

EL SALVADOR/  
U.S. AID

JENNINGS: The Senate has been struggling over an emergency aid package for El Salvador, \$62 million. That is about a third less than the president originally requested. As Anne Compton reports, the bill has been running an obstacle course of crippling amendments.

COMPTON: The showdown came in a heated exchange on the Senate floor. Opponents claim that Reagan policy is leading to a wider war in El Salvador. Democrat Joseph Biden (Del.)... 'I'll bet you a month's salary that in fact there will be, if this president is reelected, American military men fighting in El Salvador one year from this day.' Democrat Edward Kennedy (Mass.)... 'This is the last opportunity on this bill to say we want a voice on whether American blood is to be shed in Central America.' The administration is arguing El Salvador cannot survive the next two months without emergency aid. GEORGE SHULTZ (Secretary of State): Those funds are essential and needed desperately and needed now.

COMPTON: The war powers language forcing the White House to get congressional permission to send in troops failed by a wide margin, 59-to-36. UNIDENTIFIED MAN (Government Official): If the majority of the United States Senate said they were perfectly willing to have American armed forces fight on behalf of the Salvadorans....

COMPTON: Over the course of 50 hours debate, the emergency request for the \$62 million escaped repeated attempts to cut the money off or tie the money to human rights progress. Now the El Salvador aid, along with a companion \$21 million for covert aid to the rebels in Nicaragua must clear still more hurdles, these in the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives. Anne Compton, ABC News, Capitol Hill.