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STATEMENT BY VICE PRESIDENT GERALD R. FORD
WASHINGTON, D. C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, May 7, 1974

CONTACT:
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I was deeply disappointed in the decision of the Senate yesterday to reject the Administration's request for additional military assistance funds for South Vietnam. During a flight to and from New York City, which had been delayed by this close Senate vote, I had an informal conversation with newsmen who accompanied me about the Senate's action and a similar earlier action by the House.

I observed that in the present Watergate climate any votes by the Congress to cripple the Defense budget or commitments to our allies make it much more difficult for the President to negotiate for peace.

We need and want a sound strategic arms limitation agreement with the Soviet Union. The best way to get a satisfactory agreement is to maintain the military strength of the United States which contributes a principal part of our diplomatic clout.

Every vote by the Congress to undercut either our military posture or our credibility with our allies makes the President's task of negotiating an agreement that much more difficult.

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