

Arms Aid Might Save Saigon, Weyand Says

Washington

General Frederick C. Weyand, the Army chief of staff, told Congress yesterday that South Vietnam has no chance of surviving without more U.S. military aid immediately.

With more aid, the Saigon regime has a chance, Weyand told reporters, after giving the Senate Armed Services Committee a closed-door briefing on his mission to South Vietnam for President Ford.

Weyand, who returned from the trip last weekend, gave a similar briefing yesterday to the House Armed Services Committee.

Senator John C. Stennis (Dem-Miss.), chairman of the Senate committee, said Weyand did not discuss aid in dollar terms. But government sources said Weyand has recommended that Mr. Ford ask for at least \$500 million in additional military assistance.

This is \$200 million more than the President is seeking and opposition to even that amount is increasing in Congress by the day.

"I told Weyand that if I voted for one more cent in military aid to South Vietnam I would be run out of my state and I come from a very conservative state," said one senator, who asked not to be identified.

Meantime, assistant Secretary of State Philip Habib, appearing at closed door session of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, agreed with Weyand that South Vietnam might survive if given more aid. He said the South Vietnamese have "a chance" with more help. Senator Hubert H. Humphrey (Dem-Minn.), a Foreign Relations Committee member, disagreed, calling more American aid a "boondoggle." he said the South Vietnamese "had the fourth largest air force in the world and they left it and ran for cover. It's sickening. The military ineptness!"

Because of the increasing

Back Page Col. 1

From Page 1

hostility in Congress to more military aid for Saigon, Weyand gave a possible tip-off to what may be a new Administration strategy for trying to pry loose more funds.

This is to warn Congress that without more military aid, the Saigon government may not be able to negotiate its survival with the North Vietnamese.

Stennis raised that point when asked how more military assistance might save the South Vietnamese.

"They would at least have a much better chance for negotiations . . . where they could survive as a people and not be annihilated," Stennis replied. He added that if Saigon could "make a strong military showing with our aid" North Vietnam might be willing to pay a price for a settlement.

Another committee member, Senator John G. Tower (Rep-Tex.), said Weyand had linked additional military aid to negotiations between North and South Vietnam and said that with more aid prospects for "a settlement might be better."

Another committee member, Senator Henry M. Jackson (Dem-Wash.), said he did not buy the argument that more aid might facilitate negotiations.

"That is just a euphemism for unlimited aid," Jackson told a press conference. "It would take billions in military aid to give them (the South Vietnamese) any credibility. That would be the biggest loophole in the world."

Nevertheless, there was speculation in Congress and other government circles that Mr. Ford may seek to link additional military aid and Vietnamese negotiations when he addresses a joint session of Congress on foreign policy tomorrow night.

In speaking to reporters after meeting with the Senate committee, Weyand expressed confidence the South Vietnamese army will fight to hold the territory they now control.

"There is no question in my mind but that they will fight," the general said. "They have just been through a very traumatic experience. They are getting an opportunity to put it back together again and I think they will. But beyond that we will have to see."

Earlier in the day, Jackson said on the Senate floor that he has been "reliably informed" that "secret agreements" exist between the United States and South Vietnam that have never been acknowledged and that Mr. Ford only heard about recently.

Without giving any details, Jackson said the secret agreements "envision fateful American decisions."

Neither the White House nor the State Department had any immediate comment, but the State Department spokesman referred newsmen to comment by Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger on Saturday in which he said the United States has no "legal commitment" to come to South Vietnam's support but rather a "moral commitment."