

BID TO RECONSIDER ALIEN BILL BLOCKED

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Body

Republicans made a surprise move today to bring a comprehensive immigration **bill** to the floor of the House of Representatives, but Democrats **blocked** the effort after an impassioned debate.

Trent Lott of Mississippi, the Republican whip, proposed taking up the **bill**, which had been considered dead as a result of House action last Friday.

His proposal was defeated, 235 to 177. Voting for it were 167 Republicans and 10 Democrats. But 230 Democrats and 5 Republicans voted against it.

By a vote of 202 to 180 last Friday, the House defeated a move to take up the **bill** under a rule limiting amendments from the floor. Republicans complained then that they had no opportunity to amend provisions relating to the use of foreign agricultural workers in the United States. Those provisions have emerged as the most controversial aspect of the legislation, pitting organized labor against growers of fruit and vegetables.

Representative Peter W. Rodino Jr., Democrat of New Jersey, said Friday that the **bill** was dead and that there was no feasible way to resurrect it.

Move for **Reconsideration**

Since then Democrats have accused Republicans of killing the **bill**. Republicans today urged the House to **reconsider** its earlier action and to take up the **bill** under a rule that would permit wider debate and more amendments.

In the debate today it was disclosed that House members were still trying to negotiate a compromise to save the **bill** even as Congress rushed toward adjournment. But no more votes on the legislation are scheduled, and there is no requirement for the **bill** to be considered any further before Congress adjourns.

"If you think another train is leaving this station, you are sadly mistaken," Representative E. Clay Shaw Jr., a Florida Republican, said in the debate over Mr. Lott's proposal. "This is the last chance."

The Senate passed its version of the immigration **bill**, 69 to 30, in September last year. The Senate measure, like the House **bill**, would prohibit employers from hiring illegal **aliens** and would offer legal status to illegal **aliens** already in the United States. There is clear support in both houses for these provisions, but there is no agreement on how to accommodate the needs of farmers and ranchers who have long depended on illegal **aliens** to harvest their crops.

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Democrats Are Surprised

Representatives Claude Pepper of Florida and Charles E. Schumer of Brooklyn, both Democrats, said that the move by the Republicans today caught them by surprise. Mr. Pepper is chairman of the Rules Committee, which normally sets the terms for floor debate on legislation. Mr. Schumer has been leading negotiations to break the deadlock over foreign agricultural workers.

Many Democrats said they supported the immigration bill but opposed Republican efforts to circumvent the Rules Committee and the Democratic leadership of the House. Mr. Pepper denounced Mr. Lott's move as "a clear effort to pervert the rules and precedents of the House."

Mr. Lott said the question was: "Will you allow the bill to go forward or will you stop immigration reform?" Representative Dan Lungren, a California Republican, said the demise of a bill with such broad bipartisan support was "a travesty and a tragedy."

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Person: TRENT LOTT (79%); CHARLES SCHUMER (59%)

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