

# House Democrats, 144-58, Uphold End-the-War Move

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WASHINGTON, April 20—House Democrats, denouncing both the Nixon Administration for its "dangerous escalation" of the war and North Vietnam for its invasion of South

Vietnam, voted overwhelmingly today to support legislation that would set a termination date for the American military involvement.

At a party caucus, they approved by a vote of 144 to 58 a resolution directing the House Foreign Affairs Committee to report to the House within 30 days legislation providing for prompt termination of the American involvement in the war, subject only to the release of American prisoners of war.

The resolution denounced the recent bombings of North Vietnam as a "dangerous escalation of our role in the Indochina war and a direct contradiction of the Administration's stated purpose of 'winding down' the war."

This condemnation of Administration policy, combined with the unusual instructions to the committee, was initial-

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ly approved by a vote of 135 to 66.

Then, as a concession to the House leadership, the provision was added condemning "the current military invasion" of South Vietnam by North Vietnamese forces. This version was then approved by the 144-to-58 margin.

## Setback for Administration

Adoption of the resolution, sponsored by Representative Thomas P. O'Neill Jr. of Massachusetts, the Democratic whip, was regarded by the antiwar bloc as a major break-through in their effort to push end-the-war legislation through the House.

In the past, the leaders of the Foreign Affairs Committee,

with the support of Speaker Carl Albert, have generally tried to block consideration of such legislation, either in committee or on the floor.

The action of the caucus was regarded as a serious setback for the Administration, which has been able to rely upon a coalition of Democrats and Republicans to block a direct vote on end-the-war amendments approved by the Senate.

The effect of the resolution — an unusual exercise of the authority of the Democratic caucus over committees and party members — was to demand that the committee report some form of end-the-war legislation to the House and to make the issue one of party loyalty.