

President Assails Congress on

But Vows to Go to Hill For Any New Action

By Murrey Marder
Washington Post Staff Writer

President Nixon pledged yesterday that the United States "will stand firmly" behind Cambodia with all aid short of combat support, and charged that Congress "eroded the structure of peace" by forcing him to halt American bombing in that beleaguered nation.

In a statement issued by the White House in the President's name, just 12 hours after the official, historic cutoff of all American combat in the Indochina war, the President's tone was angry, defiant and re-
criminatory.

The President repeated, with even more bitter language, the blame he placed on Congress for frustrating his strategy in his letter delivered on Aug. 3 to Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield and House Speaker Carl Albert.

This time, however, in issuing a new warning to North Vietnam against launching any new

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"aggression in Southeast Asia," Mr. Nixon explicitly said he will go to Congress for any necessary action to meet a new military challenge. White House press spokesman Gerald L. Warren, who read the President's statement to newsmen, underscored that point in response to questions.

"It should be clearly understood in Hanoi," the statement said, "that the President will work with Congress in order to take appropriate action if North Vietnam mounts an offensive which jeopardizes stability in Indochina, and threatens to overturn the settlements reached after so much sacrifice by so many for so long."

The President, nevertheless, spoke in grimmer terms than he has used since he reluctantly signed the combat cutoff legislation July 1 about the conse-

See INDOCHINA, A6, Col. 1

'A Flower in the Sky' Ends the Air War

By H. D. S. Greenway
Washington Post Foreign Service

PHNOM PENH, Aug. 15—The American air war in Indochina ended today with a few bars of "Turkey in the Straw" played on a harmonica by a pilot high over Cambodia headed for Thailand.

The last, laconic exchanges between the spotter planes and the airborne command could be heard on any V H F radio in Phnom Penh below.

At roughly a quarter to 11 in the morning, the command was given: "You should not expend any more air. You should not expend any more air."

At 11, one of the spotter planes said: "Understand there is negative more activity for the facers" (forward air controllers).

"That's affirmative on that," said the command plane.

"Outstanding. Well, we all enjoyed working with you, all the Nails, Rustics and all the other FACs down here,"

the spotter, said referring to their various code names.

"You did some fine work and we knocked their . . . off more than once. We hope to work for you again."

One of the spotter planes, an OV-10, did a slow barrel roll over the city trailing white smoke. Cambodians in the streets looked up.

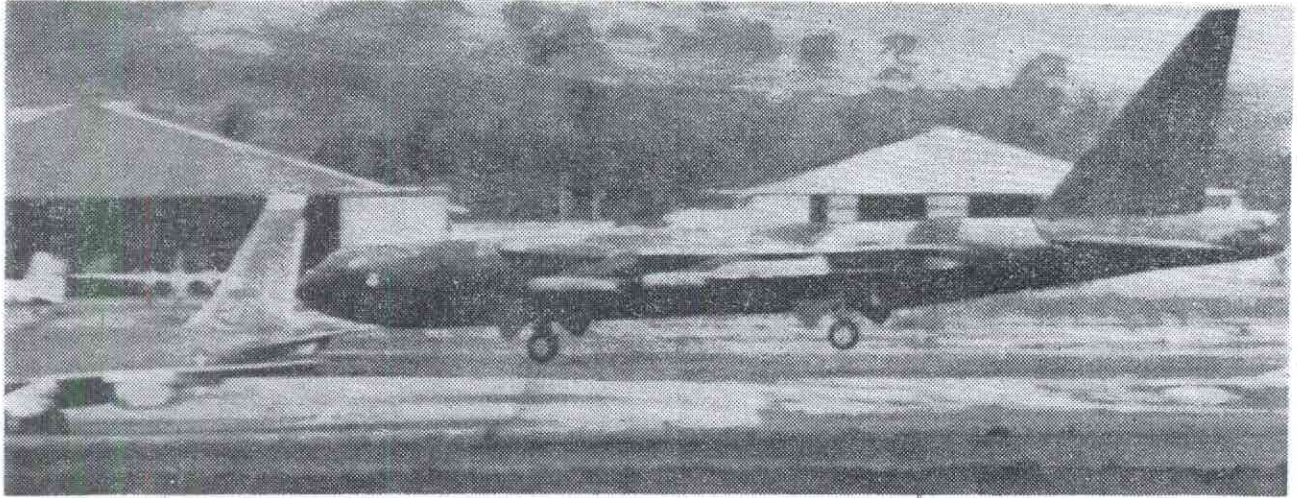
"It is 11 o'clock," said one. "No more bombing, that is why he is making a flower in the sky."

On the last morning of America's Indochina air war, the sky over Cambodia was clear and blue with only the slightest suggestion of thunderheads forming up in the south. Perfect flying weather.

In the little village of Thma Dar, about 11 miles southwest of the capital, one could see the Americans bombing and strafing away to the north—the jets pulling up straight in a seem-

See CAMBODIA, A4, Col. 1

Bombing Halt, Warns Hanoi



Associated Press

A B-52 lands at Utapao Airbase, Thailand, after completion of the last bombing mission over Cambodia.

Business as Usual With U.S. Pilots

By Thomas W. Lippman
Washington Post Foreign Service

KORAT AIR BASE, Thailand, Aug. 15—Capt. Lonnie O. Ratley III of the U.S. Air Force flew his A-70 Corsair over to Cambodia this morning and unloaded eight 500-pound bombs and 1,005

rounds of 20-mm. cannon fire on a "known enemy position" northeast of Phnom Penh.

He was back three hours later, and when he shut his engine down at 11:45 a.m. America's air war in Indochina was over.

Capt. Ratley, 29, a native

of Plant City, Fla., flew the last plane of the last tactical air mission of the war, Air Force officers here said, as the U.S. bombing of Cambodia came to its congressional imposed halt.

Time ran out at 11 a.m. and the A-7s and F-4 Phantoms of Korat's 388th Tacti-

cal Fighter Wing were bombing and strafing all morning almost up to the deadline. After 11:00, the planes were still roaring off into the sky but they carried no more bombs as the unit reverted to "training status."

See PILOTS, A3, Col. 1

Cambodia Support Promised

INDOCHINA, From A1

quences that he expects from that action.

Normally in international affairs, government leaders who are forced by domestic pressures to order actions contrary to their policies try to minimize the differences, to avoid compounding the world impact. President Nixon, however, Aug. 3 and even more so yesterday, sought to maximize and polarize his differences with Congress.

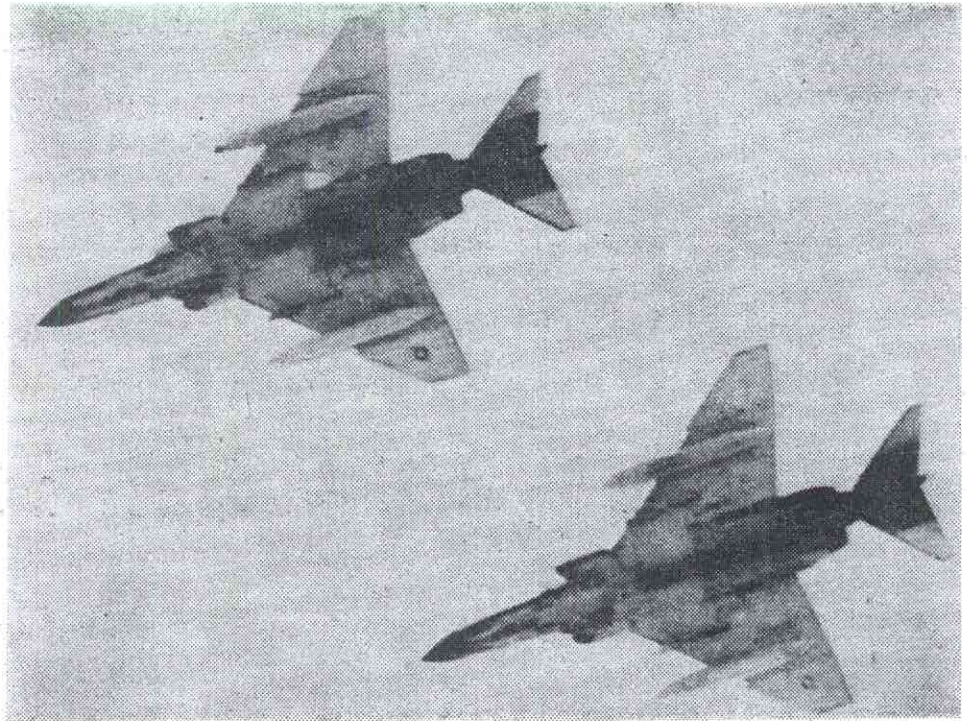
His authorized statement said, in part:

"He is concerned that by its action, the Congress has eliminated an important incentive for a negotiated settlement in Cambodia and weakened the security of Cambodia's neighbors in Southeast Asia and has erode the structure of peace in Indochina laid down in the (Paris cease-fire) agreements of Jan. 27.

"Most importantly, this congressional act undermines the prospect of world peace by raising doubts in the mind of both friends and adversaries concerning the resolve and capacity of the United States to stand by international agreements when they are violated by other parties."

The statement stressed that President Nixon "most reluctantly" agreed to the cutoff of American bombing support for the central government of Cambodia, and only because the alternative was a cutoff of funds for widespread government operations to which the bombing deadline was attached.

In the ensuing six weeks, the President said, American combat air support has helped to leave the Khmer Republic (the anti-Communist Cambodian government) in better shape to support itself against the insurgents and their North Vietnamese sponsors."



Associated Press

Two U.S. Phantoms pass over Korat Air- base, Thailand, after their last bombing runs over Cambodia. All American air ac- tion stopped at midnight Tuesday EDT.

Despite all efforts to achieve a negotiated cease-fire, the statement said, "the Communist side remains intransigently opposed to any compromise."

President Nixon pledged that "the United States will stand firmly with the Khmer Republic in facing the current challenge and will continue to provide the maximum amount of economic and military assistance permitted by present legal constraints."

In response to questions about the statement, Warren officially acknowledged that it signifies that there currently is no ongoing U.S. diplomatic activity on Cambodia. He said he had nothing new to say about plans for presidential national security adviser Henry A. Kissinger to visit Peking or to pursue Cambodian negotiations there. Kissinger's trip has been postponed to an unspecified date.

Administration officials said that U.S. assistance to Cambodia is running at the rate of \$207.7 million a year in 1973 for military aid and special support assistance, plus \$97 million in economic aid.

Defense Department officials said U.S. pilots now will fly from six to a dozen

C-130 Hercules transport planes a day into Cambodia, mainly from Thailand, with American supplies. This raises some risk of further shooting involving Americans, despite the legislative ban on U.S. combat after Aug. 15. But officials expressed confidence the pilots can avoid getting shot at. Pentagon spokesman Jerry W. Friedheim said: "We intend to be out of these hostilities and we intend to stay out of them."

Rep. Robert W. Kastenmeier (D-Wis.) was among those unconvinced that all shooting is over for Americans. In a letter to Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger, Kastenmeier said Congress intended to cut off reconnaissance flights as well as bombing missions. He said, "It makes no sense to continue the reconnaissance flights, an act, hostile in its very nature, which can only provoke a confrontation, invite retaliation and endanger the lives of those American pilots involved in this operation."

Because Congress is in recess, there was relatively little congressional comment yesterday on the intended end of the American shooting war throughout Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

Sen George McGovern (D-S.D.) said, "I'm rejoicing that the bombing has come to an end." McGovern, interviewed on CBS' "Morning News" (WTOP), said the combat cutoff is "the culmination of 10 years of work by many who have labored in the peace movement," and he added, "We must understand the lessons of this sad venture and then determine that the same tragic mistakes will never be repeated."

Sen. Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.), however, said in a statement that it remains to be seen if the bombing halt was wise.

"I pray that it was, but I have my doubts," he said.

Yesterday's White House statement could serve as a prelude for fixing blame on Congress if there is a restoration of power in Cambodia to Prince Norodom Sihanouk, who was ousted in March, 1970, by the American-supported regime headed by President Lon Nol.

President Nixon's statement yesterday could do no more than express "hope that the [Lon Nol] government will be able to defend itself and to hold its own against the insurgents and their North Vietnam sponsors."