

Lon Nol Truce Does Not Seem To Reduce Clashes in Cambodia

NYTimes

By TILLMAN DURDIN JAN 30 1973

Special to The New York Times

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia, Jan. 29—The Cambodian government's suspension of offensive action by its armed forces today appears so far to have had no effect on the fighting in Cambodia.

Combat between Government and Communist forces reached a low level last week and continued at this level today. Reports on the day's military activity released here tonight said that two Cambodian soldiers had been killed and 12 wounded in scattered clashes south, southeast and northwest of Phnom Penh.

The military command's spokesman, Col. Am Rong, said that under the suspension order, Government troops reserved the right to engage in what he called "protective patrolling." He said that it was too early to tell whether the Vietnamese and Cambodian Communist forces opposing the Government would reciprocate the peace initiative and stop offensive action on their side.

"It might take several weeks before we can tell," Colonel Am Rong stated, pointing out that one reason for the Government move was to give the North Vietnamese and Vietcong forces an unhindered opportunity to withdraw from the country.

Meanwhile, authoritative sources confirmed that American bombing in support of

Cambodian troops, as well as bombing by the Cambodian Air Force, ceased over the weekend in keeping with the Phnom Penh order to suspend fighting.

Cambodian sources say that the Lon Nol Government will call for renewed American air support if the suspension of offensive action is not reciprocated and major fighting resumes.

The Government has promised no punishment of opposition forces who come over to its side. In pursuit of this objective, sources said today, bands of civilians and Buddhist monks were filtering into insurgent areas in an effort to make contact with their enemies and planes were dropping leaflets denouncing Vietnamese Communist actions in Cambodia and urging that soldiers come over.

Four mass meetings were addressed by Government leaders in downtown Phnom Penh today to stir popular support for the policy of making peace with the opposition.

The Government also produced the most important person so far to rally from the opposition camp to its cause, 32-year-old Ker Chhieng, who left a post in Peking on Jan. 18 as Prince Norodom Sihanouk's director of protocol to come here and announce his solidarity with the regime of President Lon Nol.