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# Ford Asks \$972

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President Ford last night asked Congress to shore up the embattled government of South Vietnam by promptly appropriating \$722 million in emergency military aid and another \$250 million in economic and humanitarian assistance. At the same time the President asked congressional authority to use U.S. military force to evacuate civilians.

While conceding that it "may be too late" to save the Cambodian government from being overcome by insurgent troops, the President said that the additional military aid for South Vietnam could stabilize the military situa-

tion around Saigon and offer a chance for a political solution.

"Assistance to South Vietnam at this stage must be swift and adequate," Mr. Ford said. "Drift and indecision invite far deeper disaster."

The President, while accusing North Vietnam of systematic violations of the Paris peace accords that led to the withdrawal of U.S. military forces from Vietnam, asked Congress to join him in a call to Hanoi "to cease military operations immediately and to honor the terms of the Paris agreement."

Throughout his wide-ranging "state of the world" message the President adopted a conciliatory tone toward Congress, recalling bipartisan foreign

policy actions since World War II and invoking the memory of President Truman's leadership.

"President Truman's resolution must guide us today," Mr. Ford said. "Our purpose is not to point the finger of blame, but to build upon our many successes; to repair damage where we find it; to recover our balance; to move ahead as a united people."

But Mr. Ford's appeal for the \$722 million in military aid to Vietnam was certain to prove controversial in a Congress which since January has refused to approve a much more limited request for \$300 million in military assistance.

The President said the \$722 million request was based on the recommenda-

## Million Vietnam Aid

tion of the Army chief of staff, Gen. Fred C. Weyand, who last week returned from a 10-day inspection trip to South Vietnam.

The President also indicated that he may be making further requests for humanitarian assistance. He referred to his request for the \$250 million appropriations as "an initial sum."

Administration sources indicated that the request for the military aid boost and for U.S. authority to evacuate civilians may be closely tied together. They said that the President's request for higher aid levels for South Vietnam will make the announcement of the U.S. decision to evacuate Americans, if necessary, more palatable to the South Vietnamese government.

The Associated Press reported:

While appealing to Congress for partnership in foreign policy, Mr. Ford also traced the debacle in Cambodia in part to legislative restrictions. Because of them and "steady external support," he said the Communist insurgents have shown no interest in negotiation, compromise or a political solution.

He renewed the pledge he made on entering the White House last August to work cooperatively with Congress while asking the legislators "to keep America's word good throughout the world."

"The national interests of the United States and the cause of world stability require that we continue to give both

military and humanitarian assistance to the South Vietnamese," Mr. Ford said.

At the same time, he said Congress should immediately clarify its restrictions on the use of U.S. military forces in Southeast Asia "for the limited purposes of protecting American lives by ensuring their evacuation, if this should become necessary."

"I hope that this authority will never be used, but if it is needed there will be no time for congressional debates," he said.

Mr. Ford urged Congress to complete action on his Indochina proposals by April 19 "because of the urgency of the situation."

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### PRESIDENT, From A1

Congress barred all U.S. combat activity in the area as of August, 1973, and has balked at giving the Ford administration special military aid appropriations of \$300 million for South Vietnam and \$222 million for Cambodia.

"Let us start afresh," the President said in outlining his Indochina program. "The options before us are few and time is short."

He said, however, that it may be too late to assist Cambodia, where rebel forces are currently pressing Phnom Penh, the capital. Mr. Ford quoted "a moving letter" from Saukham Khoy, the new acting President of Cambodia, who told him "the agony of the Khmer people cannot and must not go on much longer."

Despite making no new request for food and ammunition for the Cambodians, the President said: "We will stand by our friends."

"We will honor our commitments."

"We will uphold our country's principles."

On other matters Mr. Ford said:

- In seeking peace in the Middle East the United States has "agreed in principle" to reconvene the Geneva conference but is also prepared "to explore other forums," moving ahead on whatever course looks most promising. "We will not accept stagnation or a stalemate, with all its attendant risks to peace and prosperity and to our relations in and outside of the region," he said.

- Congress should lift the U.S. arms embargo against Turkey, a vital ally for the security of the eastern Mediterranean, the southern flank of Western Europe and the collective security of the Western Alliance.

- In its review of the Central Intelligence Agency and other intelligence services, Congress should avoid

Sen. John McClellan (D-Ark.), chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said further military assistance would only prolong the suffering in Indochina.

Sen. Harry F. Byrd, Jr. (Ind.-Va.), said, "I would say the odds are against Congress approving any military aid."

House Speaker Carl Albert (D-Okla.) said "it would be very tough" to get aid to South Vietnam through Congress.

"a sensationalized public debate" that would serve to tie America's hands "while our potential enemies operate with secrecy, skill and vast resources."

- He intends "in the very near future" to attend a conference of Western allies.

- Congress should reconsider a provision of the 1974 trade act which excluded Venezuela, Ecuador, Nigeria and Indonesia from trade preferences while punishing the eight other members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries which participated in an oil embargo against the United States after the 1973 Mideast war.

- Legislation should be enacted to grant the Soviet Union nondiscriminatory tariffs and trade credits as central to improving detente between the two superpowers. These were nullified by Moscow unilaterally when Congress conditioned the benefits on the relaxation of emigration restrictions against Jews and other minorities.

- He hopes for a final agreement this year with the Soviets placing limits on strategic nuclear weapons that "would mark a turning point in postwar history and would be a crucial step in lifting from mankind the threat of nuclear war."

Members of Congress, in early reaction to the address, said they doubted Mr. Ford's aid request would be approved.