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U.S. Pours Arms Into Cambodia

SE EXAMINER

SAIGON — (UPI) — Huge shipments of American guns and ammunition flowed into Cambodia by air and truck today to replace a U.S. task force that went back to the war in South Vietnam. South Vietnamese troops opened an air base deep inside Cambodia.

On the battlefields, a combined force of Cambodians and South Vietnamese reported hurling back a Communist assault on the ammunition depot at Lonbet 20 miles northwest of the capital at Phnom Penh.

North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops operating in northwest Cambodia, 180 miles from Phnom Penh, were reported to have emplaced heavy weapons near the Angkor Temple ruins and atop a hill commanding part of the shores of Tonle Sap — Cambodia's great lake.

Here in Saigon, communiques from U.S. headquarters reported a setup in the level of Communist rocket and mortar attacks on bases in South Vietnam.

Twenty-four targets were hit last night and early today, and 12 civilians were killed by a terror grenade hurled into a crowd of people in the market place at Phuoc Long, 76 miles northeast of Saigon.

As the last members of the 31,000-man U.S. task force that moved into Cambodia May 1 returned to South Vietnam, tons of American rifles,

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mortars and ammunition streamed into Cambodia.

Some of the war material for Cambodia's relatively weak but building army arrived at Phnom Penh International Airport aboard huge U.S. Air Force cargo planes; other cargo was aboard a convoy of 40 trucks pushing up Highway 1 — the main road between Saigon and Phnom Penh.

Nixon Pledge

President Nixon, in his statement on Cambodia today, said about \$5 million worth of American military assistance had been delivered to the Cambodian army in recent weeks. The shipments included small arms, mortars, trucks, aircraft parts, communication equipment and medical supplies.

Nixon pledged that American ground troops would stay

out of Cambodia, and that the United States would not provide logistical or air support for either South Vietnamese or Cambodian troops in Cambodia. But he said U.S. plans would attack Communist supply lines in Cambodia.

U.S. military sources in Saigon said today that B52 jets of the Strategic Air Command and other American planes pounded targets inside Cambodia in a continuing drive to prevent Communist forces from rebuilding supply areas.

Airstrip Opened

South Vietnamese officials announced the opening of an airstrip at Neak Luong, a ferry crossing and highway point on the Mekong River 23 miles inside Cambodia and about 35 miles southeast of Phnom Penh.

The Neak Luong strip is capable of handling transport planes and will be used to help supply South Vietnam's 34,000-man task force in Cambodia. South Vietnam withdrew 5000 of its troops from Cambodia today and Nixon said "The greatest majority" of all South Vietnamese would leave. But he did not mention a date and South Vietnamese leaders said the soldiers will remain "as long as they are needed."

338 Killed

High-ranking allied military sources said today the United States and South Vietnam would never allow Communist forces to reopen supply routes inside Cambodia, particularly sea lanes.

The sources said the allies would continue to blockade Cambodian ports on the Gulf of Siam even if the Communists were able to seize the capital of Phnom Penh.

"I don't think we've gone to all this trouble to close these routes only to let the enemy reopen them if they installed a government that was sympathetic with them," one high-ranking officer said. "I feel we would take action against them no matter who was in power in Phnom Penh."

Th U.S. command reported 338 Americans were killed and 1529 wounded in the op-

erations in Cambodia. South Vietnamese losses were placed at 874 men killed and 3779 wounded. Allied commanders said more than 15,000 North Vietnamese and Viet Cong have been slain.

The campaign cost the Americans 43 aircraft destroyed, including an AH1 Cobra helicopter gunship shot down yesterday in a crash that killed one American and wounded one.