

THAIS SEEK A DELAY IN U.S. WITHDRAWAL

NYTimes DEC 27 1975

BANGKOK, Thailand, Dec. 26 (UPI)—Thailand is attempting to delay the withdrawal of United States combat forces, set for next spring, because of border problems with its neighbors, military sources said today.

Defense Minister Pramarn Adireksarn, without referring to specific borders, said the pull-out must be "step by step."

Thailand's primary difficulties focus on its Mekong River boundary with Laos. Thailand closed the border Nov. 17 when Pathet Lao soldiers fired on a Thai navy patrol boat, killing one officer.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman here said that the border across the Mekong between Nong Khai and the Laotian town of Tha Deua would be opened Monday for one day to permit the crossing of foreign diplomatic supplies and personnel.

The spokesman said Thailand had informed the Laotian Government that "we are considering reopening the border permanently."

VIENTIANE, Laos, Dec. 26 (AP)—North Vietnamese trucks driven by Pathet Lao soldiers began arriving in Vientiane today with milk, sugar and medical supplies for a city that has had acute shortages since Thailand closed its border with Laos a month ago. In all, 300 trucks are expected. A North Vietnamese-Soviet airlift continued to supply the city. Premier Kurkrit Pramoj announced yesterday that the frontier would be reopened in a few days.

Official Website