

APR 12 1975

Saigon

Calls Speech 'Encouraging'

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The Saigon government yesterday described President Ford's speech to Congress as "encouraging" for Vietnam.

The speech was widely reported in the Vietnamese press, and rumors immediately spread that U.S. Marines had already landed along the coast to save the grim military situation. They had not.

"President Gerald Ford's speech before a joint session of the United States Congress on April 10, 1975," the government spokesman said, "was most encouraging to the people and army of the republic of Vietnam.

"It was a reaffirmation," the statement continued, "of the pledges of support of the American government in the anti-Communist struggle of the republic of Vietnam. Once again, these pledges have demonstrated the continuity of the United States foreign policy through five presidents.

"For the people and army of the republic of Vietnam

who are going through this most critical and difficult phase of their struggle for survival, and help them safeguard and build a life that is in conformance with their aspirations for peace and freedom."

New York Times