

Aug. 15 Bombing Ban Called 'Absolute' by Sen. Hugh Scott

By Peter Braestrup

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Senate Minority Leader Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania said yesterday that "if disaster occurs" in Cambodia "we in the Congress have to assume a great part of that responsibility" by setting the Aug. 15 cutoff for U.S. bombing there.

But Scott, who voted with the majority June 30 for the cutoff, emphasized that the "ban is absolute. I think the only thing that would change it would be a (Communist) assault on the American embassy or American personnel connected with the embassy.

"I can't see any other situation where it wouldn't apply," he said.

Scott on "Issues and Answers" amid continuing pessimistic reports from Cambodia of heavy pressure by Hanoi-backed rebel forces against

the defenders of Pnom Penh, capital of Premier Lon Nol's U.S.-backed regime. U.S. airstrikes are supporting Lon Nol's troops.

Under the June 30 compromise end-the-bombing accord, President Nixon is entitled to ask Congress for an extension of the Aug. 15 cutoff. But administration officials have indicated no such request will be made; most Capitol Hill sources agree that an extension request would not get congressional approval.

Scott yesterday said that the "best solution" to the Cambodia conflict would be efforts to "effect a coalition government" by Lon Nol and rebel forces under the Peking-based group led by Prince Norodom Sihanouk who was ousted by Lon Nol in early 1970. But no such negotiated outcome seemed imminent, according

to administration sources last week.

Meanwhile Newsweek Magazine reported, in its issue today, that President Johnson rejected the use of U.S. bombing in Cambodia after Ambassador Chester Bowles, during a January, 1968, visit to Pnom Penh, got Prince Sihanouk's "tacit approval" for such measures.

Quoting an unnamed "former high official" in the Johnson administration, Newsweek said that when Bowles pointed out to Sihanouk that the North Vietnamese were operating against South Vietnam out of Cambodian sanctuaries, the prince replied: "Whatever you do there is your business, but don't let it come out."

In March, 1969, Newsweek said, after and as U.S. troop pullouts were being planned, Mr. Nixon took office, Gen.



SEN. HUGH SCOTT
... supported cutoff

Creighton Abrams, U.S. commander in Vietnam, reminded visiting Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird of Sihanouk's implied approval for bombing. Laird returned to seek and gain White House approval for the raids, which began and continued unannounced. Daily U.S. bombing raids on Cambodia were announced only after the 1970 allied invasion of the border sanctuaries.

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