

# THAI VOLUNTEERS TO GET U.S. ARMS

Washington Plans to Supply  
Ethnic Cambodians Who  
Will Join Defenders

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WASHINGTON, June 2—

The State Department said today that the United States would provide arms and equipment to ethnic Cambodians living in Thailand who go to Cambodia for military duty.

This followed an announcement this morning over the state-owned Thai radio network that the Thai Government had decided to send a volunteer force to help defend the shaky Government of Cambodia, headed by Premier Lon Nol.

The announcement stipulated, however, that the force would be made up of Thais of Cambodian descent and would be drawn mainly from an estimate half-million ethnic Cambodians who live in eight Thai provinces situated along the 400-mile Cambodian-Thai border. This appeared to supersede the statement yesterday by the Thai Premier, Thanom Kittikachorn, that the force would include both Thai reservists and Thai citizens of Cambodian ethnic stock.

## Aid Outlook Explained

At a briefing today, a State Department press officer, John King, said the United States was providing \$7.9-million in military aid to Cambodia in the present fiscal year.

He said it was a "fair assumption" that more aid would be available in the fiscal year beginning July 1 and that some of this aid could be used to equip ethnic Cambodians organized in Thailand.

Meanwhile, the White House announced that a task force of Senators, Representatives, Governors and White House officials would leave tomorrow for

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a week-long fact-finding trip to Southeast Asia.

The group, which includes no outspoken critics of Mr. Nixon's Indochina policy, will include Herbert G. Klein, Mr. Nixon's director of Communications, and Bryce N. Harlow, counselor to the President; Govs. John A. Love of Colorado, Raymond P. Shafer of Pennsylvania — both Republicans — and Robert E. McNair of South Carolina, chairman of the Democratic Governors Conference.

The senators in the group are John G. Tower, Republican of Texas, George Murphy, Republican of California, and Howard W. Cannon, Democrat of Nevada. The House members are G. William Whitehurst, Virginia Republican; William G. Bray, Indiana Republican; Melvin Price, Illinois Democrat; and O. C. Fisher, Texas Democrat.

## Hawks Dominant in Group

The group has a hawkish tinge. All three Senators are members of the Senate Armed Services Committee and all four of the Representatives are members of the House Armed Services Committee.

The trip was organized by the White House to provide "a first-hand look at military operations" in South Vietnam and Cambodia," according to the Presidential press secretary,

Ronald L. Ziegler. But some skepticism about the value of the mission was expressed among critics of the war.

Senator Frank Church, Democrat of Idaho, predicted that the group would be "herded through certain prearranged places," and said that "those going along have already made up their minds."

"It will just be converting the converted," he declared.

## President Works on Speech

The President himself spent much of his day shuttling between ceremonial functions arranged for the visiting Venezuelan President, Dr. Rafael Caldera, and his private office in the Executive Office Building, where he worked on preparation of the address he will make to the nation tomorrow night on Cambodia and Vietnam.

Aides said they expected Mr. Nixon to give an essentially optimistic reading of the Cambodian operation and the prospects for further withdrawals of American troops from Vietnam, and, either implicitly or explicitly, to appeal for public support in the face of Senate efforts to halt funds for Cambodian military operations after June 30.

There was hope here that the President would also take the occasion to clear up some of the confusion generated by other

officials regarding some aspects of United States military policy in Cambodia after the June 30 deadline — specifically, the question whether the United States would continue to supply air and logistical support to South Vietnamese troops that continue to fight in Cambodia after June 30.

In a news conference May 8, Mr. Nixon said that he did not expect South Vietnamese troops to remain in Cambodia much after June 30 "because when we come out, our logistical support and air support will also come out with them."

Yesterday, during a long and occasionally acrimonious briefing in San Clemente, Calif., newsmen again questioned Mr. Ziegler on this point. The results of the briefing were such that United Press International and The Associated Press filed reports that were quite at variance — one saying that Mr. Ziegler had suggested new restrictions on American involvement in Cambodia after June 30, the other suggesting an enlargement of the American role.

## Thai Cabinet Approves Plan

BANGKOK, Thailand, June 2 (AP) — The Thai Cabinet decided today to extend military aid to Cambodia, including the sending of volunteers to defend Pnompenh. But in its decision the Cabinet stipulated that the

volunteers be Thais of Cambodian descent.

This represented a modification of an announcement yesterday by Premier Thanom Kittikachorn, who told newsmen the volunteers would be made up of Thais and Cambodians.

No figures on the number of troops or amount of equipment

were announced. Previously Thai officials said equipment would include mobile medical units, vehicles, 50,000 sets of uniforms, canteens, boots, mosquito nets and ponchos, a flotilla of 20 gunboats to patrol the Mekong River and a naval detachment to patrol Cambodian coastal waters.