

U.S. DOUBTS TRUCE IN CAMBODIA SOON

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Officials Say Bombing Has
Failed to Persuade Rebels
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By BERNARD GWERTZMAN

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WASHINGTON, April 16—The Administration told a Congressional subcommittee today that the daily bombing raids over Cambodia had permitted the survival of the Lon Nol Government but had failed so far to persuade the Communist-backed insurgents to start negotiations for a cease-fire.

"I cannot, in all honesty, with any confidence, predict in the very near future the beginning of negotiations," said Arthur W. Hummel Jr., a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs. He was appearing before Senator Edward M. Kennedy's judiciary subcommittee on refugees, which today opened hearings into the situation in Indochina.

Administration witnesses expressed frustration that despite the Vietnam cease-fire agreement military action has increased in Cambodia.

Article 20 of the Vietnam agreement ruled out foreign military activity in Laos and Cambodia as well as in Vietnam.

But it did not specify when this activity had to stop. Administration officials have maintained that under a private understanding with North Vietnam, the United States was permitted to continue bombing in Laos and Cambodia until cease-fires were worked out in those countries.

Air Missions Resumed

Bombing stopped in Laos in February after a cease-fire was reached there, but resumed again today because of alleged North Vietnamese violations.

The United States halted raids in Cambodia in response to a unilateral cease-fire announced by President Lon Nol on Jan. 28—the day after the Vietnam agreement was signed. But when the insurgents stepped up military activity, the United States resumed air missions.

Mr. Hummel said that the bombing raids were intended to counter "the determined effort" of the insurgents to topple the Government of President Lon Nol, and to provide an "incentive" to North Vietnam and its Cambodian allies to enter into negotiations.

"I can't say it looks close or imminent," Mr. Hummel said of the prospects for negotiations.

Bombing's Value Noted

Dennis J. Doolin, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia and Pacific Affairs, said that without the bombing the Lon Nol Government would be hard pressed to survive.

Asked by Mr. Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts, whether he believed Manshal Lon Nol could remain in power with the current level of bombing, Mr. Doolin said, "Yes, and so does Sihanouk." He was referring to Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the ousted Cambodian chief of state, who has at least nominal leadership of the Cambodian insurgents.

Mr. Doolin said that North Vietnam's compliance with the cease-fire agreement in South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia was "zero, zero, zero."

When asked by Mr. Kennedy if the Saigon forces had not also violated the agreement, he replied that he would be less than honest if he said that every cease-fire violation had been committed by the Vietcong or the North Vietnamese.

But he added that by comparison, Saigon's performance was "exemplary."

Some Requests Rejected

Both Mr. Hummel and Mr. Doolin said that bombing raids were made at the request of the Cambodian General Staff, who submitted their proposed targets to Ambassador Emory C. Swank. Many of these requests have been turned down. The officials said, because the bombing would have endangered civilian lives needlessly.

The subcommittee also heard testimony from two nongovernment experts, recently in Cambodia, who pictured a bleak future for civilians unless the fighting stops soon.

Wills Klein, executive director for Nationalities Service, said the "prognosis is dismal."

"Neither our Government nor the Cambodian Government have any organized refugee program," he said. "Adequate housing, sanitation, and medical service are either nonexistent, or in short supply. Increasing numbers of refugees are being generated by an accelerated level of military activity and intensified American bombing."

He said that a million refugees, half of them children, were "receiving virtually no assistance and face malnutrition, serious food shortages and, in some areas, the real specter of starvation."

Compared with Cambodia, Vietnam is like Miami Beach, he said.

The Rev. Robert Charlebois of the Catholic Relief Services said the Cambodian situation "defies description."

He deplored the fact that of the 200 Americans stationed in Phnom Penh only one was assigned to refugee matters on a full time basis. He held out the hope of improvement now that his organization and CARE had signed contracts of \$500,000 each with the United States Government to help the refugees in Cambodia.