

U.S. Said to Pick Out Targets for Cambodians

By John Burgess

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BANGKOK, Thailand, Nov. 21—American military analysts are making recommendations on bombing targets in Communist-controlled areas of Cambodia to the military command in Phnom Penh, according to a well-placed U.S. military source.

The recommendations, based on aerial reconnaissance flights conducted several times daily by U.S. jets, are in apparent violation of the congressional ban of a direct U.S. military role in Cambodia.

[A congressional source in Washington said he thought the ban, which went into effect Aug. 15, 1973, definitely prohibited any advisory role for Americans such as recommending targets in the Cambodia fighting.]

The intelligence flights, about three sorties a day, are carried out by RF-4 Phantom jets belonging to the 432d Tac-

tical Fighter Wing stationed at Udorn Air Base in northeastern Thailand.

About two weeks before the ban against a U.S. combat role went into effect, the Pentagon said that it understood it could continue "unarmed re- See CAMBODIA, A20, Col. 1

Strip Mining Bill Derailed

A bill to regulate strip mining of coal was derailed in committee yesterday. The sticking point was language to require ranchers' approval of mining on their land without giving speculators a windfall.

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connaissance flights for the purpose of gathering intelligence."

In the period since a number of the RF-4s have returned from missions over Cambodia with minor battle damage, but none have been shot down, the source said.

Once the film is back at Udorn it is studied by American photoanalysts who identify targets, look for camouflaged positions and make recommendations for bombing strikes.

Their reports are passed on to the U.S. Support Activities Group, the Air Force headquarters complex at the Nakhon Phanom Air Base, also in the northeast. This unit forwards it to the Cambodian Air Force, presumably through the U.S. embassy in Phnom Penh.

After Cambodian planes make their strikes, U.S. reconnaissance jets make another pass over the area to film the results. Analysis of these photos are also processed at Udorn and the reports passed on to the Cambodians.

One such "after-action" analysis this summer reportedly found 100 destroyed trucks lying along a road in a Communist area.

A U.S. Air Force spokesman in Bangkok refused to answer any questions about the reconnaissance missions. "We do not discuss reconnaissance activities anywhere in the world," he said.

U.S. planes, stationed at other bases in Thailand and on Okinawa, also carry out reconnaissance missions over North Vietnam and Laos. The North Vietnamese government and the Communist faction in

the coalition government in Laos charge that the flights are a violation of the peace agreements affecting their countries.

All photoanalysis is carried on at Udorn. In addition, the United States also carries out electronic intelligence, monitoring radio signals throughout the area, by aircraft and ground stations.

Just south of Udorn there is a radio monitoring station dominated by a giant antenna that can intercept radio signals from all over the South-cast Asia peninsula.

It is manned by 1,000 officers and enlisted personnel from the Army Security Agency, many of them trained in Vietnamese, Cambodian and other local languages. Many military observers believe that tactical intelligence collected there is passed on to the the Cambodian and South Vietnamese commands.