

# SAIGON GUNBOATS ON MEKONG PLAN 55-MILE INCURSION

U.S. Advisers Are Expected  
to Go With Vessels on Push  
to City Beyond Pnompenh

## AMERICAN CRAFT HALT

Fleet Stops at Neak Luong  
Ferry Crossing, Near the

Limit Set by Nixon

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SAIGON, South Vietnam, May 10 — The commander of the South Vietnamese gunboats thrusting into Cambodia said today that the boats would sail up the Mekong River as much as 55 miles past the border of South Vietnam. Military sources reported that the American advisers aboard the fleet's 60 Vietnamese boats would make the trip with them.

Today the South Vietnamese boats penetrated more than 20 miles into Cambodia, and the fleet commander, Capt. Nguyen Thanh Chau, said the vessels would sail beyond Pnompenh, the capital, to Kompong Cham, Cambodia's second largest city, 45 miles to the northeast. The decision appears intended in part to counter the threat of Vietnamese Communist movement south along the strategic river corridor.

## U.S. Boats Reported Halted

The military sources said the 30 American gunboats in the 140-boat flotilla had not sailed beyond the 21.7 mile-limit set for penetration by United States forces into Cambodia by President Nixon. But the sources said that American advisers on the South Vietnamese boats would stay with those craft as they went beyond Pnompenh.

Meanwhile, allied forces numbering up to 16,000 Americans and 20,000 South Vietnamese continued ground operations in Cambodia from the Mekong Delta to the Central Highlands against generally light and scattered opposition.

The United States command reported no new thrusts of major operations into Cambodia today. The progress of the allied fleet on the Mekong River continued to attract most attention.

## Flotilla New Ferry Crossing

The bulk of the flotilla, including the American boats, assembled at evening at Neak Luong, the Cambodian ferry crossing on Highway No. 1, near the 21.7-mile limit. Neak Luong was to have been reported recaptured from enemy control yesterday by South Vietnamese ground forces.

Informed sources said a number of South Vietnamese boats, possibly carrying United States advisers, sailed farther tonight toward Pnompenh, which is about 30 miles up the river from Neak Luong. But they said most of the boats would wait until morning before continuing.

The flotilla and accompanying ground forces are expected to continue their river encounter.

**Continued**