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Chronicle
Army's Last Words

Saigon

Almost lost in the cease-fire furor yesterday was the quiet closing of the U.S. Command's daily news briefings for correspondents, the "5 o'clock follies."

"This is the final press briefing, and the final communique," the command spokesman, Major Jere K. Forbus, announced to a throng of reporters jammed into the stuffy, beat-up audi-

torium on a downtown Saigon corner.

Asked how the termination of the briefings could be justified, Forbus replied: "The U.S. Command will continue to support the press, but we have to comply with the terms of the peace agreement and curtail some services."

Command spokesmen will remain in Vietnam during the 60-day phasing-out period for U.S. forces, to issue

"timely memos" and answer questions on subjects concerning the Americans, Forbus said.

The "5 o'clock follies" have been a daily institution since 1965, when the American military buildup began.

The South Vietnamese military command will continue its own briefings which are held daily in the same auditorium just ahead of the U.S. briefing.

Associated Press
