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# Cambodia Asks Asian and Pacific Nations for Troops

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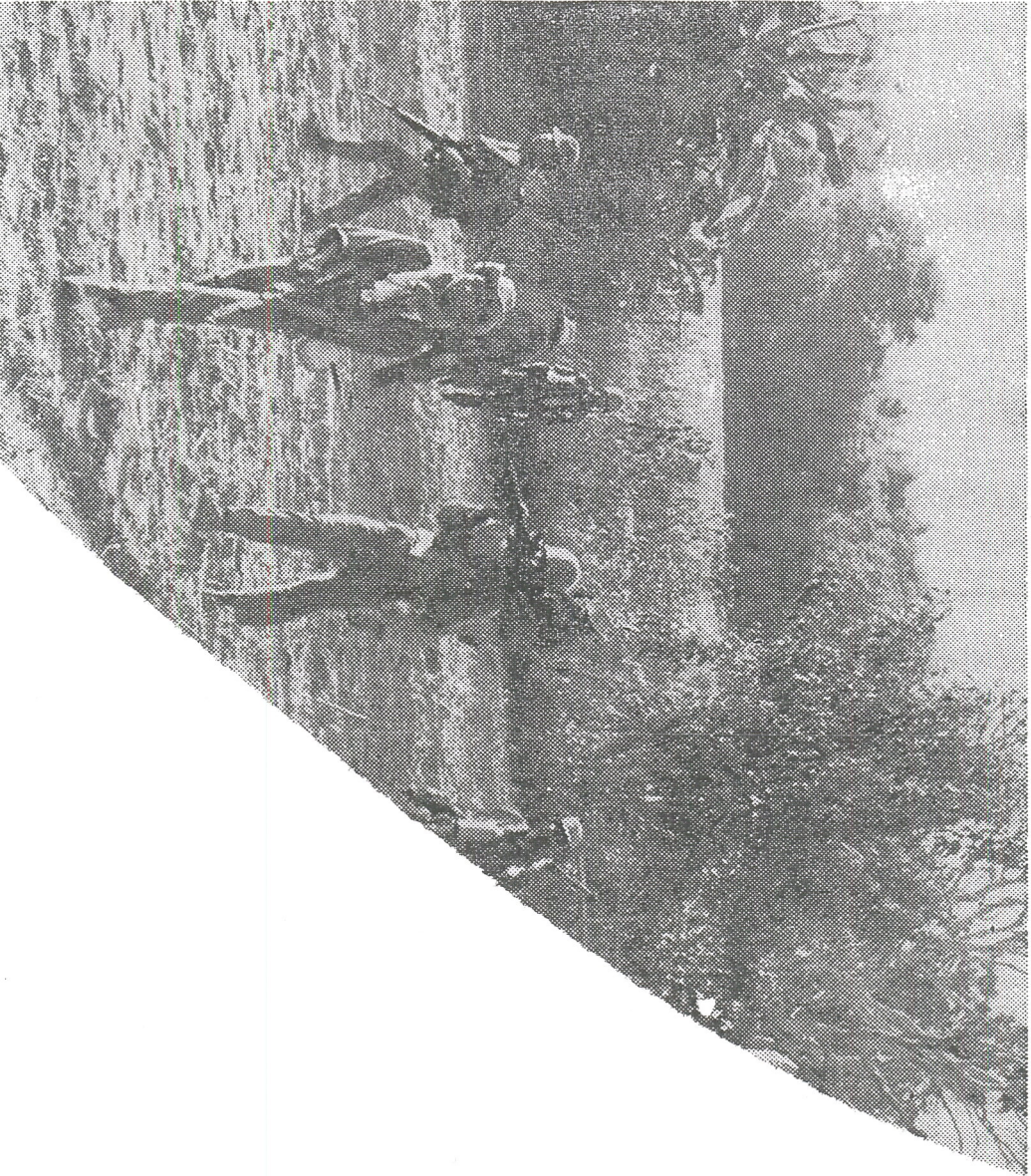
PNOMPENH, Cambodia, May 18—Cambodia has asked Asian and Pacific Ocean countries to send troops to help her repel the North Vietnamese and Vietcong attackers, but the initial reaction has been negative.

Highly placed Cambodian sources said today that the request for troops was sent Saturday to an 11-nation conference of Asian foreign ministers in Jakarta, Indonesia. In its closing communiqué yesterday, the conference, called to discuss the increased conflict in Cambodia, urged international diplomatic assistance for Cambodia.

The request for troops was sent over the signature of Premier Lon Nol, who acted after a meeting of the National Committee of Salvation. Although it has no official powers, the committee, headed by the First Deputy Premier, Prince Sisowath Sirik Matak, makes all vital decisions.

## Individual Action Possible

High committee sources said that the lack of action by the Jakarta conference had not been regarded as a rejection of the request. They said it remained alive and a matter for the individual countries that had participated—Japan, Australia, New Zealand, South Vietnam, Thailand, South Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Laos and the Philippines. Cambodia attended as a "special invitee."



Cambodian mercenaries, part of a force

The request for troops was the first made by Cambodia and a measure of the Government's view of the seriousness of the situation. Although American and South Vietnamese troops are fighting enemy forces in Cambodia, they are doing so on their own account.

The request for troops was believed to be motivated largely by the realization that the withdrawal of American air and logistics support by June 30—as decreed by President Nixon—will drastically reduce the operations of South Vietnamese troops in Cambodia and once more leave the weak Cambodian Army on its own.

## Help Termed Essential

The committee sources said the Cambodian Army would find it extremely difficult to assume the defense of the border regions. They said that Cambodia wanted to use the period until June 30 to prepare for that task but that help was essential.

For military manpower, Cambodia, looks principally now to the members of the Cambodian minority in South Vietnam who are serving as mercenaries under the American Special Forces, the Green Berets. About 2,000 of these soldiers have arrived here, followed by quantities of American equipment, and have been incorporated in special units into the Cambodian Army.

Cambodian sources said there had been an agreement in principle for the sending of more Cambodian volunteers from South Vietnam.

The sources also said that Cambodia was continuing her pleas to all countries for military equipment. An idea that is gaining favor in official circles is to ask the United States and South Vietnam to leave behind the bulk of their weapons and equipment when their forces end their offensives into enemy sanctuaries.

Cambodia, according to the sources, is planning to ask for help in training her soldiers. She would like to send units for instruction in such countries as South Vietnam, Thailand and even the United States.

**Laos Offers a Precedent**

There is precedent for such military assistance in the case of Laos. Many of her best units have been trained in Thailand with the help of American instructors.

Such training would involve American weapons, since both South Vietnam and Thailand are equipped almost exclusively by the United States. Cambodia would like to end her dependence on Chinese and Soviet arms, particularly because of the difficulties in procuring ammunition.

Officials note unhappily that the most substantial military aid received here so far has been shipments of Chinese-made automatic rifles captured by allied forces in South Vietnam. This increases Cambodia's dependence on Communist-made ammunition, they say.

If no help is forthcoming, the sources said, Cambodia is prepared to buy arms and equipment, particularly artillery and armor, anywhere, including the United States.