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Indochina Roundup

Hanoi Asks Return of S. Viet Jets

North Vietnam formally urged Thailand yesterday to return to the Provisional Revolutionary Government planes and ships that fleeing South Vietnamese took to Thai territory.

"In the interest of relations between the Democratic Republic of North Vietnam and Thailand and peace in the entire region, the North Vietnamese government hopes that the Thai government will respond positively to these (PRG) demands, by restoring immediately to the PRG all planes and ships taken to Thailand illegally during the flight by the Saigon administration and army," a Foreign Ministry statement in Hanoi said.

The PRG has claimed that the planes, numbering almost 130, were "stolen" and that they belong to the new government.

The United States claims that the planes are U.S. property under a military aid agreement.

Thai Foreign Minister Chatchai Choonhavan said earlier yesterday that the planes have been "temporarily impounded" and that the Thai government has not yet decided what to do about them.

The PRG has formally requested Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines, as well as Thailand, to return planes and ships taken by fleeing South Vietnamese. In a diplomatic note, the PRG said it has exercised governmental control in South Vietnam since April 30 and under international law the equipment should be returned.

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