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President Urges More Saigon Aid

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WASHINGTON, Sept. 12—

President Ford appealed personally to Congressional leaders today to restore the hundreds of millions of dollars cut from the Administration's foreign aid request for South Vietnam and the rest of Indochina.

In a clear sign that he planned to maintain the same support as previous Administrations for Saigon, Mr. Ford authorized the White House spokesman to report his strong plea for additional military and economic assistance. There are moves in Congress to reduce American involvement.

Mr. Ford also told the Senate majority leader, Mike

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Mansfield, the minority leader, Hugh Scott, and others that he was "concerned" about restrictive amendments to the aid bill approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The amendments would severely limit his ability to "conduct United States foreign policy," he was quoted as having said.

The committee, in a 100-page report made public last week, cut the aid bill request for the fiscal year ending next June 30 from \$3.25-billion to \$2.5-billion.

Would End Korean Aid

The report also approved a three-year phaseout in military aid for South Korea, a three-year phaseout in the over-all military grant program and sharp limits on the aid that could be given to South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

The committee also proposed stripping the President of his ability to make exceptions in the aid program when he deemed them in the national interest.

"I respect and strongly support the role of Congress in the area of foreign policy," Mr. Ford said in a special message to Congress on legislative priorities also made public today. "But under the Constitution, the executive is the spokesman for the nation and must have adequate freedom of action."

Asserting that he "may recommend changes" in approach to foreign aid next year, Mr. Ford said: "I strongly urge this Congress to continue the current programs unencumbered by amendments which prevent the effective implementation of policy."

On Vietnam, Mr. Ford told congressional leaders during a 75-minute morning meeting—according to the White House spokesman—that he was "disappointed with recent moves to cut drastically military aid to South Vietnam and asked that reconsideration be given to these actions."

Arms Aid Cut in Half

Military aid to South Vietnam was included in the Defense Department's appropriations bill. The Administration had sought \$1.4-billion but got only \$700-million.

State and Defense Department officials have complained that this 50 per cent cut would cause serious ammunition and petroleum problems for Saigon.

"The President said the Administration had asked for the minimal level to assure adequate replacement of equipment on a one-for-one basis in accordance with the Paris agreement on Vietnam," the spokesman, John W. Hushen, said.

He said that the President had warned that recent cuts could seriously reduce South Vietnam's ability to defend itself in the face of increasing North Vietnamese military actions."

Economic Aid Slashed

The administration asked for \$750-million in economic assistance for South Vietnam. This was cut by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to \$420-million. The House Foreign Affairs Committee, still studying the bill, has tentatively set the authorization at \$450-million. The full Senate is due to act next week.

Mr. Hushen said, "The President also pointed out that economic assistance has been cut nearly in half by Congressional action and would not allow the United States to participate in the vital reconstruction process to give South Vietnam an opportunity to help build a viable and self-sufficient economy."

Initial reaction on Capitol Hill was unenthusiastic about the President's request. Several members of the Foreign Relations Committee said that they thought the Administration would be fortunate to get the amounts authorized by the committee.