

From Jack Anderson column:

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THE VIETNAM WAR may have disappeared from the front pages, but the American taxpayers are still financing South Vietnam's military effort.

Two unreleased studies disclose that the U.S. is now paying 86 per cent of the cost of maintaining the Saigon regime and that it may be dependent upon American aid for the rest of this century.

President Nixon is asking for \$2.4 billion in military and economic aid for Saigon for the coming year. This amounts to 32 per cent of the total U.S. aid for the entire world. Counting Laos and Cambodia, the embattled peninsula will get close to half of all U.S. aid.

THE STUDIES were conducted by the Indochina Resource Center, a private research group which keeps a close watch on Southeast Asian affairs, and by NARMIC, a project of the American Friends Service Committee.

The studies contend that the Saigon government is an "artificial state," kept afloat mainly by the generosity of the American taxpayers.

The biggest drain on the South Vietnamese economy, charge the studies, is corruption. "Certainly more than a few (Saigon) subjects are millionaires or nearly so," the documents state, and "there are probably several hundred" who together could pay the government's bills "each year for a decade hence."

These South Vietnamese profiteers are able to escape heavy taxation. Consequently, state the reports, "indigenous Vietnamese tax revenues have not any time in the last decade produced more than 15 per cent of the total resources spent to sustain" the government.