

Bombing Request Likely If Hanoi Drives South

Washington

Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger said yesterday that the administration

likely will ask Congress for authority to renew bombing in Indochina if Hanoi launches another all-out of-

fensive against South Vietnam.

In a local television interview taped for broadcast tonight, Schlesinger also said the U.S. has no intention of sending troops into the Middle East.

Schlesinger said Hanoi "should not count on" the U.S. not sending bombers to the aid of South Vietnamese troops should a major offensive begin.

Under legislation enacted last year, the administration would have to obtain authority from Congress to renew bombing in Vietnam.

Schlesinger said such a request "is highly likely to be forthcoming . . . if the North Vietnamese were to choose, without provocation, to launch an all-out offensive of the sort that occurred in May of 1972."

He said the American people might cry for military intervention to force the Arab states to resume fuel deliveries but dismissed chances that the administration would pursue such a policy.

Schlesinger said the U.S. "is dedicated to the independence of the free states . . . and that includes the states in the Middle East."

He cautioned "We should recognize that the independent powers of sovereign states should not be used in such a way as would cripple the larger mass of the industrialized world . . ."

"That is running too high a risk, and it is a source of danger, I think, not only from our standpoint, but from the standpoint of the oil-producing nations."

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