

Kennedy Blast on Cambodia

Hearings

Open on

Refugees

Washington

Senator Edward M. Kennedy (Dem-Mass.) said yesterday the Nixon administration is making little effort to help bring peace and relief to Cambodia while saying a great deal about the urgent need for airlifting military hardware and supplies to continue the war.

At the opening of hearings on Cambodian refugees by the Senate judiciary subcommittee on refugees which he heads, Kennedy said the U.S. should stop sending bombers and start sending diplomats to help arrange a cease-fire.

Kennedy estimated there are 3 million men, women and children who have become refugees in Cambodia "since the American-sponsored invasion of that country three years ago." He said civilian casualties are in the tens of thousands and that housing, food and medical conditions are deteriorating rapidly.



Cambodian soldier and refugees sought a haven in South Vietnam after fleeing clashes along border

AP Wirephoto

BOMBING

Kennedy questioned Dennis Doolin, deputy assistant secretary of defense, about the cost of the U.S. bombing of Cambodia which now has gone into the 41st day.

Doolin acknowledged that the bombing costs more than \$1 million a day, but he could not say precisely how much or what tonnage of bombs is being dropped.

Wells Klein, executive director of the American Council for Nationalities Service and a consultant of the subcommittee, estimated the population of Cambodia at 6.5 million people. Over the past three years, he said, some 2.5 to 3 million people have been or now are

refugees or persons displaced by the war.

His estimate was much higher than that of Robert H. Nooter, an assistant administrator with the U.S. Agency for International Development.

CAMPS

Nooter estimated a total refugee population of approximately 700,000, including 10,000 refugees in camps around Phnom Penh and elsewhere in the provinces.

Klein, who visited Cambodia in late March as a member of a study mission, estimated there are 507,000 officially registered refugees and another 500,000 who are unregistered. In addition, he said, one must count 500,000 military dependents who have been forced to move by

the fortunes of war and 250,000 ethnic Vietnamese who were repatriated to, or forced to flee to, South Vietnam.

Klein said there also are 2 million people under the control of the Khmer Rouge or other anti-government forces. No statistics are available for this population. But, he said, with the resumption of U.S. bombing by strategic and tactical aircraft, at least half of the population under non-government control must be classified as refugees or displaced persons.

He said rice is in short supply everywhere and many persons are fleeing to government-held areas in the hope of securing food.

Associated Press