

NIXON SEES PERIL IN BOMBING HALT; WARNS CONGRESS

He Reaffirms Cutoff on Aug. 15; Sees Great Impact on Allies

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WASHINGTON, Aug. 3 — President Nixon, reaffirming that bombing in Cambodia would be terminated Aug. 15, warned today that the cutoff, imposed by Congress, could have "dangerous potential consequences" in Asia.

In a letter to Congressional leaders, Mr. Nixon said: "This abandonment of a friend will have a profound impact in other countries, such as Thailand,

Text of President's letter on Cambodia, Page 5.

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 action."

In Congressional quarters, Mr. Nixon's letter — addressed to Carl Albert, Speaker of the House, and Mike Mansfield, the Senate majority leader — was widely interpreted as an attempt to shift onto Congress the blame and the responsibility if Cambodia should fall to the Communists after the halt in bombing.

Warning to Hanoi

Mr. Nixon also used the letter to warn the North Vietnamese not to "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," he said. "The American people would respond to such aggression with appropriate action."

Meanwhile, the Pentagon announced that Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger was issuing orders to military commanders to end "all combat activities" in Cambodia and Laos at midnight Aug. 14, Eastern daylight time.

Supply to Continue

Under the Defense Department orders, unarmed reconnaissance flights and "noncombat flights" to deliver military supplies will be permitted. The United States will also continue its flow of military aid to Cambodia and Laos.

The termination of the bombing in Cambodia was required by a legislative amendment approved by Congress on June 30 and subsequently signed into law by Mr. Nixon as part of a continuing resolution providing stopgap financing for various Government agencies, including the Defense Department. The amendment, resulting from a compromise between the White House and Congress, provides that after Aug. 15 no funds previously appropriated or provided under the continuing resolution can be used "to fi-

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nance, directly or indirectly, combat activities" by American forces in or over Cambodia, Laos, North Vietnam or South Vietnam.

In his letter, the President said he would "obey" the law and clearly indicated that he would not ask for Congressional authority to continue the bombing in Cambodia.

However, Mr. Nixon devoted most of his letter to criticizing Congress for its action and to warning of the "dangerous potential consequences" and "the

hazards that lie in the path chosen by Congress."

In his warning to North Vietnam, Mr. Nixon did not specify what "appropriate action" might be taken by the United States nor did he go into the Constitutional question of his authority to order renewed military action against North Vietnam.

When Attorney General Elliot L. Richardson was Defense Secretary he defended the Constitutionality of the Cambodian bombing as a continuation of the Vietnam war. He maintained that after a significant

pause in military actions against North Vietnam, the President as commander in chief would no longer have authority to resume combat against North Vietnam without specific Congressional approval. The United States stopped combat operations in North Vietnam and South Vietnam after the signing of the Paris cease-fire agreement on Jan. 27.

Among the "dangerous potential consequences" of the Congressional action, the President cited the difficulty of obtaining a cease-fire in Cambodia now that American bombing

support was coming to an end.

"We have had every confidence of being able to achieve" a cease-fire agreement in Cambodia, he said. "With the passage of the Congressional act," he continued, "the incentive to negotiate a settlement in Cambodia has been undermined, and Aug. 15 will accelerate this process."

At the time a halt in the bombing was being debated in Congress, the Administration maintained that "delicate nego-

tiations" were in progress between the United States-supported on Nol Government and the Communist insurgent forces to achieve a cease-fire agreement in Cambodia. However, considerable skepticism has developed in Congressional and diplomatic quarters that serious negotiations were ever under way.

In the meantime, the Administration has abandoned all efforts to negotiate until after the bombing halts.