

2

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ON PAGE L-A

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Congress inclined to grant asylum to Marcos - if he leaves peacefully

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Widespread sentiment emerged yesterday on Capitol Hill to give Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos refuge in the United States if his loyalists allow a peaceful transition to a provisional government.

Congress, which last week asked the administration to declare the Feb. 7 election fraudulent and took steps to cut off aid to the Marcos regime, relieved some of the pressure yesterday after the White House formally asked Mr. Marcos to step down.

Throughout the day, Secretary of State George Shultz and presidential envoy Philip Habib briefed interested members of Congress on efforts to end the crisis of this staunch American ally in the Pacific.

Mr. Shultz and Mr. Habib, who returned last weekend from Manila, talked to 18 senators and nine House members at a closed-door briefing in the Capitol. The meeting lasted more than an hour.

P Legislators refused to discuss what the two officials told them, but Sen. Patrick J. Leahy, Vermont Democrat, praised the Reagan administration for taking "a far more realistic attitude" in recent days and not trying "to gloss over the corruption" of the election in which Mr. Marcos' claimed victory.

A House bill pressed by Rep. Stephen L. Solarz, New York Democrat, orders a cutoff of military aid to the Marcos regime and requires future economic aid to be funneled through charities. Yesterday the measure was put on hold by the Democratic leadership less than a week after it unanimously cleared the House for foreign affairs subcommittee that Mr Solarz heads.

"It seems moot at this point," said an aide to the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole said sanctuary for Mr. Marcos in the United States would "depend on how it all unravels. If it's painful, it'll make it difficult. If it's violent, I'd be less inclined" to offer a safe haven for Mr. Marcos in the United States.

Senate Minority Leader Robert Byrd said "all signs" point to opposi-

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tion candidate Corazon Aquino being named leader of the Philippine people.

"I would hope Mrs. Aquino could have the opportunity to lead," Mr. Byrd said. "I hope the truly popular leader would help to bring order out of chaos and a return to democracy"

Mr. Byrd also said he might oppose sanctuary for the Marcoses in the United States if the Marcos regime causes bloodshed.

Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Richard Lugar, the Indiana Republican who led a team of congressional observers to the Philippines earlier this month, cautioned that Mr. Marcos has "military

forces at his disposal that could cause bloodshed."

Mr. Lugar was among those suggesting that the United States offer asylum to Mr. Marcos.

"I don't believe his government is viable, but clearly there are military forces at his disposal that could cause bloodshed," Mr. Lugar said.

Said Mr. Leahy: "Marcos has to leave and the sooner the better. I would not be at all surprised to see Marcos out within a week."

Mr. Leahy also predicted that Mr. Marcos would get refuge in the United States if he wants it, but added that his reception here would depend on whether he leaves without fighting. "It would be very, very difficult for him here if he leaves in major bloodshed," Mr. Leahy said.

Sen. John Melcher, Montana Democrat, said the crisis in the Philippines "is a problem for us, but it's not for us to try to dictate a solution"

Mr. Melcher said he had been briefed by Blas Ople, Mr. Marcos' longtime labor minister and steadfast loyalist, and Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Lt. Gen. Fidel Ramos, who have joined the Aquino forces against Mr. Marcos.

Mr. Ramos' nephew, Ranjit Schahani, worked in Mr. Melcher's office during the summer of 1984. Mr. Melcher said he considered himself a friend of Mr. Ramos.

Mr. Melcher said Mr. Ople told him two people were killed in the takeover of the state television station Sunday night in an effort to interrupt a broadcast by Mr. Marcos. But the senator said he was unsure which side had sustained the losses.

Although Mr. Leahy predicted Mr. Marcos would leave the Philippines by the end of the week, Mr. Melcher said Mr. Ople told him Mr. Marcos wanted to remain in the Philippines.