

Cambodia Evacuees Overdue at Border

By DAVID A. ANDELMAN
Special to The New York Times

ARANYAPRATHET, Thailand, May 1—Cambodian Communist, French and Thai Government officials met repeatedly today across the bridge here that marks the Thai-Cambodian border, but the discussions failed to produce any firm word on the whereabouts of foreigners, who have been isolated in the French Embassy compound in Phnom Penh.

There were reports through the day that all 610 foreigners, whom the Cambodians had promised to deliver by truck convoy to this border town 250 miles from Phnom Penh, were near the bridge. It spans a small stream that is the border here.

The reports reached diplomats, relief workers and newsmen gathered here, but at

nightfall there was still no firm evidence that the Phnom Penh evacuees were near.

[In Paris the principal foreign representative of Prince Norodom Sihanouk's government accused France of harboring hundreds of "war criminals" on the grounds of the Phnom Penh embassy. A French Foreign Ministry spokesman denied that any Cambodians remained within the embassy confines.]

The Cambodian and Thai officials agreed, shortly before sundown, to keep the frontier open all night, should the refugee convoy suddenly arrive. The frontier is usually closed from dusk to dawn.

Late today the French Ambassador to Thailand, Jean-Louis Toffin, arrived at the frontier to take charge of the sporadic discussions, which one offi-

cial termed "endlessly frustrating."

After talking at some length with Cambodian soldiers and at least one senior Cambodian official, the Ambassador said: "Everything that has been said before about this convoy is complete nonsense. We have no idea where it is."

The problem, was apparently that Cambodian officials at the border had little or no authority to make decisions and were not kept posted on the status of the refugees by senior officials in the Cambodian capital.

All two-way communications between Phnom Penh and the outside world have been cut since Saturday. Only through radio broadcasts and news releases issued by the Cambodian Communists did the intentions of the Cambodians to release

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the foreigners become known.

Officials at the frontier scurried around all day, trying to satisfy every request made by the Cambodian troops at the border crossing. It is the only direct contact still maintained between the new Government of Cambodia and the outside. All of these efforts appeared to be fruitless.

At one point the Cambodian soldiers indicated that the problem was a shortage of gasoline for the trucks. Officials of the International Committee of the Red Cross, who have set up an emergency medical center for the evacuees here, immediately prepared to deliver the fuel. But later a higher Cambodian official said there was no such shortage and no evidence that the convoy was being delayed for lack of gasoline.

At another point Col. Jean Loubert, the French Military attaché, dug into his pocket and came up with three aspirin tablets for a Cambodian soldier who had complained of a toothache. "We will give them anything they want," the colonel said later.

Delay Disturbs Envoy

Ambassador Toffin said he was becoming increasingly disturbed over the delay in delivering the 610 people—515 French citizens and 95 foreign nationals, including five American journalists. All took refuge in the embassy after Phnom Penh was lost to the Communists on April 17.

The last word the French Government received before two-way communications ceased was that food and medicine were running short in the compound and that medical authorities feared an outbreak of dysentery. Ten beds have been set up in a police post next to the border gate here. The Red Cross has medicines here to

treat everything from a simple cut to cholera.

Diplomats of 10 nations—Thailand, the United States, the Soviet Union, France, West Germany, India, Japan, Spain, Belgium and Italy—have joined the throng waiting at the border point here at Aranyaprathet, in southeastern Thailand 135 miles east of Bangkok. The Cambodians say they will turn over the foreign nationals only to their diplomatic representatives.

Charge by Sihanouk

By HENRY KAMM

Special to The New York Times

PARIS, May 1—The principal foreign representative of Prince Norodom Sihanouk's government accused France today of harboring hundreds of "war criminals" at the French Embassy in Phnom Penh.

A French Foreign Ministry spokesman denied that any Cambodians remained there when radio contact with the embassy was broken last weekend.

The ministry spokesman said that all that France has received on the expected movement of

the embassy refugees has been "false reports after false reports," all from nonofficial sources. Among the Americans is Sydney H. Schanberg, a correspondent of The New York Times since the radio cutoff. France has been unable to get any word about her Phnom Penh embassy from the new Cambodian authorities, neither directly nor through third parties. Representations have been made to the semiofficial mission of Prince Sihanouk here, through the prince in Peking and through the Chinese Government.

Today's Cambodian statement, issued over the signature of Chau Seng, Prince Sihanouk's representative in Europe, not only cast doubts on the status of the 610 refugees at the embassy but reiterated the Cambodians' nonrecognition of the embassy's diplomatic protection.

Mr. Seng singled out Prince Sisowath Sirik Matak as a "war criminal" and "traitor" who had taken refuge at the embassy. Prince Sihanouk considers former Premier Sirik Matak, his cousin, the principal plotter and perpetrator of his overthrow in 1970.

Said to Have Yielded

PEKING, May 1 (Agence France-Presse) — Marshal Lon Nol's former Deputy-Premier, Sisowath Sirik Matak, fled to the French Embassy when the Communists took Phnom Penh on April 17, but gave himself up to the authorities a few days later, a well-informed Cambodian source here said today.

The source made the statement to a newsmen here after Chau Seng, Prince Sihanouk's representative in Europe, said in Paris that the embassy was harboring war criminals, including Prince Sirik Matak. He was one of seven persons condemned to death in principle by the Cambodian Communists.



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Three-nation talks were held at border near the town of Aranyaprathet.