

# Congress Leaders Break Deadlock Over Aid Funds

NYTimes

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Special to The New York Times DEC 11 1971

WASHINGTON, Dec. 10 — A deadlock over foreign aid, the last major obstacle to adjournment, was broken today as Congressional leaders agreed to bypass a Senate amendment on the withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam.

Under the plan worked out by Democratic and Republican leaders, Congress, instead of passing a foreign aid bill, will put through a stop-gap resolution permitting spending for foreign economic and military assistance to continue at an annual rate of about \$2.6-billion until March 15.

With the agreement, it appeared that the first session of the 92d Congress could adjourn as early as next Monday, although it will more likely be Tuesday or Wednesday before all legislative business can be completed.

Privately, some members confessed that they were under

pressure from their wives to remain in town until Wednesday so that they could attend White House Christmas receptions that President Nixon has arranged for the first three days of next week.

As Congress began clearing its legislative calendar for adjournment, the following steps were taken:

¶The Senate failed to override President Nixon's veto of a bill that would have provided a vast network of day care centers and other services for the nation's children. The vote, 51 to 36, fell 7 short of the two-thirds required to override a veto.

¶The Senate passed and sent to the White House legislation authorizing \$1.6-billion over the next three years for an expanded research attack on cancer. The Senate also passed and sent to the House legislation authorizing \$142-million over the next three years for dental care for children.

¶The House passed legislation extending the President's authority to control wages and prices for one year, until April 30, 1973. The bill, an essential element in President Nixon's economic stabilization program, now goes to a Senate-House conference to resolve differences between it and a Sen-

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ate version.

¶The Senate passed and sent to the White House a supplemental appropriation bill providing \$3.4-billion for various Government agencies.

The foreign aid authorization bill, which sets a ceiling on spending, had become deadlocked between the House and the Senate over an amendment sponsored by Mike Mansfield, Democrat of Montana, the Senate majority leader. The amendment would have established as national policy the total withdrawal of American forces from Indochina in six months, contingent only upon the release of American prisoners of war.

In a House-Senate conference committee, House conferees had refused to yield to Senator Mansfield's demand that an up-or-down vote on his amendment be permitted in the House. In return, the Senate leadership, in the absence of an authorization bill, refused to permit a Senate vote on a House-passed foreign aid appropriation bill, which provides the money for the programs.

At a meeting this morning called by Hugh Scott, Republican of Pennsylvania, the Senate minority floor leader, House and Senate leaders decided, over Senator Mansfield's continuing opposition, to bypass the Vietnam issue.

## Program Continued

Instead of either an authorization or appropriation bill for the current fiscal year, which ends next June 30, it was agreed that the House next week, probably on Monday, would pass a so-called continuing resolution permitting foreign aid spending until March 15 at about the same rate as last year. The resolution would also contain authority to provide military credits to Israel for the purchase of weapons, including Phantom jet fighters.

The decision was a rebuff to the Senate, and in particular its majority leader, in its efforts to assert a role in the formulation of foreign policy. It was a victory for the Administration and the House in the intense maneuverings that have developed since the Senate over a month ago first killed and then revived the foreign aid bill.

In effect, the Administration got several hundred million dollars more for foreign aid than it would have if an appropriation bill had been passed. The \$2.6-billion rate is about \$900-million less than the amount requested by the Administration, but with the heavy cuts already approved by a Senate Appropriations subcommittee, it appeared that, at most, any appropriation bill would have provided about \$2.2-billion.

## Restrictions Are Deleted

In the process, the Administration also got rid of various restrictive amendments that the Senate wrote into the foreign aid authorization to curb the power of the executive branch.

One would have required annual authorization of the State Department's budget, thus giving the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee a greater legislative hold over the department. Another, in a novel use of Congressional power over the pursestrings, would have provided that the foreign aid funds could not be spent until the President released various funds for domestic programs that he has impounded.

In recent days, Senator Mansfield has been urged by some of his colleagues to yield on his Vietnam amendment in order to preserve the other restrictive amendments and thus help establish the principle of Congressional co-equality with the executive branch.

## Compromise Ruled Out

But Senator Mansfield, who acknowledges that he has become "somewhat single-minded" on the issue, refused to yield, thus ruling out a compromise with the House.

Senator Mansfield's bargaining position was critically weakened when Senator Allen J. Ellender, Democrat of Louisiana, chairman of the Appropriations Committee, who was eager to leave next week on a trip to Antarctica, agreed with House leaders on a continuing resolution to break the impasse. Until that point, Senator Ellender had been declaring his opposition to any more continuing resolutions for the foreign aid program on the ground that they were undercutting the authority of the Senate and its legislative committees.

In the leadership meeting, Senator Mansfield continued to express his opposition to a continuing resolution and to renew his demand for a House vote on his Vietnam amendment, which was again rejected by House leaders.

## Concession by Mansfield

But Senator Mansfield made the crucial concession that, he would permit the continuing resolution to be considered by the Senate in the closing hours of the first session. As majority leader, he has the right to determine which legislation will be considered.

Senator Mansfield later told reporters that he regarded the decision as "a rebuff to the Senate" but explained that, because of the weary, adjournment-minded mood of Congress, he saw little reason to pursue his fight for the Vietnam

amendment. The Administration and House leaders have relied on just this adjournment pressure to push a continuing resolution through the Senate.

In principle, Senator Mansfield can renew his fight when the continuing resolution expires in March. But, in the opinion of many in Congress, the bypassing of the Mansfield amendment probably marks the end of a serious Senate challenge to Mr. Nixon's Vietnam policies and at least a temporary retreat in the attempt by the Senate to assert a voice in the formulation of foreign policy.