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A Windfall For Saigon In Arms Aid

Washington

The Pentagon has told a Senate committee that it has found \$266 million extra for military aid to South Vietnam this year — funds that military officials said they did not know they had.

As described by congressional sources and confirmed by Pentagon officials, this is what happened:

Several months ago, the Defense Department asked Congress to raise the ceiling for arms aid to South Vietnam to \$1.6 billion from \$1.126 billion.

When members of the Senate Armed Services Committee looked at details of the request, they could not understand the accounting procedures.

After several weeks of study Pentagon officials reported that they had discovered an accounting error. The Pentagon maintained that it had found that \$266 million was left over from fiscal 1972-73 — money that Congress had appropriated — and that this money was now available for the current fiscal year if Congress did not object.

It apparently will not.

New York Times