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# Petroleum Airlift for Cambodia

## Phnom Penh

U.S. embassy officials here said today that because of fuel shortages, the American mission has been authorized to begin a petroleum airlift to blockaded Phnom Penh.

Officials said no details of the airlift would be forthcoming because they did not want to give useful information to the enemy.

Meanwhile, military sources said the U.S. has doubled its air shipments of military equipment to Cambodia since the start of the Communist offensive early in February.

U.S. C-130 Hercules freighter aircraft from Thailand have been averaging 20 deliveries of arms and ammunition each week to Phnom Penh's Pochentong Airport, the sources said.

Khmer Rouge insurgents and their North Vietnamese and Viet Cong allies have cut nearly all highways to the capital and fuel is running short. Food and other essentials, however, are said to be adequate.

Communist forces along the Mekong River ambushed a supply convoy last weekend. Two ships were set ablaze, a dozen others

turned back to South Vietnam. Five ships of the convoy did make it to Phnom Penh.

Captain C. S. Lo, master of the 7000-ton Lucky Star, one of the five, reported that as the convoy sailed up river, U.S. warplanes strafed the river banks a quarter of a mile ahead.

Cambodia's Prince Norodom Sihanouk, who heads a

government in exile in Peking, said in a message read over Hanoi radio that he narrowly escaped being killed by U.S. B-52 bombers during a secret visit last month to rebel-held areas of his country.

Sihanouk, who was ousted in 1970, claimed many air strikes were made about a mile from where he was sheltering.

*Associated Press*