

APR 22 1970

CITY EDITION

Weather: Mostly sunny, mild today.
Partly cloudy tonight and tomorrow.
Temperature range: today 62-45; Tuesday
63-43. Full U.S. report on Page 89.

10 CENTS

CAMBODIA CALLS FOR MILITARY AID IN NOTE TO NIXON

Premier Also Asks Help of
Cambodian Mercenaries
Trained by Americans

NEED IS HELD CRITICAL

In Incident Near the Capital,
100 Vietnamese Civilians
Are Caught in Cross Fire

By HENRY KAMM

Special to The New York Times

PNOMPENH, Cambodia, April 21—Premier Lon Nol sent an urgent appeal to President Nixon yesterday to help Cambodia in her critical situation, high Cambodian sources disclosed today.

The Premier asked specifically, in a personal letter, for two kinds of assistance: military equipment and arms, and the active intervention in Cambodia of American-trained and equipped Cambodian mercenaries, who are believed to be working for the American Forces (Green Berets) in South Vietnam.

[In Washington, officials reported that the President had received the Premier's letter, but they declined further comment.]

The appeal was transmitted to the United States Embassy for forwarding. It was the first appeal of so urgent a tone and on such a high and direct level made by Cambodia since the crisis that the Government says has been provoked by North Vietnamese and Vietcong invaders. The crisis has spread since the overthrow of Prince Norodom Sihanouk as Chief of State on March 18 by Premier Lon Nol and his associates.

Early Request Unclear

A general appeal for arms was made last week to several governments, but the United States said at that time that the request, an informal one, was unclear.

In the tense battle situation, the Cambodian troops who had intended to launch a counter-attack on the town of Saang, 20 miles south of here along a winding road and 15 miles on a straight line, withdrew a few hundred yards today.

Two 28, single-engine planes returned this morning for strafing runs over guerrillas holding the town.

Instead of the counter-attack the Cambodian authorities decided to send about 100 Vietnamese into Saang to persuade the Vietnamese, by loudspeaker and pamphlet, to leave.

Witnesses reported that the attempt at psychological warfare ended in disaster.

The Vietnamese, who had been brought to Saang from detention in a textile factory, were marched into the enemy-held town.

A Vietnamese guerrilla rose from cover at their approach and waved them away. At this, a single Cambodian soldier fired his rifle, and the Viet-

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Cambodians Appeal in a Letter To Nixon for Aid to Meet Crisis

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name in town opened up with rifles and automatic weapons in reply.

The Vietnamese civilians—men, women and young girls—were pinned down in the cross fire and about 10 were reported wounded and several missing.

High Cambodia sources, who until recently spoke confidently of Cambodia's ability to force invaders back into South Vietnam, now describe the military situation as critical.

The Vietnamese guerrillas are not only cutting all roads leading to Pnompenh from the east and south and reaching the outskirts of the capital, the sources say, but they also are choosing the places where they

will strike. High Cambodian military sources say the guerrillas have the initiative throughout their area of operation.

The sources say the enemy is capable of mounting mortar attacks on Pnompenh. They say that the Vietnamese have put the Cambodian Army on the defensive everywhere and have done so without committing themselves to major confrontations.

The Vietnamese Communists struck inside the provincial capital of Takeo south of Phompenh again last night and cut the road between here and Takeo by seizing the town of Samrong. An alternate route exists, but it is threatened by the enemy's seizure of the town of Tani.

Route 1, leading to the southeast, is effectively blocked by trees felled across the road by the Vietnamese. The principal highway to the southwest, leading to the port of Sihanoukville, remains open.

The only encouraging element, as far as the Cambodian military sources are concerned, is the appearance in force in recent days of Cambodians paid by the American Special Forces in the region of Svayrieng in the southeast.

The sources said that their success had encouraged Premier Lon Nol to ask President Nixon to widen the scope of such operations.

Australia Studies Bid

CANBERRA, Australia, April 21 (Reuters)—A Cambodian request for military equipment was being "considered by the Government," the Australian House of Representatives was told today.

New Clash Reported

SAIGON, South Vietnam, April 21 (Reuters)—The Government today reported new fighting near the Cambodian border. It



CAMBODIAN ASKS HELP:
Premier Lon Nol sent message to President Nixon.

asserted that its forces had killed 144 North Vietnamese soldiers.

A South Vietnamese spokesman reported that Government rangers had been supported by armored cavalry, artillery and air strikes in the fighting and suffered casualties of about 100 killed or wounded.

The rangers were said to have captured 15 prisoners, 89 weapons, 1,000 rounds of ammunition for Russian-built rifles, and about 3,000 pounds of rice.

'New Experiment'

SAANG, April 21 (Reuters)—The local Cambodian commander called the mach into Saang "a very new experiment to appeal to the conscience of the other side." General Sostehene Fernandes added:

"If the V.C. (Vietcong) shoot at their compatriots, it is not our fault. They will also reveal their own positions which will be very interesting to us."