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THURSDAY

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President Holds Plans To Invade N. Vietnam

WASHINGTON — It may be denied because of the antiwar ferment, but President Nixon has on his desk detailed contingency plans calling for U.S. ground troops to cross into North Vietnam if Hanoi should attempt to break through the demilitarized zone. This daring move is part of the military action that possibly would be taken if the North Vietnamese should threaten the orderly withdrawal of American troops from South Vietnam. The President is prepared to conduct elaborate, Cambodian-style forays across the North Vietnamese border to knock out enemy communications, supply and staging centers.

This is what he must have had in mind, say insiders, when he told a press conference last week: "If the North Vietnamese did what some have suggested they might do — move a massive force of 250,000 to 300,000 across the DMZ against our Marine Corps people who are there — I would certainly not allow those men to be massacred without using more force and more effective force against North Vietnam."

Later in the press conference, he added significantly that the Cambodian action "puts the enemy on warning that if it escalates while we are trying to de-escalate, that we will move decisively and not step-by-step."

Protests Stun President

The intensity of the antiwar protests, however, may deter the President. Those who consulted with him on the Cambodian operation say he was prepared to take bolder action if the public-opinion polls had showed he had popular support. Conversely, the antiwar frenzy has stunned the President and may persuade him to pull his punches.

Another military move that has been taken up with the President is a thrust into Laos to cut off the North Vietnamese supply lines that wind through Laos down the Ho Chi Minh network of trails. But this proposal has been largely ruled out, say insiders, because of the difficult terrain and the dubious prospects.

Meanwhile, it is apparent that the Cambodian action isn't going to destroy COSVN, the supreme Communist military headquarters, which the president said was the primary target of the invasion.

Furious With Chiefs

The President is furious with the Joint Chiefs for misleading him about the possibility of destroying COSVN. They visualized the enemy command center, apparently, as a jungle version of their own elaborate, Pentagon-style headquarters.

Their attacks upon the Communist infrastructure, they felt, had largely destroyed the underground network and com-

pelled the North Vietnamese to return to conventional logistics.

But other intelligence specialists had warned the COSVN, like a floating crap game, could be folded up quickly and re-established later in some other jungle hideout. The Communists' guerrilla style of warfare, not unlike that used by our own forefathers to wrest independence from the British, still confounds those who fight by the book.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Campus agitators — Secret films of the recent violence on some campuses reveal that the hard-core militants, who shouted the loudest for blood, quietly pulled back when the violence erupted. These professional agitators, apparently, are adept at ducking out on the violence they stir up. In this way, they can avoid arrests and move on to other campuses. Only the suckers get hurt.

Troop withdrawals — President Nixon has carefully emphasized how many troops he expects to withdraw from Vietnam, not how many he intends to leave behind. His secret plans call for continuing the pullout until the U.S. force is down to about 60,000 men. They will remain to furnish air, artillery and logistical support for the South Vietnamese until a settlement is reached.

Thurmond's tux — Stern, erect Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., picked up an unexpected anecdote for the law-and-order speeches he intended to deliver in South Carolina last week. He packed his tux and an extra suit and locked them in his car while he attended a patriotic rally in downtown Washington. When he returned, thieves had broken into his car and made off with the senator's fancy tux and suit.

Real Martha Mitchell — Martha Mitchell's dipped-in-curare verbal darts are surprising to those who remember her as a Southern belle back in Arkansas. They describe her as a "typical flower of the South," a pretty, smiling girl who seldom raised her voice above a delightful drawl. Atty. Gen. John Mitchell married her in Elkton, Md., an elopement center, a few days after his divorce from his first wife became final.

In the middle — Dow Chemical Company, the object of violent left-wing political assault, may also come under attack by the right wing. Leftwingers have been demonstrating against Dow because it manufactures napalm. Now the rightwingers have learned that Dow Chemical's Japanese subsidiary is trying to do business with Communist China.

Northern segregation — The Health, Education, and Welfare Department is quietly preparing to go ahead with its new mandate to enforce school integration in the North. J. Stanley Pottinger, the new civil rights director, has called a conference of his key people in Denver this month to lay out the strategy. Meanwhile, 77 per cent of the nation's black children still attend predominately black schools.