

# White House Defends Air Raids In Cambodia as 'Interdiction'

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WASHINGTON, Aug. 4—The White House insisted today that United States aircraft were flying only "interdiction" missions against enemy forces in Cambodia.

But Ronald L. Ziegler, the White House press secretary, conceded that such raids could have tactical benefit for Cambodian Government forces.

Pentagon spokesmen said, moreover, that American commanders in South Vietnam had wide latitude in determining what an "interdiction mission" might be.

The Associated Press reported yesterday from Kompong Speu in Cambodia that United States Air Force Phantom jets were dropping bombs and napalm on North Vietnamese and Vietcong forces engaged in a battle with Cambodian troops for control of Route 4, Pnomphen's only access to an oil refinery on the coast.

Mr. Ziegler said today that there had been no change in President Nixon's policy announcement on June 30 of confining American air activity to attack on enemy troops and supplies that endangered United States forces in South Vietnam.

"Often times there are ancillary effects," from such raids, Mr. Ziegler said, but he declined to elaborate. Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird has said that Cambodian forces could expect some "ancillary

benefits" from the American raids.

The explanation today by a Pentagon spokesman, however, made it apparent there was a thin line of distinction between an interdiction raid and its side effects.

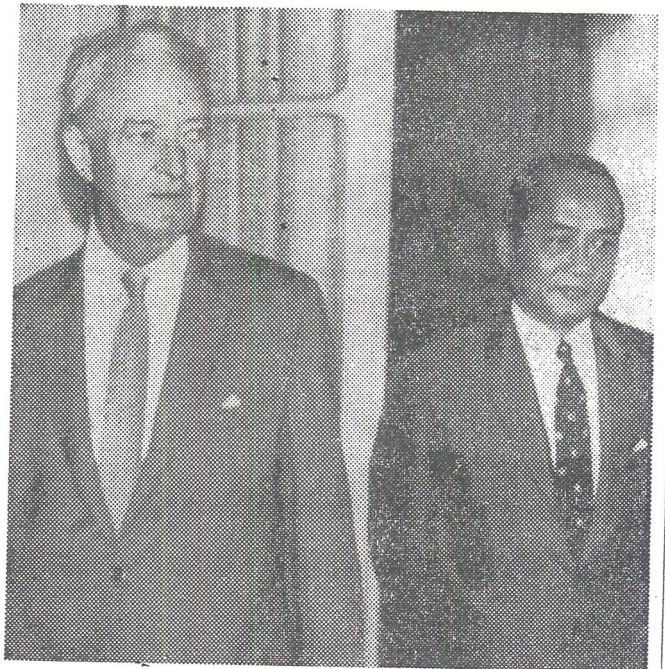
The spokesman said that "if there are [enemy] troops or trucks moving in Cambodia, even empty trucks headed north, where a troop concentration is located, it would have to be interpreted at the time by the [American] commander if it is going to endanger our troops."

He added that "just about any North Vietnamese soldier in Cambodia could endanger the troops in South Vietnam."

At a Pentagon briefing, Jerry W. Friedheim, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, said he had no knowledge that napalm was being used on the missions. But he said the choice of weapons was left to field commanders.

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Associated Press

**CONFERENCE ON PEACE NEGOTIATIONS:** David K. E. Bruce, chief U.S. representative at peace talks in Paris, with Pham Dang Lam, his South Vietnamese counterpart. Mr. Bruce visited Mr. Lam, who returned Saturday from Saigon.