

Congress

Briefed

By Nixon

WASHINGTON — (AP) — President Nixon briefed members of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees on the Indochinese situation today and their Democratic chairmen emerged with optimistic reports on the action. Some others disagreed.

Rep. L. Mendel Rivers (Dem. S.C.), the House chairman, said: "In my opinion, the American people will find the President has made a very timely decision, and moreover he caught this crowd flatfooted."

Symington Doubts

He referred to the surprise move of U.S. forces into Cambodia last week to seek out Viet Cong and North Vietnamese headquarters there.

Sen. John Stennis (Dem., Miss.), told newsmen, "It's going right well," and added: "It is very clear that the movement there is tied to our Vietnamization."

But Sen. Stuart Symington (Dem., Mo.) told the Senate later the briefing "does little to lessen my apprehension," and added: "Could this invasion be an admission that the

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him that "the real reason" for the U. S. move was to lessen the pressure of Communist attacks on the Cambodian government.

Democratic leader Mike Mansfield, asked if the Cambodian operation is going well, replied, "They seemed to think it is."

The Montana Democrat added that he heard nothing at the White House to relieve his sense of depression and unhappiness at the events of the past week.

Senate and House leaders of both parties went to the White House along with members of the Armed Services Committees of the two houses. A similar session was scheduled late in the day for Senate and House committees dealing with foreign policy.

Others present included Vice President Agnew, Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird; the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Earle Wheeler and Henry Kissinger, presidential assistant for national security affairs.

Brooke's Question

Whalen said Brooke's question gave him the impression that a major aim of the U. S. move into Cambodia was to help the Cambodian government resist Communist pressure.

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"Sen. Brooke pointed out that the sanctuaries had existed in Cambodia for a long time, and that enemy troops had been there a long time, too," Whalen related, "so that it was unclear what emergency prompted the President to act," when he did.

"The President said that during that period the situation in Cambodia had deteriorated, that four provincial capitals and a major highway had been cut.

—He said that militarily the United States should have gone into Cambodia before, but that there was a problem of neutrality. But in view of the deteriorating situation, he said, we felt we could go in without violating the neutrality of Cambodia."

Whalen said from this response it seemed clear to

him that "the real reason" for the U. S. move was to lessen the pressure of Communist attacks on the Cambodian government.

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Foreign Relations

Meanwhile, a movement developed among Republican members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to return temporarily to that panel a resolution repealing the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin resolution.

The reason was inclusion of language critical of Nixon's decision to send U.S. troops to Cambodia. Some committee members said they had not known this would be included in the report.