure the foreign-aid system would come to a halt regardless of the amount of unspent aid funds left in the pipeline. The State Department has put this figure at \$3.4-billion, of which \$3-billion is said to have been committed.

Senators also spoke favorably today of including funds for Pakistani refugees and for military assistance to Israel while provisions of separate "interim" legislation were being worked out. This measure would be submitted to the Senate before adjournment of this session.

Senator J. W. Fulbright of Arkansas, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, said after its 90-minute meeting, "I think one thing I can say is that there wasn't any disposition to do nothing." He added:

"Something will be done but what it will be, I have no idea. As they say downtown, I want to leave my options open."

Meanwhile, the Administration stepped up its campaign to get a 90-day extension resolution through both legislative branches with authority to continue the \$2.64-billion spending rate approved in last year's appropriation. At the White House and the State and Defense Departments, spokesmen took a noticeably harder line against "piecemeal" legislation such as members of the Foreign Relations Committee were considering.

President Nixon conferred during the day with Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird and with Henry A. Kissinger, the Presidential assistant for national security. Mr. Nixon also scheduled a meeting with Secretary of State William P. Rogers for tomorrow.

Revival Program Urged

After the President's meeting with Mr. Kissinger, Ronald L. Ziegler, the White House press secretary, told newsmen that revival of a "balanced, integrated and coordinated foreign-aid program" was necessary to avoid weakening the President's ability to negotiate with China and the Soviet Union.

"It is important at this time in history when we are moving toward an era of negotiation which those countries that we cannot and should not dilute the incentive of those negotiating by ending foreign assistance," Mr. Ziegler said.

Senator Fulbright had said that, to him, "the critical issue is the military side of foreign aid," particularly such items as an increase in aid to Cambodia, which would have received up to \$341-million under the defeated Senate measure.

Evidently aware of this, Mr. Ziegler said at a late White House briefing that what he gave as the President's position program. "A coordinate foreign-

aid program must include military assistance," he said.

Secretary Laird suggested on leaving the President's office that an end of military aid could have a direct effect on United States plans to continue withdrawing troops from South Vietnam and South Korea. He said it also bore directly on efforts of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to negotiate with the Warsaw Pact countries for mutual reductions of troops in Europe.

The Secretary's spokesman at the Pentagon, Jerry W. Friedheim, said that "we would not like to be in a position where we would have to leave men overseas that we had intended to bring home."

Mr. Laird said that the abrupt ending of military aid "could not have come at a worse time, as the Administration is trying to move from confrontation to negotiation."

The Defense Secretary who is leaving this week on a tour of Asian capitals, said, "I am going to assure the Vietnamese that the Senate's action on the aid bill is not final and that corrective action will be taken."

Senator Fulbright said that if there was a consensus in his committee on anything it was that "we should take advantage of this opportunity to work some revisions in the program including a number of things that reflect attitudes formed during the cold war.

Senator Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania, the Republican leader, said he favored a clear line of demarcation between economic and military aid programs "even if both are to be retained in this bill as in the past."

Both Senator Fulbright and Senator Frank Church, democrat of Idaho, indicated they would resist any effort to include in interim legislation provision for economic and military aid to Cambodia for which the rejected Senate measure provided \$341-million.

Senator Fulbright said he planned to invite Secretary Rogers and Dr. John A. Hanahan, A.I.D. administrator, to testify before the committee in the next few days.