

## 48 Statement on Signing the Foreign Assistance Act of 1971. *February 7, 1972*

I HAVE today signed S. 2819, the Foreign Assistance Act of 1971. That act authorizes appropriations for our international development assistance programs until June 30, 1973, and for the remainder of foreign aid activities, including international security assistance programs, through June 30, 1972.

Viewed against the vital national objectives which our foreign assistance programs are designed to pursue, the act is a great disappointment. It severely cuts the amounts requested by the Administration

for development assistance and security assistance and is below minimum acceptable levels. It does not include the major reform proposals that I sent to the Congress in April of last year.

Moreover, the bill reaches my desk more than halfway through the fiscal year, delayed by legislative entanglements resulting from the attachment in committee of an unprecedented number of restrictive and non-germane amendments, some of which raise grave constitutional questions. While many were modified or removed in

the long months of debate, the final product adds significant additional restrictions and limitations to those already in law which have hampered the efficient administration of foreign aid and the effective conduct of foreign affairs.

The foreign assistance programs of the United States constitute a fundamental element of our strategy for peace. While these programs have had a troubled his-

tory and have sometimes been unpopular, their role in maintaining the security of our Nation is indispensable. I call upon this session of the 92d Congress to restore a comprehensive security and development assistance program through legislation equal to the challenges and the opportunities for peace which lie before us.

NOTE: As enacted, S. 2819 is Public Law 92-226 (86 Stat. 20).