

Freshmen Demos Blast Ford Speech

Washington

A group of 33 first-term House Democrats yesterday denounced President Ford's request for more military aid to South Vietnam and to suggest that he was "setting up" Congress to take the blame if Indochina falls to

The two-hour session was about equally divided between statements criticizing the President's address to Congress Thursday, in which he requested an additional \$722 million in military aid, and pressing Assistant Secretary of State Robert McCloskey with such questions as: "Why doesn't the President stop posturing and start leveling?"

Representative Gladys Spellman (Dem-Mo.) called Mr. Ford's speech "another chapter of Alice in Wonderland" and "leadership by blame. What makes the President think we can do with this piddling amount what we couldn't do with 500,000 men? It's just more of the same. He can later blame Congress for not coming through."

Representative Henry A. Waxman (Dem-Calif.) said he saw the President "positioning himself for the 1976 campaign, while calling for bipartisan cooperation with Congress."

Representative Mark W. Hannaford (Dem-Calif.) said: "The President knows full well he will not get the money he seeks. What is his motive? I suspect it is to absolve him of responsibility for the impending tragedy."

Representative Timothy Wirth (Dem-Colo.) told

McCloskey he had a "feeling we were being set up by a request for money that has no chance of passing."

McCloskey vigorously denied any such motive by the President and added: "The fever that infects this town makes it impossible to make a statement of fact without it being taken as blame."

McCloskey volunteered the view that "there is a deeper appreciation downtown (at the White House) that Congress counts a hell of a lot more" than former-

This was apparent acknowledgment that a Congress which two years ago limited the President's power to wage undeclared war, and now fortified with 75 new House Democrats almost solidly opposed to any more U.S. involvement in Indochina, must be considered a partner in any further moves there.

Representative Bob Carr (Dem-Mich.) suggested that the President in his speech was "posturing" for members of the diplomatic corps in the audience and asked: "Wouldn't it be better if he said it's all over?"

McCloskey called it "unworthy" to suggest the President was posturing.

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