

Senators Urge Delay in Debate On Hanoi Aid Till Pullout Ends

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 20—Senate leaders of both parties urged that debate on American aid to North Vietnam be put off until United States troops and prisoners were safely out of Indochina.

Both Hugh Scott, the Senate Republican leader, and Mike Mansfield, his Democratic counterpart, suggested that open debate on the merits of such reconstruction assistance might jeopardize the withdrawal of the United States from Vietnam.

But the debate was expected to flare up again tomorrow, when William P. Rogers, the Secretary of State, testifies before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. His appearance two weeks ago before the House Foreign Affairs Committee touched off Congressional warnings that proposals for aid to North Vietnam would not be welcome on Capitol Hill.

Proposals by Kennedy

A Congressional fight over the whole issue of aid in rebuilding Indochina could also be set off by amendments that Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts, introduced today to a pending military assistance bill. The amendments would authorize an "initial humanitarian contribution" of \$72-million to war victims in South Vietnam and Cambodia, and they stipulate that the funds would be channeled through international organizations and private relief agencies.

Senator Scott, of Pennsylvania, reportedly told fellow Republicans at a closed meeting of the Senate Republican policy committee that it might be "dangerous" to advertise Congressional opposition to aid for North Vietnam while the Communists were still releasing American prisoners and accounting for those listed as missing in action.

Senator Norris Cotton of New Hampshire, the chairman of the Senate Republican Conference, told reporters that Mr. Scott had urged members of Congress to "cool it" on the issue.

Situation Called Fragile

Senator Mansfield of Montana, agreed in an interview later today that Congress should "do nothing at the present time to rock the boat." He said that the fundamental consideration was to get the United States out of Indochina and that the situation there was still "fragile."

Although Senator Mansfield reiterated that he was generally "not an aid man, quite the contrary," he said that he was

inclined to support the President's plan to provide assistance to North Vietnam because "this is a special situation."

The White House has not specified what form United States aid should take nor has it indicated the amount it will recommend. Mr. Mansfield said that "we shouldn't jump the gun" before Mr. Nixon outlined his recommendations to Congress.

Opposition Voiced

A number of Senators and Representatives have already voiced opposition to aid for Hanoi. The latest was Senator Herman E. Talmadge, Democrat of Georgia, who said in a speech today that it was "outrageous to cut funds for domestic programs to curb inflation and then offer tax money to North Vietnam."

"I want no part of any aid-to-Hanoi program," Mr. Talmadge said at the Women's Forum on National Security. "I not intend to vote to give them so much as one canceled postage stamp."

Senator Kennedy declared that the United States could not "wash our hands" of the plight of Indochina's refugees, orphans and cripples, "simply because the last American soldiers are leaving their shores."

His amendments would specify that aid should go to war victims through international organizations and "with a minimum presence and activity" of United States officials.