

Cambodia Issues Decree For General Mobilization

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PNOMPENH, Cambodia, June 25 — The Cambodian Government issued a "general mobilization" decree today, requiring every citizen between the ages of 18 and 60 to perform either military duty or some "service of national interest."

The decree also made all property and financial resources subject to requisition for national defense purposes.

The Government of Premier Lon Nol did not make clear whether it was issuing the decree because of some unexpected immediate threat from Vietnamese Communist forces, such as a possible attack on Pnompenh. But since the decree mentioned that the decision had originally been made by the High Council of National Defense on June 16, it would appear that there was no special urgency beyond the general, deteriorating war situation.

Too Many Volunteers

At the moment, the Government has more volunteers for the army than it can arm and clothe. The decree, therefore, appeared to be simply another step in the Government's campaign to bring the country to a state of readiness, both psychologically and militarily.

The earlier steps included the declaration of a state of emergency in the country on March 28, 10 days after the Lon Nol regime removed Prince Norodom Sihanouk as Chief of State, and the declaration of martial law on June 1.

In addition to the national service and property take-over edicts, today's decree also said that all persons and corporations covered by its provisions would be subject to military laws and tribunals, and no longer to civil laws and courts.

Premier Criticized

Some members of the National Assembly had been urging the Government to issue a general mobilization decree for some time, and criticism was voiced privately that the Premier was being too phlegmatic on the issue.

A special meeting of the National Assembly was held on June 16, at which a committee was formed to keep abreast of the war situation and provide reports to the Assembly, which will then make recommendations to the Government.

The special meeting lasted only one hour, which would indicate there was no strenuous debate. But apparently it did

prod the Government into acting on general mobilization, which was decided on by the High Council of National Defense the same day.

The Government decrees provide the necessary powers to move against subversive acts and anti-Government behavior, and the purpose may be to keep any potential malcontents and dissenters in line during this critical period.

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