

Nixon Appeals for Military Strength

Key Biscayne, Fla.

Urging members of Congress to be "patriots first and partisans second," President Nixon appealed on Memorial Day for approval of his \$85.8 billion defense budget as vital for world peace.

"... Our hopes for a lasting peace are brighter than at any time in living memory because we now have a structure of peace and are working carefully to strengthen it," Mr. Nixon said in nationwide radio address yesterday.

But he added: "... No matter how talented our diplomats are, the policies they pursue must be backed by credible strength... and, in the last analysis, this means military strength."

Later, the President flew back to Washington, scheduled a cabinet meeting for this morning and announced plans to call a bipartisan leadership session when Secretary of State Henry Kissinger returns from the Middle East at midweek.

Press secretary Ronald Ziegler said there is "an open agenda" for the cabinet session, but that legislation, the economy and other matters will be discussed.

The presidential spokesman put down growing reports of differences between Mr. Nixon and Vice President Gerald R. Ford, particularly on the turnover of Watergate tapes.

He said present relations

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between the President and Ford are "very good."

He also said "the vice president has no difficulties with the President at all" and that Mr. Nixon does not object to Ford's public speaking because the vice president has been so supportive of the President."

Newsweek magazine, however, said there have been indications that Ford is falling out of favor with Mr. Nixon. It said in the current issue that Mr. Nixon asked former New York Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller at a recent White House meeting: "Can you see Gerald Ford sitting in this chair?"

Informed of the Newsweek

article, Ford instructed an aide to obtain the comments of the President the night he nominated Ford as vice president. Ford's office has so far taken no action with that material however.

In his radio speech, Mr. Nixon said that in the Middle East "We have begun the long work of reconciliation—of bringing people together at the peace table who formerly met only on the battlefield."

The President singled out the Democratic chairmen of Congress' armed services committees, Representative Edward Hebert of Louisiana and Senator John Stennis of Mississippi, for supporting his defense proposals.

"... When it comes to the strength of America, the honor of America, and the future security of America, they are patriots first and partisans second," he said.

"We may seek to ignore the world, but the world will not ignore us," he said. "And, in a day when atomic weapons are spreading, when famine stalks large parts of the earth, and when the tinder that could ignite another conflagration exists in many parts of the world, to turn our back on our responsibilities for world leadership would... be disastrous not only for us... but also for all people in the world who seek peace."

Associated Press