

POW RIN

May Get Travel Pay

By Ron Shaffer

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The U.S. Senate quickly passed a bill yesterday that would authorize the Pentagon to pay travel expenses for relatives attending funerals of American prisoners of war and servicemen once classified as missing in action whose bodies have been recovered in Southeast Asia.

The measure was introduced by Sen. Robert Dole (R-Kan.) yesterday morning and was passed by voice vote of the Senate without

the usual process of committee study and hearings. Dole said he was prompted to introduce the bill by a story in Friday's editions of The Washington Post.

The Post reported that Cecile Abbott of Sacramento, Calif., thought it "inequitable" that the government would not pay travel expenses for herself and her 12-year-old son to attend the burial in Arlington Cemetery of her husband, Navy Capt. John Abbott, a POW who died in captivity and whose remains were re-

leased earlier this month by Hanoi. He requested that he be buried in Arlington.

She contrasted that with the money the government spent to transport relatives of 556 POWs released 14 months ago to reunions in stateside hospitals, and to bring more than 500 of them to the White House for a presidential reception.

Presidential press secretary Gerald L. Warren said at the White House briefing yesterday that President Nixon had asked the Defense Department "to seek avenues" to assist Mrs. Abbott, and the department said it would do so.

Sen. Dole said he would ask the House leadership to vote on the bill Monday. The House was not in session yesterday.