

RICHARDSON SEES CLEAR AUTHORITY TO BOMB CAMBODIA

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Says Nixon's Constitutional
Right Is Not Linked to G.I.
Presence in Vietnam

CRITICISM ON INCREASE

Mansfield, Fulbright and
Javits Are Questioning
Legality of the Raids
NYTimes

By JOHN W. FINNEY
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 28 —
Secretary of Defense Elliot L.
Richardson maintained today
that the President had clear
constitutional authority to con-
tinue bombing in Cambodia to
clean up a "lingering corner of
the war."

Speaking to newsmen as
criticism of the bombing in-
creased on Capitol Hill, Mr.
Richardson declared that the
President's constitutional au-
thority was not dependent
upon the presence of American
forces in Vietnam. In the past
the Administration has cited
the President's inherent powers
as Commander in Chief to take
steps to protect those troops.

Mr. Richardson, however, did
not specify what the constitu-
tional authority for continued
bombing was.

Final Pullout Today

Taking direct issue with Mr.
Richardson's statements, Mike
Mansfield, the Senate Demo-
cratic leader, said to newsmen
that President Nixon would
have no constitutional authority
to order bombing raids in Cam-
bodia once all American com-
bat forces were withdrawn
from South Vietnam. The with-
drawals are scheduled to be
completed tomorrow.

Senator Jacob K. Javits, Re-
publican of New York, was
drafting a Senate speech that
he expects to deliver tomorrow
questioning the propriety and
legality of the continued bomb-
ing. Senator J. W. Fulbright,
chairman of the Foreign Rela-
tions Committee, was preparing
a letter to Secretary of State
William P. Rogers demanding
an explanation of the authority
for the bombing.

White Paper Is Due

Meanwhile State Department
officials reported that the Ad-
ministration was drafting a
white paper giving its position
in what is developing into an-
other confrontation between
the executive branch and Con-
gress over the President's war-
making powers. The white pa-
per may be issued tomorrow.

The White House stated yester-
day that the bombing in
Cambodia would continue until
the Communist forces there
agreed to a cease-fire.

Mr. Richardson, who made
his comments before appearing
before the Senate Armed Ser-
vices Committee, said that the
"main point" to be made on
the President's constitutional
authority "is simply that a
cease-fire has not been achieved
in Cambodia."

"So what we are doing in
Cambodia is continuing to sup-
port our ally there against the
continuing efforts to disrupt
communications, to isolate

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Phnom Penh," he continued.
"We are engaging in air strikes
only at the request of the Cam-
bodian Government."

Mr. Richardson's use of the
word "ally" to describe the
Cambodian Government seemed
to go significantly further than
past policy statements of the
Administration, including some
made by Mr. Richardson when
he was Under Secretary of
State in 1970 during incursion
of American forces into Cam-
bodia.

Following a policy laid down
by Prince Norodom Sihanouk,
who was deposed as Cam-
bodia's chief of state in 1970,
the present Government of
President Lon Nol has explicitly
removed Cambodia from the
protection of the 1954 treaty
by which the United States and
other countries established the
South East Asian Treaty Or-
ganization. This action seemed
to be recognized earlier by Mr.
Richardson, who as Acting Sec-
retary of State wrote the Sen-
ate Foreign Relations Commit-
tee on May 30, 1970, that "the
SEATO treaty has no applica-
tion to the current situation in
Cambodia."

At the time of the Cambodian
incursion, President Nixon and
other Administration officials
repeatedly emphasized that the
purpose of the operation was
not to help defend the Govern-
ment of Cambodia but rather
to help defend American and
South Vietnamese troops in
South Vietnam against North
Vietnamese attacks staged out
of Cambodia.

When the American troops
were withdrawn from Cambodia
in June, 1970, President Nixon
said: "The only remaining
American activity in Cambodia
after July 1 will be air missions
to interdict the movement of
enemy troops and materials
where I find this necessary to
protect the lives and security
of our forces in South Vietnam."

In his remarks to newsmen
today, Mr. Richardson acknowl-
edged that "protection of Amer-
ican troops was a primary func-
tion of a great many of the
air activities engaged in Indo-
china." But he went on to argue:

"What we have now is a
situation in which there is a
kind of lingering corner of the
war still under way, and so
the United States is simply con-
tinuing to give the kind of sup-
port there that we were giving
up to the point where a Viet-
nam cease-fire was negotiated."

Testifying today before a
House Foreign Affairs subcom-
mittee, Marshall Green, Assis-
tant Secretary of State for East
Asian and Pacific Affairs, sug-
gested that the bombing had a
political purpose of exerting
pressure on North Vietnam to
accept a cease-fire in Cambodia.
While declining to go into the
question of constitutional au-
thority, Mr. Green offered the
following explanation of the
bombing:

Clenched Fist, Open Hand

"It is related to our desire to
see a cease-fire brought about
in Cambodia. Our experience
in these very difficult negotia-
tions shows that it takes a com-
bination of a clenched fist with
one hand and an open hand
with the other to bring about
negotiations with these char-
acters in Hanoi."

At the same time Mr. Green
acknowledged that the Lon Nol
Government had a problem of
finding a party on the other
side with which to negotiate a
cease-fire. The Cambodian in-
surgent forces, he noted, are
divided into three principal
factions—forces trained in
North Vietnam, the Khmer
Rouge and a third group with
"a China orientation."

Senator Mansfield said in an
interview that the United States
was getting itself into a posi-
tion of "keeping in power a
regime in Cambodia that does
not have the confidence of the
people, and doing it with the
power of B-52 bombers."

"If we are not careful," he
said, "we have got the makings
of another Vietnam."