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PRESS COMMENTS ON VIETNAM SITUATION

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[Text] Rome, April 10 (ANSA)--The Italian press today continued to center its attention on the situation in Vietnam and the stance taken toward developments in Indochina by the United States. The papers stressed the delicacy of the present moment following revelations of a secret U.S.-Saigon accord and hours before President Gerald Ford was about to make speech on American foreign policy.

Milan's CORRIERE DELLA SERA felt that Ford had only two real alternatives at present: on the one hand, to take the path indicated by the Democrats and ask Congress only to allocate "humanitarian" funds to alleviate the suffering of the population in that war-torn land. In practice, such a course would mean abandoning the Saigon government to its fate. The alternative would be to ask Congress to grant military assistance along with the humanitarian aid.

The CORRIERE DELLA SERA thought it likely that Ford would opt for this second plan although the amount of military aid granted would doubtless be far less than that proposed by General Weyland.

According to another Milan daily, IL GIORNO, Ford is acutely aware of the widespread hostility in America against any further Indochinese venture and as a result, the paper claimed, the White House chief is sticking to generalities, condemning isolationism, voicing hope for better times to come and appealing to a sense of brotherhood among mankind.

With regard to the secret agreement between former U.S. President Richard Nixon and South Vietnamese head-of-state Nguyen Van Thieu, Rome's MESSAGGERO said that disclosure of the pledge had served to stir up violent controversy once again over what (many) consider the "arbitrary and unconstitutional" fashion in which Kissinger conducts U.S. foreign policy.

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The White House admissions have thrown new light on the heavy atmosphere of uncertainty that has reigned over the Administration's handling of the Indochinese disaster and the contradictions which have emerged between members of the Administration and the Pentagon. The paper said.

The MESSAGGERO said that the overriding mood in the Congress was set against sending any large amounts of aid to Vietnam, but claimed that the wavering of congressional doves would probably mean that a limited amount of military aid would be approved by the legislative branch of government.

IL GIORNALE NUOVO of Milan noted that the disappearance of a noncommunist South Vietnam would not meaningfully modify the balance of force in the world.

Opponents of the American intervention in Vietnam were right the paper said in pointing up the glaring discrepancy between the importance of South Vietnam to American interests and the cost of the war in terms of men and dollars.

Unfortunately, it is not only South Vietnam that is at stake at present, the paper said but the credibility of American pledges and commitments.

The Christian Democratic Party daily POPOLO tried to strike a positive tone by stating that as result of the Vietnam tragedy no one believes in or even thinks of outside military intervention any more. America the paper said, certainly does not think of such intervention nor does the American Congress or the people.

The POPOLO saw Moscow's silence over the past weeks as "significant" and "responsible."

"No one wants to perpetuate this excruciating war." the paper said, voicing the hope that as a result, more realistic peace negotiations would finally bring an end to the long suffering of the Vietnamese people.