

Embattled Phnom Penh May Need an Airlift

Washington

Two top Pentagon officials said yesterday they foresaw no immediate military collapse of the Cambodian government but then said the U.S. might have to set up an airlift to the besieged capital of Phnom Penh.

This guarded assessment was offered by Defense Secretary Elliot L. Richardson and Admiral Thomas G. Moorer, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as concern grew among administration officials over what they privately described as a "deteriorating" military situation in Cambodia.

All the supply routes to Phnom Penh have been cut off by Communist-led insurgent forces.

Richardson said that if the "situation becomes dire enough," the U.S. may have to airlift supplies and military equipment to the forces defending the Cambodian capital.

APPEARANCE

For the moment, however, Richardson said priority was being given to reopening the roads and waterways leading into Phnom Penh, where the Cambodian parliament voted yesterday to extend the "state of danger" proclaimed nearly a month ago by President Lon Nol.

His Own Sermons Knock Him Out

London

An English clergyman has come up with a novel cure for insomnia—he recites his own sermons as he lies in bed.

Cannon Peter Collins disclosed in a letter to the London Times yesterday that he falls asleep well before he was finished preaching the text of his most recent Sunday sermon to himself.

The cleric asked whether there were any politicians or lecturers who used their discourses in this way.

Reuters

Richardson and Moorer were questioned about the Cambodian military situation by reporters after an appearance by the two officials before the House Appropriations subcommittee on defense.

Asked whether he saw any evidence of collapse of the Lon Nol government as a result of the Communist military pressure, Moorer replied: "I do not see any immediate threat of total collapse."

Noting that the Communist guerrilla forces in the past have periodically cut off the lines of communication lead-

ing into Phnom Penh only to have them reopened by government forces, Moorer said, "I think the fighting of this nature will continue."

BOMBING

As the military situation has grown worse for Lon Nol's forces over the last month, the U.S. has intensified its bombing in Cambodia of North Vietnamese supply lines and enemy troop concentrations.

Officially the administration continued to maintain its secrecy about the extent of the American air operations in Cambodia, a secrecy that a defense official suggested was based more on political than military considerations. Richardson argued Monday that information on the bombing could not be made public because "possible advantage might be taken of it by the other side."

Privately, however, Defense officials reported that about 60 B-52 bombers and 150 tactical fighter-bombers have been operating daily over Cambodia for the last few weeks. This represented an increase in bombing activity, which defense officials said accompanied a step-up in Communist military actions in Cambodia in the last month.

CAMPS

At the outset, the large B-52 bombers, according to officials, were used primarily to attack North Vietnamese supply routes and bases in northeastern Cambodia and along the border of South Vietnam. But increasingly, officials said, the bombers, which lay down a saturation pattern of bombs, have been used to attack base camps and troop concentrations of the insurgent Cambodian forces that at this point present the main military challenge to the Phnom Penh government.

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