

10 CENTS

NIXON PROMISES TO QUIT CAMBODIA IN 3 TO 7 WEEKS

Says He Won't Send Troops
Any Deeper Than 21 Miles
Without Asking Congress

WHITE HOUSE BRIEFINGS

President Tells Committees
Offensive Is Going Well—
Thant Urges Conference

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By JOHN W. FINNEY

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WASHINGTON, May 5—President Nixon sought to subdue mounting criticism from Capitol Hill today by giving Congressional committees what was described as a "firm commitment" that American troops would be withdrawn from Cambodia in three to seven weeks.

In another step to reassure Congressional critics, Mr. Nixon also pledged that he would not order American troops to penetrate deeper than 21 miles into Cambodian territory without first seeking Congressional approval.

The President told the Congressional delegations that the Cambodian operation was proceeding successfully and that some of the American forces were already being withdrawn.

Gain Seen for President

Mr. Nixon explained and defended his military intervention in Cambodia at two meetings at the White House. He met in the morning with the Senate and House Armed Services Committees as well as other Congressional leaders and then late in the afternoon with the Senate Foreign Relations and the House Foreign Affairs Committees.

As a result of the meetings, the President, in the opinion of his Congressional supporters, has reasserted a political initiative at a time when there is a mounting effort in the Senate to circumscribe his war-making powers in Southeast Asia as Commander in Chief of the armed forces.

[At the United Nations, Secretary General Thant issued an appeal for an international meeting to seek peace in Indochina.]

Senator John G. Tower of Texas, a ranking Republican on the Senate Armed Services Committee, observed after the morning meeting at the White House that the political effect had been to "enhance considerably the prospects for support of the President in Congress."

Objections Raised

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, headed by Senator J. W. Fulbright, ran into difficulties meanwhile in its effort to mount a challenge to the President and was forced to withdraw a report critical of the Administration's actions in Cambodia.

Two Republican members of the committee—Senator John J. Williams of Delaware and John Sherman Cooper of Kentucky—objected that language condemning the Administration's decision to send troops into

Continued on Page 10, Column 1

Continued From Page 1, Col. 8

Cambodia had been written into the report by the committee staff and had not been approved by the full committee.

The report, issued yesterday by the committee, charged that the Administration had usurped the war-making powers of Congress by sending troops into Cambodia without the knowledge or consent of Congress. Senator Williams objected that "the staff got a little overzealous and wrote their views in the committee report," which was then issued without having been approved by the full committee.

Senator Fulbright, an Arkansas Democrat, said he had not noticed the controversial

language in checking the final draft and agreed with Senator should be returned to the committee for deletion of the passages relating to Cambodia.

The result was to delay Senate action on legislation that would repeal the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin resolution as well as to remove a vehicle that Administration critics had planned to use for mounting a Senate debate on the Administration's intervention in Cambodia.

The members of the armed services committees emerged from the morning meeting with the President in what appeared to be a generally favorable and optimistic mood.

Senator John Stennis, Democrat of Mississippi, the chairman of the Senate committee, said that the Cambodian operation was "going right well so far." The schedule for withdrawal of United States troops

been in bad trouble if this action had not been taken," he declared.

Representative L. Mendel Rivers, Democrat of South Carolina, the chairman of the House committee, said: "In my opinion the American people will find the President has made a very timely decision."

Symington Still Dubious

One exception to this general chorus of approval among the members of the armed services committees was Senator Stuart Symington of Missouri, who is also a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Mr. Symington returned to the Senate to report on the floor that the briefing "does little to lessen my apprehension."

"Could this invasion be an admission that the policy of 'Vietnamization' is failing?" Senator Symington asked. He went on to express "hope that if Prince Sihanouk is successful in re-establishing his military control of Cambodia, that action will not entail additional military operations in that country."

The possibility that Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the deposed Chief of State, might regain power was reportedly raised at the morning White House briefing, and some participants got the impression that in such an event the Administration might undertake further military intervention in Cambodia.

Time Limit Indicated

The morning meeting, however, was described as primarily a military—rather than political—briefing, with President Nixon explaining his reasons for intervening in Cambodia and then Defense Secretary

Melvin R. Laird and Gen. Earle G. Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, giving reports on the progress of the operation thus far.

Representative Gerald R. Ford of Michigan, the House Republican leader, told reporters afterward that "the President said several times the operation would take six to eight weeks and hopefully a shorter time." Some members interpreted the President's statements as a commitment that the troops would be withdrawn within two months.

"They are coming out in five, six or seven weeks at the outside," said Representative F. Edward Herbert, Democrat of Louisiana, "That was a firm commitment."

Senator Tower interpreted the President's statements as a "firm commitment" that the operation in Cambodia would be over in three to seven weeks.

Vote on Funds Expected

The acknowledged hope of Administration supporters was that these Presidential assurances would tend to muffle Congressional efforts to write legislative restrictions on the future use of defense funds for combat activities in Southeast Asia. But the sponsors of such restrictions saw the planned withdrawals from Cambodia as buttressing their case that Congress could and should prevent future intervention in that country.

The House faces a vote tomorrow on an amendment to the military authorization bill submitted by Representative Ogden R. Reid, Republican of New York, specifying that no defense funds could be used for the introduction of ground combat troops into Cambodia, Laos or Thailand.

The Reid amendment would not take effect until July 1, the start of the new fiscal year. When asked by Representative Robert L. Leggett, Democrat of California, a supporter of the Reid amendment, whether the Administration contemplated having any American forces in Cambodia after July 1, the President reportedly replied:

**GIVE FUN FOR SOMEONE.
GIVE TO FRESH AIR FUND.**

NO CONTINUATION