

# 'U.S. Jets Napalm Cambodia Town'

PHNOM PENH — (UPI) — Cambodian troops said today American jet fighter-bombers supporting a new Cambodian army operation struck a populated village with napalm, killing at least two civilians and destroying a third of the village.

Government field commanders said the air strike by four U.S. jets occurred Monday, but was reported only today by troops returning from the isolated operational area, 35 miles north of Phnom Penh.

## 150 Homes

They said an old man and a young boy were killed in the napalm raid and 10 civilians were wounded. At least 60 of the 150 homes in the village were reported destroyed.

Pilots were told by a U.S. forward air controller and a Cambodian ground officer that Viet Cong were in the village of Koh Thom, but residents told government troops after the air strike

that there had been no Communists in the village for several days.

Military intelligence sources said today heavy fighting had been expected in the Koh Thom area, but that Communist troops manning a supply corridor had fled 24 hours before the 5000-man operation began Monday.

## Final Authority

The field commanders said an American air controller reported that he "thought he saw some men in the village carrying rifles" when he flew over Koh Thom.

An English-speaking government officer told the jets to make a strafing pass, firing 20 millimeter shells into the village, then ordered the napalm strike, the commanders said.

American sources earlier this month said that the "final authority on whether or not an air strike will be made rests with the Cambodian commander on the ground."