

Fear of Cambodian Bloodbath Seen Key to Senate Vote on Aid

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 12 — Senator Jacob K. Javits, Republican of New York, told his staff yesterday to prepare a press release announcing his opposition to all further military aid to Cambodia.

He then instructed them not to release the statement until he returned from a meeting of the Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee dealing with the aid issue. "I might change my mind," he said.

He went to the meeting, listened awhile, and then voted for aid. He cast the deciding vote in a 4-to-3 majority for an Administration-sponsored compromise to provide Cambodia with \$125-million in military aid.

According to an account given by several present at the meeting and confirmed by Mr. Javits today, he said to his colleagues: "I don't want to be the one who gave Cambodia the last push to a bloodbath."

By all accounts, it is this argument alone — the specter of a bloodbath in Phnom Penh after an imminent Communist victory — that the Administration hopes will provide the vote for extra aid to Cambodia.

"Falling dominoes, loss of American credibility—these arguments haven't meant very much for a long time," a Senate aide explained. "When you get right down to it, we've been fighting this war because no one wants to take responsibility for a prospective bloodbath."

Yesterday's meeting of the Senate subcommittee to act on the Administration's request for \$222-million in supplemental military aid for the Phnom Penh Government and other aid proposals centered almost exclusively on the bloodbath argument, sources present said.

Senators and Senate aides see this debate as a microcosm of debates that will take place on the floor of the Senate and House either at the end of this week or early next week.

Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, Democrat of Minnesota and chairman of the subcommittee, argued that more military aid would only prolong the war. The United States, he said, must end the aid to end the war and provide for the safety of those whose lives might be in jeopardy through some international presence.

He was joined in these arguments by Senator Frank Church, Democrat of Idaho, and Senator George McGovern, Democrat of South Dakota. They cited statements by Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the exiled Cambodian leader, that only the lives of President Lon Nol and his immediate entourage would be in jeopardy when the Communists took over.

The Senate Republican leader, Hugh Scott, maintained that the Communists had already massacred about 200,000 civil-

ians. He told his colleagues about a petition signed last week by civil servants and shopkeepers in Cambodia in support of the Government and said this petition could become a death list.

Senator Clifford P. Case, Republican of New Jersey, expressed the view at the meeting that "whether the chance of survival is one in 1,000, it's worth taking." Mr. Case voted for the compromise.

Senators Gale W. McGee, Democrat of Wyoming; and John J. Sparkman, Democrat of Alabama, also said that however slim the chances of Phnom Penh's survival, they wanted to try.

But all of their votes were set before the meeting; the eyes were on Mr. Javits. Today he said that he got no calls from the White House or Secretary of State Kissinger. "I voted strictly on my conscience," he said. "I was not voting the money for Lon Nol and his friends to run away. If the Cambodians who want to fight the Communists get the aid right away, they will at least have something to bargain away."