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Nixon Letter on Bombing Ban

Following is the text of a letter from President Nixon to House Speaker Carl Albert and Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield.

By legislative action the Congress has required an end to American bombing in Cambodia on August 15th. The wording of the Cambodia rider is unmistakable; its intent is clear. The Congress has expressed its will in the form of law and the administration will obey that law.

I cannot do so, however, without stating my grave personal reservations concerning the dangerous potential consequences of this measure. I would be remiss in my constitutional responsibilities if I did not warn of the hazards that lie in the path chosen by Congress.

Since entering office in January of 1969, I have worked ceaselessly to secure an honorable peace in Southeast Asia. Thanks to the support of the American people and the gallantry of our fighting men and allies, a ceasefire agreement in Vi-

etnam and a political settlement in Laos have already been achieved. The attainment of a settlement in Cambodia has been the unremitting effort of this Administration, and we have had every confidence of being able to achieve that goal. With the passage of the congressional act, the incentive to negotiate a settlement in Cambodia has been undermined, and August 15 will accelerate this process.

This abandonment of a friend will have a profound impact in other countries, such as Thailand, which have relied on the constancy and determination of the United States, and I want the Congress to be fully aware of the consequences of its actions. For my part, I assure America's allies that this Administration will do everything permitted by Congressional action to achieve a lasting peace in Indochina. In particular, I want the brave and beleaguered Cambodian people to know that the end to the bombing in Cambodia does not signal abdication of

America's determination to work for a lasting peace in Indochina. We will continue to provide all possible support permitted under the law. We will continue to work for a durable peace with all the legal means at our disposal.

I can only hope that the North Vietnamese will not draw the erroneous conclusion from this Congressional action that they are free to launch a military offensive in other areas in Indochina. North Vietnam would be making a very dangerous error if it mistook the cessation of bombing in Cambodia for an invitation to fresh aggression or further violations of the Paris Agreements. The American people would respond to such aggression with appropriate action.