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Senate

Department claimed yesterday that the August 1973 halt of U.S. bombing in Cambodia, which Congress ordered—and I did not vote for that particular proposal—cut off “extremely promising” efforts to negotiate a settlement of the Cambodian conflict.

This is extravagant language, sadly reminiscent of the political rhetoric of another era. Cambodia's survival as a nation is not involved in the supplemental request; neither is there a question of the survival of the Cambodian people. But there is, admittedly, a possibility that Congress denial of more military aid may tend to expedite negotiations between the Cambodians themselves.

The interests of the people of Cambodia will best be served by bringing an end to the killing, not by providing more bullets and guns by the United States, China, and the Soviet Union, but by providing rice and medical supplies.

Cambodia is not ours to win or lose, just as China was not ours to win or lose. The struggle in Indochina is not a football game, with the United States as coach. It is, in Cambodia, a war among Cambodians in which we have permitted ourselves, unfortunately, to become involved on one side. If there is one lesson the United States should have learned from the long, bitter years in Vietnam it is that we should stay out of civil wars of other nations.

Fingerpointing at home will only foul public discussion of legitimate policy issues relating to Indochina. And blame-manship will not help to build a cooperative working relationship between Congress and the executive branch on foreign policy matters. The question is not who lost Cambodia, if the present government falls, but who got us into Cambodia, for what purpose and what its cost in men, money, refugees, and destruction has been.

AID TO CAMBODIA

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, on February 25, in a letter to the Speaker of the House, the President said that “an independent Cambodia cannot survive” without the supplemental aid he requested and posed the question: “Are we to deliberately abandon a small country in the midst of its life and death struggle?” The day before, Assistant Secretary of State Philip Habib told a Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee that only if the aid requested was provided can “that nation survive.” Now Secretary Habib has made a “summary of negotiating efforts on Cambodia” available to the Congress and the media. The State