

NYTimes MAY 3 1975
**Thais May Shift Stand and Give
125 Vietnam Planes Back to U.S.**

BANGKOK, Thailand, May 2 (UPI)—Faced with American protests, Thai Government officials appeared today to be backing down from previous statements that they would return to Saigon the 125 South Vietnamese planes flown here by fleeing pilots in the closing hours of the war.

Commenting on American statements that the planes belonged to the United States since they were furnished to the former Saigon Government under military-aid agreements, Foreign Minister Chatichai Choonhavan said at a news conference:

"This is a very sensitive subject. According to the law they belong to us at the moment, but we will have to look into the commitments between the United States and Vietnam."

U.S. Stand Backed

Defense Minister Praman Adiraksarn said earlier that the planes could not be handed over to the present Saigon Revolutionary Government because documentary evidence showed that they belong to the United States.

"They must be taken out of Thailand by the Americans themselves," he said. "We cannot return them to the Vietcong."

The return of the planes to Vietnam was demanded in broadcasts from Saigon and in notes distributed in Paris.

"Many persons in the Saigon puppet administration took dozens of warships, cargo ships, cargo planes and jet fighters" to neighboring countries, the Saigon radio said.

Demands by Saigon

Both broadcasts and diplomatic notes stressed that the Saigon Revolutionary Government had the right to recover what it described as stolen property.

Thailand's Premier, Kukrit Pramoj, in an apparent attempt to avoid offending the new Saigon Government, said on Wednesday that Thailand would enter negotiations for the return of the planes.

But Americans here made their views known, and yesterday Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger said at a news conference in Washington that the aircraft still belonged to the United States.

Another statement by Mr. Schlesinger drew an angry comment from Foreign Minister Chatichai, who denounced the United States as a country

without morals and declared that all American troops would be expelled from Thailand within a year as previously scheduled.

Claim by Saigon Reds

Special to The New York Times

PARIS, May 2 — The new Saigon authorities in notes distributed here today laid claim to all South Vietnamese property across the world and to responsibility for the country's diplomatic representations abroad.

One note, emanating from the Foreign Ministry in Saigon and distributed by the mission of the Provisional Revolutionary Government here, declared that henceforth, "all goods, furniture, buildings, means of transportation, etc." that belonged to the Saigon administration both in South Vietnam and abroad are "the property of the population of South Vietnam and to be administered by the P.R.G."

The claim included property rights on "the tens of warships and cargoes, the hundreds of transport and combat vessels transferred to Thailand and elsewhere by Saigonese elements," the note said, "and the tens of tons of gold they stole as well as other goods they took abroad."