

Ford Invokes 'Domino Theory'

South Bend, Ind.

President Ford cited the "domino theory" last night in defending his Indochina policy and said the fall of Cambodia "could affect the national security of the United States."

Mr. Ford ticked off Com-

munist advances in Southeast Asia and mentioned indications that U.S. allies are doubting America's word as he invoked the theory that the fall of one Asian nation would lead to another, and ultimately endanger the United States.

It was perhaps his strongest statement to date on the situation in Indochina, and it came during a wide-ranging news conference on the campus of the University of Notre Dame.

Mr. Ford also condemned any CIA involvement in plots to assassinate foreign leaders and said this would not happen while he was President. And he added he is personally analyzing the assassination allegations to determine if the executive branch should be investigated.

He also said he sees no reason why Vice President Nelson A. Rockefeller shouldn't be his running mate in 1976. And he again pressed Congress for prompt action on tax cut legislation.

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calling it essential for the nation's economic recovery.

When a questioner asked whether the survival of a non-Communist government in Cambodia, where the government in Phnom Penh is encircled by insurgent forces, is "vital to U.S. security," the President replied:

"... I think it is. I cannot help but notice that since the military situation in Cambodia has become very serious and since the North Vietnamese have apparently launched a very substantial military effort against South Vietnam, against the Paris peace accords, there has been, as I understand it... a potential request from Thailand that we withdraw our forces from that country."

Mr. Ford also mentioned news reports that Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos is reviewing his country's relations with the United States, then he added:

"I think these potential developments to some extent tend to validate the so-called domino theory, and if we have one country after another — allies of the United States — losing faith in our word, losing faith in our agreements with them, yes, I think the first one to go could virtually affect the national security of the United States."

Earlier in the day, Mr. Ford addressed 12,000 Notre Dame students and faculty members, saying that he could not support any suggestion that the nation "go it alone" by withdrawing from international involvement and commitments.

Mr. Ford rejected what he termed "the new isolationism" and said he is convinced that Americans, "however tempted to resign from the world, know deep in their hearts that it cannot be done."

Associated Press