

Cambodia Held Sure of U.S. Air Support

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PHNOM PENH, Cambodia, Feb. 5—An authoritative Cambodian source said today that the United States had assured this country that it would resume bombing in Cambodia if the North Vietnamese troops resumed offensive operations against Government troops.

The assurance was delivered, according to the source, by Gen. Alexander M. Haig, Jr. when he called on the Cambodian President, Lon Nol, last month to inform him of the contents of the Paris cease-fire accord and the tenor of the negotiations between Henry A. Kissinger and Le Duc Tho concerning Cambodia.

The same assurance was conveyed in Paris by William H. Sullivan, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, to the Cambodian foreign minister, Long Boret.

At the same time the American officials reportedly assured the Cambodians that they were confident that they had reached an unwritten understanding with Hanoi that the North Vietnamese troops would be withdrawn from Cambodia.

Brig. Gen. Lon Non, the Cambodian President's younger brother, who is attached to the Interior Ministry, said that early but inconclusive signs pointed to the movement of

some North Vietnamese troops of the First Division in the south of Cambodia across the South Vietnamese border. Asked whether this did not constitute a violation of the Paris accord, Gen. Lon Non shrugged and said that that was the business of the Vietnamese.

On Jan. 28, the date in Southeast Asia that the South Vietnamese cease-fire went into effect, Marshal Lon Nol declared a unilateral halt in Cambodian offensive operations—which were small-scale—and American planes halted bombing in this country. General Lon Non said that aerial surveillance by American planes over Cambodia also stopped.

Communist attacks since then have also decreased, according to General Lon Non. Some knowledgeable Cambodians express a hopeful belief that such North Vietnamese troop movements as there are, particularly along the main highway linking Phnom Penh to the sea, may be connected with the withdrawal of at least some of those troops from Cambodia.

Optimism Is Common

Optimism that peace may be at hand is easily found in a country where, unlike Vietnam, there are no real hatreds among the population and the war that engulfed it in 1970 is only an extension of the struggle be-

tween the opposing Vietnamese sides and the United States.

Now that the real belligerents have stopped fighting, Cambodians say, there is no reason why this country should remain a theater of war.

But the optimism is tempered in official circles with considerable skepticism. High officials, while conceding that Mr. Kissinger, President Nixon's chief negotiator in the peace talks, probably obtained the maximal concession from Hanoi when he got the clause requiring total withdrawal of foreign troops from Cambodia, point out that Hanoi has never conceded the presence of its troops in Cambodia.

Because of a Vietnamese minority of perhaps one million people who lived in Cambodia before war broke out, many of whom have fled to South Vietnam, it is feared that a good number of Vietnamese Communist troops could remain here pretending to be lifelong residents of Cambodia.

Expressing what he called "reserved optimism" that an unofficial ceasefire may be obtained, Foreign Minister Long Boret said that the reactivation of the International Control Commission was essential for bringing about peace. Prince Narodom Sihanouk, the deposed chief of state, expelled the vestiges of the ineffectual peacekeeping group in 1969.