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## Pentagon Said in Dark

# Snafu Spurs Arms Rush

SAIGON — (UPI) — A highly placed American civilian source said today that failure of the White House to keep the Defense Department informed of truce talks progress led to a last minute stampede to get new weapons into South Vietnam before a truce went into effect.

The source said Defense Department officials apparently had not been informed of the terms of the proposed agreement until it was ready for signing.

When they learned it would ban introduction of any new or additional weapons and provide only for re-

placement of existing weapons in the South Vietnamese army, they protested.

At that point, the stampede began to bring in new weapons prior to signing of an accord. In Washington, the Defense Department announced that it was "borrowing" F5 Freedom Fighter jet attack bombers from Iran, Taiwan and South Korea for the South Vietnamese Air Force.

The highly placed source speculated that the snafu over the weapons deliveries might be one of the reasons the cease-fire was not signed

before tomorrow's presidential elections.

(In Washington, Defense Department spokesman Jerry Friedheim denied that defense officials had not been kept informed.

He said the speeded-up supply of war materiel to Saigon was designed to give the South Vietnamese immediately all the planes they originally had been scheduled to receive in 1973.)

About 120 of the F5s were believed to be involved in the "loan." Military sources said the planes, stripped of their wings, were being flown into Bien Hoa air base, 14 miles northeast of Saigon, in big C5 Galaxy transport planes.

They were arriving at the

rate of six or more per day, three planes aboard each C5, military sources said. More than 24 of the planes have arrived, the sources said.

The U.S. Air Force also brought in 32 of its big C130 Hercules four-engine, turbo-prop transport planes for the South Vietnamese Air Force despite the fact that it hasn't a pilot, air crewman or ground crewman trained to fly the planes. The planes theoretically double the South Vietnamese airlift capacity.

Other C5s began hauling in M48 tanks and armored personnel carriers to Saigon's Tan Son Nhut airport and more heavy artillery was expected to arrive soon.

"Pentagon officials have denied reports that the emergency buildup was required because Laird was caught by surprise on the cease-fire proposal." SFE Examiner, 7 Nov 72, this file.