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Thieu Sees Indefinite Stay

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SAIGON, South Vietnam, May 27—South Vietnamese troops will continue to operate in Cambodia for an indefinite period after United States units are withdrawn and will require continued American logistical and combat support to sustain those operations, President Nguyen Van Thieu has declared.

In an interview videotaped on Saturday for showing in the United States today, Mr. Thieu said that South Vietnamese troops would assume responsibility for all ground combat operations in South Vietnam by the middle of 1971.

[In Washington, the Pentagon announced that two American fighter-bombers had attacked anti-aircraft sites in North Vietnam after a reconnaissance plane they were escorting was fired upon about 90 miles north of the demilitarized zone.]

Nevertheless, he said, the

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Thieu Foresees Lengthy Stay Cambodia

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South Vietnamese will still need more than 100,000 Americans for an indefinite period after that to provide air, artillery and logistical support. Some American combat units will also be required after mid-1971 to provide security for the remaining United States support troops, he added.

President Thieu discussed the Cambodian situation and a wide range of other topics in an hour-long interview with Clifton Daniel, an associate editor of The New York Times, and this reporter. The session was conducted in English in Saigon for broadcast today on "News in Perspective," on the National Educational Television network, which includes Channel 13 in New York.

The President said he had no specific agreement with President Nixon on American assistance for future operations in Cambodia, but he appeared confident that the support would be provided.

"Here in Vietnam," he said, "any operation should be considered a joint operation, because the Vietnamese and American troops need each other."

A moment later he added: "We are doing a common war. This is for the safety of both American and Vietnamese troops."

Foe's Strength a Key Factor

The size and duration of future South Vietnamese operations and the degree of enemy on the amount of enemy equipment uncovered in those operations and the degree of enemy resistance encountered, Mr. Thieu said.

Asked if South Vietnamese troops might still be fighting in Cambodia a year from now, the President replied: "I have no fixed date in my mind." He said his troops would clear out the Communist base areas across the Cambodian border and do what was necessary to prevent the North Vietnamese and Vietcong units from re-establishing these bases.

Officials of the Nixon Administration have conceded South Vietnam's right to continue operating in Cambodia after the June 30 deadline set by President Nixon for the withdrawal of all American units, but they have left vague whether the United States would provide active support for those operations.

Mr. Thieu said his soldiers would need "combat and logistical support, like evacuation [helicopters] and resupply," in some of the operations in Cambodia. In other, smaller operations, he said, the South Vietnamese units can manage by themselves.

Adequate Air Support Seen

The President said he thought the South Vietnamese could provide their own air strikes and artillery support, unless they encountered heavy resistance from the enemy.

On other subjects, Mr. Thieu made these points:

¶The Paris peace negotiations are likely to remain stalled because the Communists are waiting to be offered "something better" in terms of political concessions. Mr. Thieu made it clear he had no further concessions in mind.

¶South Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia and Laos should consider joining together in an anti-Communist alliance "to counter the Communist invasion in Southeast Asia."

¶Representative Tran Ngoc Chau, an Opposition member of the House of Representatives jailed on charges of pro-Communist activities, will get a new trial as a result of the Supreme Court decision invalidating the military tribunal that convicted him. Until that however, the controversial deputy will remain in prison, Mr. Thieu declared.

Despite the lingering traces of a heavy cold, Mr. Thieu appeared relaxed and confident throughout the interview. He sat straight in a high-backed wooden armchair that was brought to the studio from the presidential palace a few min-

utes before his arrival. Every few minutes he sipped ice water.

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