

CAMBODIANS TELL WHY THEY YIELDED

MAY 16 1975

Official Declares 'Our Weak
Country' Could Not Afford
Confrontation With U.S.

NYTimes

By Reuters

BANGKOK, Thailand, May 15
—The Cambodian Government
said today that it had decided
to let the American merchant
ship Mayagüez go because "our
weak country cannot have a
confrontation with the U.S.A."

In a broadcast over the
Phnom Penh radio, monitored
here, Information Minister Hou
Nim accused the United States
of systematic spying on Cam-

*Text of Cambodia communiqué
will be found on Page 15.*

bodia since the Communists
took over on April 17. He said
the Mayagüez, which was cap-
tured last Monday, was only
one of several spy vessels seized
in the Gulf of Siam.

The minister asserted that
the Cambodians had captured
several ships "camouflaged as
fishing boats and handled by
Thai and Khmer crews" in
waters near the port of Sihan-
oukville and near small Cambo-
dian islands in the Gulf of Siam.

"These crews admitted," the
minister said, "that they were
agents of the C.I.A. who had to
establish contact with other
agents in hiding on Cambodian
soil."

Mr. Hou Nim said that these
vessels had moved to within
a mile of the Cambodian main-
land and that at times their

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Cambodian Aide Says Country Was Too Weak to Resist U.S.

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and all the peoples of the
world," he went on.
He said that on one of the
vessels "camouflaged as a fish-
ing boat" that had been inter-
cepted off Pring Island, op-
posite Sihanoukville, "there
were seven Thais, armed with
two rifles, explosives, grenades,
mines and ammunition as well
as very powerful Ameri-
can-made telecommunications
equipment."
According to the minister,
the seven crewmen told the
Cambodians that they were
C.I.A. agents trained in Thai-
land with a mission "to carry
out destruction and establish
contact with other agents who
had stayed in Cambodia after
the defeat of the Americans."
He charged that the Maya-
güez had clearly entered Cam-
bodian waters on an espionage
mission.

The minister asserted that
the Mayagüez had been inter-
cepted two and a half or three
miles east of the Wai Islands.
The United States had put the
point of interception as eight
miles south of the islands,
which are about 60 miles off
the Cambodian coast.

Mr. Hou Nim charged that
the United States was "contest-
ing our right to guard our own
maritime domain because of
our own weakness."

"The American Government
and President Ford must be
held responsible by our people