

Senate Panel Votes, 24-0, To Bar Cambodian Raids

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By JOHN W. FINNEY MAY 16 1973

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WASHINGTON, May 15 — The Senate Appropriations Committee, in a further Congressional rebuff to President Nixon's Indochina policies, voted 24 to 0 today to cut off all funds for bombing in Cambodia.

With its vote, the conservative-dominated committee, which in the past has generally supported the Administration's Indochina policies, added significant momentum to the growing Congressional drive to halt the bombing.

The legal effect of the amendment would be that the Pentagon, which is running short of operational funds, would be left without money to continue the bombing in Cambodia during the remainder of the fiscal year, which ends June 30. United States bombing in Laos ended in February, after a cease-fire was agreed upon there.

The surprise move within the Appropriations Committee to cut off all funds for Cambodian bombing was led by Senator Thomas F. Eagleton, Democrat of Missouri, who argued that denying just the transfer authority was "defective" because

"we want the bombing stopped now."

The Eagleton amendment was attached to a bill that would provide \$3.2-billion in supplemental appropriations for various parts of the Government in the rest of this fiscal year. The unanimous decision to accept the amendment came after reportedly "not a word" was raised against the amendment's purpose of seeking to close the loophole left by the actions of the House and the Senate subcommittee.

Mansfield: United 'at Last'

Only two members of the 26-man committee did not join in the 24-to-0 vote. Both Senators — John Stennis, Democrat of Mississippi, and Gale McGee, Democrat of Wyoming — were absent.

Among the Republican conservatives voting for the Eagleton amendment were Milton R. Young of North Dakota, Roman L. Hruska of Nebraska, Norris Cotton of New Hampshire and Hiram L. Fong of Hawaii.

That such Republicans would have split with the Administration by supporting an end-the-

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bombing amendment opposed by the White House was the subject of excited conversation among Senators and their aides as word swept through the Senate dining room and the cloak rooms.

"At last we seem to be united," said Senator Mike Mansfield, the majority leader, who for nearly six years has been seeking some legislative way to end the fighting in Indochina.

As described by several Senators, two principal factors seemed to be behind the sudden coalescing of Senate opinion against further military action in Indochina.

One was a weariness with continued military involvement in Indochina now that American troops have been withdrawn and prisoners of war released. The other was a concern that continued bombing in Cambodia might lead to the downing of planes and the capture by the Communists of more Americans.

Asked to explain the Appropriations Committee action, Senator Young, the ranking Republican on the panel, said:

"I think we have all concluded we can't accomplish any more over there, we have got our prisoners of war out with honor, and what's the point of going on supporting a government that seems to have no will to fight and is corrupt?"

Senator Sottron, who supported both the Johnson and Nixon Administrations on Indochina, told reporters that with the troops and prisoners home, "I consider that it's a new ball game."

"As far as I am concerned," he said, "I want to get the hell out of there just as quick as possible, and I don't want to fool around to the point that they might take more prisoners."

With Republican leaders acknowledging that there no longer are the votes to block end-the-bombing amendments, the White House has taken up a rear-guard position to delay Senate action until after Henry A. Kissinger, the president's adviser on national security, meets with Le Duc Tho, north Vietnam's chief negotiator, in Paris.

The talks' on ways on enforcing the Vietnam cease-fire agreement of last Jan. 27 are to begin Thursday and continue for perhaps a week.

Senator Mansfield, who as majority leader controls the timing of legislation on the floor, was pressing for consideration of the supplemental appropriations bill late this week. But under various Senate rules, it may be possible for Administration supporters to delay consideration until after the Memorial Day recess, begins a week from Thursday and ends the following Tuesday.

After a luncheon meeting of the Senate Republican Policy Committee at which the timing of debate was discussed, Senator John G. Tower, in explain-

ing White House opposition to immediate consideration of the bill, said "the Administration did not want to see Mr. Kissinger stripped of all his bargaining chips in Paris."

Senator Mark O. Hatfield, Republican of Oregon, who is a member of the Appropriations Committee, called upon the President to "take note of the total, unified sentiment of our committee" by suspending the Cambodian bombing "immediately as a sign of his willingness to respect the will of Congress and renew the public's trust."

While making clear that the Cambodian bombing will continue for the time being, the White House has not committed itself on what it would do if both houses of Congress passed legislation to cut off all bombing funds.

The Eagleton amendment was the second such proposal to be adopted by a Senate committee.

Yesterday the Senate Foreign Relations Committee approved an amendment that would cut off the use of any funds for military actions in Indochina that Congress had not specifically authorized.

That proposal, sponsored by Senators Clifford P. Case, Republican of New Jersey, and Frank Church, Democrat of Idaho, was attached to a State Department budget authorization bill by a vote of 13 to 3.

Testifying yesterday before the Senate Judiciary Committee on his nomination to be Attorney General, Defense Secretary Elliot L. Richardson said that if the Case-Church amendment was adopted by Congress, he would advise the President to stop the bombing.

Asked today by Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts, whether he would advise the President to stop the bombing in the interest of "comity" with Congress if only the transfer authority were refused, Mr. Richardson refused to commit himself.

Jerry W. Friedheim, the Pentagon spokesman, said today that without Congressional action on the transfer authority, the Defense Department was rapidly reaching the point where it would have to order drastic cutbacks in military operations, such as flying time, to stay within its budget for the current fiscal year.

The Pentagon has estimated that it would need \$25-million for its bombing in Cambodia through the end of next month, to pay for such costs as fuel. Other costs have already been met.