

U.S. Officials Say G.I.'s Will Not Invade the North

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Feb. 26—Authoritative Administration officials said today that the United States has no intention of sending ground troops into North Vietnam, and they strongly discounted the likelihood of a South Vietnamese ground attack on North Vietnam.

But in public, Administration spokesmen maintained silence on both questions. Other officials acknowledged privately that this was part of a psychological-warfare effort to keep enemy forces off balance.

They said that invasion threats attributed to President Nguyen Van Thieu of South Vietnam were aimed, in part at least, at diverting some North Vietnamese forces from the enemy build-up around the South Vietnamese column operating in Laos.

Pentagon officials maintained that the South Vietnamese tactics—coupled with American military moves just south of the demilitarized zone along the border of North and South Vietnam, and undisclosed until now—were having the desired effect of keeping some enemy forces pinned down.

These officials said that a 1,500-man Marine Corps combat team had been shifted several times in South Vietnam just below the demilitarized zone in a deliberate effort to worry North Vietnamese commanders about the possibility of some foray across the zone, or possibly even an amphibious landing on North Vietnam's coast just above the DMZ.

Administration officials also said that small numbers of American combat troops would be sent into Laos, if necessary, to help recover American airmen shot down during the fighting there.

"If we had an air crew downed we would do whatever was necessary to recover that crew," Jerry W. Freidheim, the Pentagon spokesman, said. To date, he continued, no American infantrymen has been sent into Laos for this purpose.

But Administration officials contended that it would be permissible. They said there would be no change in policy nor would it violate Congressional restrictions against combat

forces in Laos if small ground combat teams went in to protect search-and-rescue operations. Otherwise, rescue teams would be vulnerable to enemy ambushes around downed helicopters, officials said.

Definitions of Missions

"These are not combat missions," officials stated. "They are search and rescue."

Both at the White House and at the State Department, Administration spokesmen refused to answer questions about whether American ground forces would be used in action against North Vietnam.

Thieu Said to Be Misquoted

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Feb.

26 (AP)—A spokesman for President Nguyen Van Thieu said today that Mr. Thieu had been misquoted as having said that an invasion of North Vietnam was only a matter of time.

"The quotes were inaccurate and out of context," said Hoang Duc Nha, press secretary to the President.

"What President Thieu said was that South Vietnamese forces have taken the initiative and are now capable of fighting the Communists any time, any place, on any battlefield," Mr. Nha continued.

The Government news service, Vietnam Press, reported yesterday that in "answering the convention's request for a

march north, President Thieu said it was only a matter of time."

Cambodian Asks Invasion

CANBERRA, Australia, Feb. 26 (Reuters)—Foreign Minister Koun Wick of Cambodia called today for an invasion of North Vietnam by the United States and its allies.

Mr. Koun Wick, who arrived here for talks with Australian officials, said at a news conference that the only way to persuade North Vietnam to participate in fruitful peace talks on Indochina was for the Americans and South Vietnamese to invade the North.