

Laird Cable Denied

Washington

The Pentagon denied yesterday that Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird had cabled the United States commander in Vietnam with suggestions on how to rally American public opinion behind the military incursion into Cambodia.

Newsweek magazine in this week's issue quoted what it called a "top secret" cable from Laird to General

Creighton W. Abrams, commander of U.S. forces in Vietnam. The magazine reported the cable said "the American public would be impressed" by significant captures of high-ranking Communist officers, major enemy headquarters and large enemy caches.

"Secretary Laird neither signed nor sent any such message," said Jerry W. Freidheim, the Defense Department spokesman. "No such message was dispatched

from this building by anybody to anybody."

Friedheim said he did not know if Abrams actually received such a message from some other source.

Newsweek said American field commanders, in response to the alleged Laird cable, had been playing up the capture of enemy supply caches because they had been unable to find large concentrations of Communist troops in Cambodia.

Associated Press