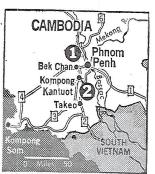
S, FRIDAY, JUNE 15, 1973



Government soldiers lost a post west of Bek Chan (1). Road from Kompong Kantuot (2) to capital was jammed by refugees.

CAMBODIA REBELS PRESS ON CAPITAL

Move From Several Sides as Heavy Fighting Goes On

By MALCOLM W. BROWNE

Special to The New York Times

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia,
June 14—Communist forces
were pressing toward Phnom
Penh from several directions
today as heavy fighting continued through the day.

The main action was again
reported about 13 miles west
of here along Route 4, the capital's link to the sea.

Fighting was heavy with
many casualties reported near
Bek Chan, where Government
troops appeared to be maintain-

roops appeared to be maintainng a strong defensive perimeter. Last night, a Government
garrison was forced out of the
village of Thnal Totung, four
miles farther to the west.

A visit to some of the roads near Phnom Penh today showed that a situation nearly as seri-ous for Government forces had

ous for Government forces had developed on Route 3, which leads toward the southwest, meeting Route 4 just outside the capital.

The road was so jammed with refugee cars, trucks, buses and motorcycles with trailers heading for Phnom Penh that traffic was nearly at a standstill. The refugees were mostly from Kompong Kantuot, a junc-

from Kompong Kantuot, a junction town of 30,000 people 15 miles from here.

The town was under intermittent Communist rocket attack, and Communist units several hundred yards off were steadily pushing the defenders back.

U. S. Raids Contiune

The continued gravity of the military situation in the Phnom Penh area has been underlined in the last two days by nearly continuous American air raids on Communist positions nearby.

The many thousands of

The many thousands of regugees moving along Route 3 will further tax Phnom Penh's resources, which were called upon during the last week to care of at least 35,000 others driven from their homes along Route 4.

Many towns nd villages on Routes 3 and 4 have been destroyed in the last week, leaving nothing for regugees to return to even if the areas are recaptured.

turn to even if the areas are recaptured.

The brunt of Phnom Penh' defense is apparently being borne as usual by heavy fire power and air power. Besides the incessant sounds of bombing and atillery a new sound has joined the noises keeping Cambodians awake at night. It is the stuttering roar of rapid is the stuttering roar of rapid firing aerial cannons and machine guns spraying nearby the countryside from American aircraft. American officials here do not disclose details about the conduct of the air war but it appears from observation of the Phnom Penh airport and nearby battlefields that many new American gunships are participating in the fighting.