

Departing Envoy Calls Cambodia War Pointless

Phnom Penh

Departing U.S. Ambassador Emory C. Swank yesterday described the war here as increasingly counterproductive for both sides but with little prospect that hostilities would end soon.

Swank, who has served here since September, 1970, spoke at a meeting he described as a "farewell" to representatives of the American news media—his first on-the-record contact with newsmen since he arrived.

Asked whether he felt that over-all American policy objectives in Cambodia have been achieved during the last three years, the ambassador said:

"The Khmer republic and its armed forces contributed significantly to the Vietnamization of the war in Vietnam and thus to the disengagement of our own forces. On this side there have been between 25,000 and 26,000



EMORY C. SWANK
A gloomy appraisal

Khmer troops killed, and time was bought for the success of our program in Vietnam."

Thus, Swank said, the U.S. owes Cambodia a debt of gratitude.

But he added that "the

war seems to me to have less and less point to any of the participants."

Because of this, he said, American policy is directed toward ending the war by negotiated settlement as quickly as possible. But prospects, he said, remain very gloomy.

One difficulty, he asserted, is the refusal by the other side to negotiate at all at this point, apparently convinced that it can win a military victory.

The ambassador said that negotiations would be likely to succeed only if the other side becomes convinced that there is a point in negotiating rather than pressing for total victory. The actual military situation, he said, is not desperate although the current "fluid" conditions make long-term predictions difficult, he said.

Swank said that Phnom Penh's forces are now using ammunition and some supplies at a very rapid rate and that shortages could develop, particularly if the Nixon administration's requests for military appropriations for Cambodia should be significantly cut by Congress.

At the moment, he noted, U.S. military aid to Cambodia is still being sent under a continuing resolution and therefore is less than it would be under a regular appropriation. The administration has asked for \$170 million for military aid to Cambodia in fiscal year 1974, which began in July.

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