

WXPost SEP 13 1974

Ford Presses Congress to Confirm Rockefeller Before Campaign Recess

President Ford appealed to Congress yesterday to act on a broad range of unfinished business—particularly the vice presidential nomination of Nelson A. Rockefeller—before it goes home next month. He promised new efforts to cut federal spending.

Mr. Ford outlined the priorities in a special message to the House and Senate during a busy day that also included talks with Republican and Democratic congressional leaders and a second meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

In his message Mr. Ford said he attached "utmost importance" to confirmation of Rockefeller before members of Congress leave to campaign in the November elections. House Democrats meanwhile announced they cannot complete the confirmation process before the election.

The Democratic leadership has announced that Congress will return in November after the election. But Deputy White House press secretary John W. Hushen said Mr. Ford's requests were "predicated on the assumption that final adjournment would come before the November elections and we don't want them to come back for lame duck session."

Among the pending pieces of legislation that the President singled out for priority were bills on trade reform, foreign aid, appropriations for government operations, modernization of the unemployment compensation system, a new agency for energy research and development and federal aid for urban mass transportation.

National health insurance was given slight mention, with Mr. Ford voicing hope for "a

sound compromise" on the controversial issue. But Hushen acknowledged that "we're not very optimistic" about chances for action this year.

Discussing the need to cut federal spending as part of the campaign against inflation, the President said he would send Congress another message recommending deferral of appropriations already approved and asked for "immediate" backing.

He coupled word of his forthcoming proposals, expected shortly, with a plea to Congress to reject moves to reverse his three-month postponement of a 5.5 per cent pay raise for federal workers that was scheduled to take affect Oct. 1.

Mr. Ford accused Congress of reducing his ability to conduct foreign affairs by proposing sharp cuts and restrictions in the foreign aid bill.