

Aid to Hanoi Said to Hit Record And Exceed U.S. Help to Saigon

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By LESLIE H. GELB MAR 20 1975
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WASHINGTON, March 19—The Ford Administration has been circulating a document on Capitol Hill that purports to show that aid to North Vietnam by Communist nations has reached record levels and now exceeds American aid to South Vietnam.

Preliminary estimates in this document, prepared by the intelligence community, are that Communist military and economic aid to Hanoi, principally from the Soviet Union and China, totaled \$1.7-billion in 1974. This compares with about \$1.2-billion in all forms of American aid to Saigon during the fiscal year ending this July.

The authors of the document were careful to hedge their dollar estimates, but their conclusion was that "North Vietnamese forces in South Vietnam, supported by record stockpiles of military supplies, are stronger today than they have ever been."

"At currently appropriated levels of United States military assistance, however, the level of combat that we anticipate

in the next few months will place the Communists in a position of significant advantage over the South Vietnamese forces in subsequent fighting," the document said.

Communist military aid to Hanoi in 1974, was estimated at \$400-million, compared with \$700-million in American military aid to Saigon for fiscal year 1974. The document says that \$275-million of the aid to Hanoi was military equipment and ammunition, whereas American aid in these categories was only \$268-million. Most of the American aid, the document points out, is for technical and training aid, spare parts and fuel.

The document estimates Communist aid to Hanoi in 1972 at \$1.2-billion and in 1973 at \$1-billion. A document circulated by the Defense Intelligence Agency last year showed figures for these years as \$985-million and \$805-million respectively. This earlier document predicted that Communist aid to Hanoi in 1974 would total only \$1-billion.