troops that: the national morale will sag to the point where the Lon Nol regime collapses.

As elsewhere in Indochina, the level of fighting ebbs and flows with Communist buildups followed by offensives and then lulls as the insurgents pull back to build up their strength.

From about March 10 to 20, it appeared as if the insurgents were drawing back. Their battalion-sized troop concentrations had been badly hurt from the air.

They have now returned to their old positions, but this time, instead of presenting the tempting target of battalion-sized concentrations, they are strung out along the roads and the Mekong in smaller units over a wider area. This change of tactic has made the bombing less effective now than in early March, observers here say.

No one can say how long the insurgents can keep up the present offensive, but usually cautious observers, who point out that political and economic chaos and corruption are a way of life in Cambodia, are worried about the low morale of the government troops. The Cambodian army has never been an elite or aggressive fighting force. Now, disenchantment with the Lon Nol regime is spreading and morale has reached its lowest ebb in years.

The latest military threat is the presence of nine or ten insurgent battalions, well supplied with mortars, moving into the area just northwest of the capital. Their purpose is unknown, but since next weekend is the Cambodian new year, intelligence sources are worried that the insurgents may be planning a holiday raid on the northern suburbs—perhaps against Phnom Penh airport. That would present yet another blow to Penh airport—that would prestige.

[From the Christian Science Monitor, Apr. 23, 1973]

PLEAS FOR A HALT—CAMBODIA: BOMBING INOCENT VILLAGERS

(By Daniel Southerland)

Prek Youn, Cambodia.—The bombing of villages such as this one raises embarrassing questions for the Nixon administration.

A White House spokesman has stated that the American bombing in Cambodia—now going into its 47th consecutive day—is a result of the continuing presence of North Vietnamese troops in Cambodia in violation of the Vietnam peace agreement.

But just as has been the case in many other Cambodian villages in recent months, the troops who entered Prek Youn were not North Vietnamese. They were Cambodian, or Khmer, insurgents.

Even assuming that one unstated aim of the bombing is to weaken not the North Vietnamese in Cambodia but the Khmer Insurgents, Prek Youn is at the very least an example of needless damage inflicted on civilians.

VILLAGERS AGREE...

According to villagers from Prek Youn, and they all agree on this, the bombs hit the village several hours after the Cambodian insurgents had left it.

The only people hurt by the bombing of Prek Youn, therefore, were civilians.

Prek Youn is, or rather was, a large and prosperous village situated on the Mekong River near Highway 1 about 23 miles east-southeast of Phnom Penh. The people grow rice, corn, potatoes, beans, bananas, and watermelons. Prek Youn was untouched by the fighting and bombing until very recently.

One night two weeks ago Khmer insurgent troops attacked a nearby government Army camp and then entered the village. These were what the people call “Red Khmers.” They have the support of the North Vietnamese, but they now are doing most of the fighting in Cambodia.

After entering Prek Youn, the Red Khmers fired on Cambodian Navy patrol boats trying to clear the way for a supply-vessel convoy coming up the Mekong. They urged some of the villagers to leave with them. They told those who did not want to go with them that they, too, should leave the village because it would be bombed by American planes.

Many of the people took this advice, and by 6 o’clock the next morning they were on their way out of the village. The Red Khmers also left. At about 9
o'clock, according to villagers' accounts, two American jets appeared and began bombing the village.

The villagers said that the American fighter-bombers made one pass after another against a phantom enemy. They destroyed or heavily damaged about half the houses in the village.

That night in an area near the village where some of the people had taken refuge, the fighter-bombers struck again. The bombs killed an 11-year-old boy named Sok San and wounded at least seven other persons. Among them was a 32-year-old woman named Vong Sarim, who was pregnant. The Cambodian Navy took the wounded people up the river to Phnom Penh for hospitalization.

Vong Sarim later told this reporter that she had seen no Khmer insurgent troops or any other troops in the area where the nighttime bombing occurred. She had given birth to her child without difficulty, but her right leg was still badly swollen because of debris which hit it during the bombing.

Casing Found.

Inside the village itself, the bombing killed 15 cows, and near the remains of the cows lay part of the casing for a U.S. Air Force “antipersonnel” weapon known as the CBU. This cluster bomb unit had contained several hundred steel-pellet bomblets. The casing was marked as a product of Lanson Industries. It is a weapon specifically designed to kill people, but this time it got animals instead.

In some sections of Prek Youn, nothing remains but deep bomb craters, broken cooking pots and other utensils, rotting fruit, shattered banana trees, and scorched pieces of corrugated iron roofing.

One of the strangest things to be found in Prek Youn was a printed leaflet. Apparently dropped by an airplane, the leaflet was written in Vietnamese. It was addressed to North Vietnamese troops and told them that a peace treaty had been signed in Vietnam and that they could go home.

The people in Prek Youn had seen small groups of Cambodian insurgent troops in the village. But they had not seen a single Vietnamese. No one in the village could read the leaflet, much less understand what it was all about.

Prek Youn now is virtually deserted. Some of the people return to the village in the morning to sift through the ruins and retrieve possessions and food. Then in the afternoon, they move closer to Phnom Penh. Many of them are living at the moment on the grounds of pagodas serving as unofficial refugee camps.

At the Sla Keth pagoda, 12 miles east of Phnom Penh, refugees from Prek Youn report they had gotten no help from the Phnom Penh government. They feared that the rice which they salvaged from Prek Youn was going to run out in two or three months. They had no idea when it would be safe enough for them to return to the village and stay there permanently.

Area Heavily Populated.

The area along Highway 1 east of Phnom Penh is heavily populated. But for a stretch of some eight miles east of Prek Youn most of the people are afraid to spend the night in their old homes. In the afternoon you can see them moving westward on the highway in ox carts and rented motorbike taxis with the food and belongings they have salvaged from their former homes.

“I would like to ask you to request the government not to drop any more bombs, because we would like to rebuild our homes,” said an old man living among the Prek Youn refugees outside the Sla Keth pagoda.

“You journalists can see the problem with your own eyes,” said another refugee. “But most of the American people cannot see with their own eyes, so your government gets away with lying to them.”

“We want President Nixon to do everything he can to stop the war,” the man said, as more and more refugees gathered round.

‘Send Our Voices . . .’

“We want you to send our voices to the American people,” he said. “Our only hope is in the American people because our own government ignores us.”

“If the Americans can make peace in Cambodia, we, the Cambodian people, will thank the American people like brothers.”

One wonders how many Prek Youns there are.
In recent weeks, the United States has reversed an earlier policy of not bombing in the heavily populated area around Phnom Penh.

But Prek Youn apparently got off easy. Although many houses were destroyed, few people were killed or wounded in the bombing. Refugees mentioned 10 other villages south of Prek Youn where, they said, the bombing had been much heavier!

Finding out just how much heavier could be difficult, because traveling Highway 1 even as far as Prek Youn can be dangerous. One never knows when the road will be cut—not by the North Vietnamese but by Cambodian insurgents.

[From the Boston Globe, May 9, 1973]  

21,121 AIR RAIDS IN LAOS, CAMBODIA—US BOMBING SINCE TRUCE: 145,919 TONS

Washington.—Since the Jan. 27 Vietnam cease-fire, US planes have dropped 145,919 tons of bombs on Cambodia and Laos. They have also made 21,121 air strikes on those two countries, and the attacks have cost $255.7 million. Nine airmen have been killed, two are missing and three planes have been lost.

These figures were given to congressmen yesterday by Pentagon officials.

(An air strike, in this tabulation, means one plane on one mission).

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Dennis J. Doolin and J. Fred Buzhardt, the Pentagon’s general counsel, testified at a House Armed Services Committee hearing.

Doolin said all US activities in Cambodia, including some military activities, are directed by the US ambassador in Phnom Penh. He said that until April 29, US air strikes were validated by the embassy. Now, he said, the US Air Force has blanket authority to conduct tactical air strikes and some B52 raids in Cambodia.

AIR WAR FIGURES IN INDOCHINA CONTINUE TO CLIMB.

This blanket authority will be reviewed at the end of this month, Doolin said.

The following breakdown on the bombing was given:

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<th>BOMBING TOTALS—CAMBODIA, LAOS—SINCE JAN. 27</th>
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<td>Cambodia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Air Strikes</td>
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<td>Bomb Tonnage</td>
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<td>Cost in Millions</td>
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On Cambodia 82,887 tons of bombs were dropped and 12,136 strikes made at a cost of $159.5 million.

On Laos 68,082 tons of bombs were dropped and 8935 air strikes made at a cost of $59.9 million.

Doolin said the Air Force is turning down approximately 40 percent of the Cambodian requests for American air strikes either because targets cannot be validated or because of the risk of hitting civilian populations.

Buzhardt cited the same authority for the Administration for the Cambodia bombing: President Nixon’s authority as commander-in-chief to use military force to try to make Hanoi abide by the cease-fire in Cambodia.

“We have the legal authority to bomb for the purpose of ending the war,” Buzhardt said.

He said there were no US military forces or military advisers in either Cambodia or Laos, Doolin said.

But he said there are 102 military people in Cambodia overseeing delivery of military equipment, working in the embassy’s political military section and in the defense attache office there.

Doolin said another 170 US military personnel are in similar non-combat positions in Laos.

US planes have conducted 6181 sorties in Cambodia and 5489 in Laos that are not connected with bombing, Doolin said. He did not say what they were for and said their cost was not immediately available.
Phnom Penh, Cambodia, April 19—United States air support for the Cambodian war effort against the Communists apparently continues each day without renewed Government-to-Government requests but with the continuous cooperation of American and Cambodian military planners.

Asked today about the processes by which American air strikes are planned in Cambodia, a United States spokesman here replied: "How many times must we tell you that such questions can be answered only by CINCPAC or Washington? We have no comment."

CINCPAC is the term used for headquarters of the United States Commander in Chief, Pacific, situated in Honolulu.

At a news conference today, Cambodia's Information Minister, Keam Reth, was also asked whether President Lon Nol had specifically requested American bombing and if so, when.

Mr. Keam Reth replied: "The President has contacted high-ranking Americans and also has made requests for materiel, but never for American manpower. I cannot specify the date of the request, which is secret."

**SPECIFIC TARGETS DESIGNATED**

Broadly speaking, American air support to Cambodia's hardflying army follows the general Indochina pattern of tactical and strategic planning, which often overlap.

In Indochina, tactical air support theoretically refers only to attacks by low-level fighter-bombers on specific enemy concentrations that are in contact with troops of countries allied with the United States. Strategic support technically means the kind of high-level bombing carried out by B-52's over supply arteries, notably the Ho Chi Minh trail.

In fact, B-52 raids have been used increasingly here, as elsewhere in Indochina, as direct tactical support of field units.

Tactical strikes, here as in Laos, are coordinated by an American controller, normally in a plane, who relays requests from Cambodian field commanders to the American aircraft, giving specific map coordinates for the targets.

For the strategic sorties, most of which are carried out at night, the general practice has been to hold a joint conference in each military region of the country involved each afternoon at which local commanders present their arguments for bombing certain targets during the next 24 hours.

**PRIORITIES MUST BE SET**

Normally, both the local and the American participants in the regional conferences tend to request more sorties than they expect to get, and higher American headquarters, subordinate to the Pacific Command headquarters at Honolulu, must apportion priorities.

But since the heavy bombers are being used increasingly in the tactical role, to relieve hard-pressed troops, encircled towns or blockades of roads and waterways, targets are often changed even while the bombers are in flight. This requires quick communication between ground and air.

The United States has no military advisers in Cambodia and its large complement of military men serve mostly either with the military equipment delivery team or the United States Embassy itself in attache roles.

Despite the absence of a formal military establishment here, the Americans engaged in coordinating air support—who do not wear uniforms—have ample equipment and men on hand to react on short notice to requests from Cambodian commanders for sorties. American air support also depends on standard American air reconnaissance techniques designed to detect troop and vehicle movements or concentrations.

Americans are not assigned to remain with Cambodian units but Americans connected with the air support program travel widely throughout Cambodia by helicopter or plane so as to familiarize themselves daily with the needs of Cambodian Commanders.

Much of the nation's territory is currently controlled by Communist forces, but since it is known that most of the Cambodian population lives in the Gov-
Government-controlled zone, there appears to be no official Cambodian apprehension that there might be civilian victims in most of the raids.

Wherever the Communists are in control, the object is to kill as many of the enemy as possible, with an attendant risk of civilian casualties. Knowledgeable western diplomats here have said they believe that the bombing often carried out with imprecise control, has caused high civilian casualties.

There are indications that in some instances American planners have vetoed bombing missions requested for heavily populated areas.

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**COASTAL TOWN FALLS**

Phnom Penh, April 19 (Reuters) - The coastal town of Keb fell to Communist forces yesterday, military sources reported today. The loss of the town, 85 miles southwest of Phnom Penh, has not been officially announced, and reports of casualties are just beginning to reach the capital.

Today Government forces were reported battling to retain two provincial capitals - Takeo, 40 miles south of here, and neighboring Tram Khan.

The military garrison at Keb was evacuated under fire with heavy losses, the sources said. Most of the civilians, including four French missionaries, had managed to escape several days ago.

The capture of Keb, the largest urban center taken by the Communists in several years, extends their already considerable hold on Cambodia's seacoast.

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**ROUTE TO SEAPORT CUT AGAIN**

Phnom Penh, April 19 (AP) - Communist forces have again closed Route 4, Phnom Penh's only link with the deepwater seaport at Kampong Saom, reports from the field said today.

Government troops had reopened the American-built road just 10 days ago.

Reporters who visited the scene today said Government soldiers had abandoned an outpost 20 miles southwest of the capital off Route 4 and another position near Tonat Pong, a hill two miles north of the highway, after intense fighting. Twenty Government soldiers were reported to have been killed and 30 wounded in the fighting.


**EMBASSY STILL CONTROLS CAMBODIA RAIDS.**

(By Sydney H. Schanberg)

Phnom Penh, Cambodia, May 10 - The full-scale United States bombing in Cambodia is being conducted with the assistance of the American Embassy in Phnom Penh, under circumstances that raise questions about the safeguards against striking civilian targets and about possible violations of the Congressional act under which the embassy functions.

The embassy has refused to provide newsmen with detailed information on the bombing, arguing that its staff has no direct involvement and acts merely as a conduit for requests from the Cambodian Government to the Seventh Air Force at the new American, air command for Indochina, situated at the Nakhon Phanom base in neighboring Thailand.

... But the embassy's role is considerably larger than that. The first official confirmation of this came in a report made public two weeks ago, by two staff members of a Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee, James G. Lowenstein and Richard M. Moose, who recently toured Southeast Asia and who got their information, on Cambodia, only after overcoming strong resistance from the embassy in Phnom Penh.

**EFFORT TO REDUCE ROLE**

The bombing, which has been under strong criticism by Congressional and other sources in the United States, was defended before a Senate committee by Secretary of State William P. Rogers on April 30.

He said the raids were justified under the Constitution and were "a meaningful interim action" to force the Communist-backed Cambodian insurgents to
accept the cease-fire called for in the Vietnamese peace agreement. The bombing was stepped up in response to increasing insurgent activity. Although the United States Embassy in Phnom Penh, sensitive to public and Congressional reaction, has tried to shift part of its role in the bombing to the Cambodian military—at least in theory—the changes have largely been in appearance and the American role continues to be significant.

An investigation by this correspondent over the last two weeks—based on interviews with informants close to the situation and also on the monitoring of radio conversations of personnel in the air and on the ground who are involved in directing the raids—has produced the following information:

First, the radio control center for coordinating and helping direct tactical air strikes against enemy troops has been shifted in the last week or so from the embassy to a Cambodian military building at an undetermined site in Phnom Penh, and Cambodians, rather than assistant United States air attaches, are doing the talking now.

But American military men, presumably air attaches, are reportedly at the Cambodian center, apparently giving the embassy's approval or disapproval to requests from Cambodian ground commanders for tactical bombing. (Final approval from the Seventh Air Force in Thailand is still required.)

The embassy denies that United States personnel are working at the center, but says that they do visit it "just as U.S. personnel visit other operational elements" of the Cambodian Army.

The embassy is occasionally mentioned in the monitored radio conversations, and all bombing strikes that are requested through the Cambodian control center seem to require the "validation" of someone identified as "Uniform Sierra"—the initials being "U.S." which could be the embassy.

Second, the American spotter and control planes that are identifying the targets after raids have been requested by Cambodian ground commanders and are directing the attack planes—jet fighter-bombers—to these targets are almost totally dependent on the Cambodian ground commanders for information on the targets' nature. This means information on how important the target is, on whether civilians are in the area and on whether the bombing might cause damage to previously undamaged civilian structures.

Third, the monitored radio conversations establish that the Cambodians do not raise questions or have reservation about possible harm to civilians or damage to civilian buildings. The Americans ask all these questions and apparently do not always receive accurate answers from the Cambodian commanders, who want as much air power as they can get and are rarely interested in such niceties as the possible presence of civilians.

The radio conversations also indicate that Cambodian commanders sometimes request air strikes when their situation is actually fairly calm. The following is by the pilot of an American spotter talking yesterday to the control plane a converted transport loaded with communications equipment, about request from a commander for a strike that was eventually approved:

**BROADCASTS EASILY HEARD**

"My personal opinion was that it wasn't that pressing down there. He doesn't seem to be taking that much fire. You know, he let me just fly around for half an hour without even talking to me. You know that's unusual if they're taking any incoming (enemy fire), but I still think we should give them a hand."

Fourth, some Cambodian commanders—the number is said to be 12 thus far—apparently have the authority to approve air strikes for the Cambodian side without going through the radio center, which would seem to reduce the controls on bombing error and carelessness further. These commanders can give their approval directly to the United States spotter pilot, who conveys the approval to the control plane. The control plane—its call sign is "Cricket"—then seeks and almost always gets the final approval of the American side, that is, Seventh Air Force headquarters.

Fifth, the radio conversations clearly indicate that the complicated procedures for requesting and approving tactical air strikes, which vary according to the situation, are frequently a mass of confusion growing out of language and communications difficulties.

The conversations were monitored on an ordinary V.H.F. radio set that can be purchased wherever radios are sold and can be tuned to some of the frequencies used in conducting the air war.
The following are examples of the confusion, each an individual instance of spotter planes talking with the control plane, after having had conversations with Cambodian commanders:

"Orickie, here's old Poppa area here this morning; and our problem is that some of these ground commanders are not that experienced and that's the reason why they have not been given their own validation authority."

"He does not have his own validation authority. He does not have. But control down there has been telling us all morning he did have it.

"Things have been fluctuating here in the last couple of days and I wasn't sure whether or not you got that validation yourself or you wanted me to get it before I come to you."

"No, I'm not recommending the strike. I can't find out exactly what the friendly situation is down there.

In sum the bombing, which began increasing in the second week of February, two weeks after the Vietnam cease-fire was signed, and became intense by the beginning of March, is an American operation that has been modeled to give the appearance that the Cambodians are playing a significant role in coordinating and directing it.

When the bombing began increasing in response to stepped-up attacks by Communist-led Cambodian insurgents, the Cambodian military had neither the equipment nor the training to run a radio control center on the ground, so the American Embassy assumed that role. Then, in the last several days, the necessary V.H.F. and U.H.F. radio equipment arrived and the Cambodians took over the job, in theory. The confusion in the radio conversations indicates that they are still not able to handle the task themselves.

As for the embassy itself, the Cooper-Church amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1971, which puts clear restrictions on the size and activities of the embassy, says that no aid funds "may be used to finance the introduction of United States combat troops into Cambodia, or to provide United States advisers to or for Cambodian military forces in Cambodia."

There are about 100 American military men in the embassy in Phnom Penh—more than 20 assigned to the defense attaché's office and about 75 working on the Military Equipment Delivery Team, which oversees the flow of military aid to Cambodia. They do not wear their uniforms in Cambodia.

Also working for the embassy are about 80 nationals of other countries, most of whom have military backgrounds in Asia and most of whom work on the military equipment team.

Independent observers here, and critics of the air war as well, have raised the question whether the air attaches and other military men at the embassy who are assisting the Cambodians in air operations are not in fact performing the role of advisers. Others see the argument as legalistic and, in the context of Cambodia's suffering, meaningless.

"What kind of absurd hair-splitting is this," a Western European diplomat commented. "American men in American planes are bombing the hell out of this place, and the embassy argues that it's all right because there are no American advisers here."

The embassy, which is feeling considerable internal dissension over its information policy, has been doing its best to keep a clear picture of the air war from emerging. According to the Lowenstein-Moose report, the embassy, which is headed by a career diplomat, Emory C. Swank, has often been acting on its own in trying to conceal or obfuscate information—rather than on instructions from Washington, as it has suggested.

SECTION 15 'FREEDOM DEAL'

In conducting the bombing, the Seventh Air Force has divided Cambodia into two parts—the eastern third, where the Cambodian Army never ventures because the area is solidly held by the enemy and normally used as an artery for moving troops and supplies from North Vietnam into South Vietnam, and the other two-thirds, where the Cambodian Government of President Lon Nol controls most of the population centers but not much of the countryside and where all the ground actions take place.

The eastern third is designated by the Americans as a sector called Freedom Deal, essentially a "free-fire zone" where the Seventh Air Force picks all the targets through its own reconnaissance.

In the case of the bombing of supply arteries and similar targets by B-52's carrying up to 24 tons of bombs and flying at altitudes around 30,000 feet, the
Seventh Air Force passes on its suggested strikes to the Cambodians for virtually automatic approval. On tactical air strikes by lighter low-flying jets in combat situations, it does not even clear the operations with the Cambodians. In all of this the United States Embassy plays only a minor "commenting" role as an intermediary.

In the rest of the country—the American designation for it is believed to be Khmer—the bombing is in two categories: the tactical strikes by jets in close support of Cambodian troops clashing with enemy forces, and the heavy, theoretically strategic, carpet-bombing of supply routes by the B-52's.

In practice the B-52 raids have been used increasingly, as they were elsewhere in Indochina, as tactical strikes in direct support of ground forces. Some of the raids, most of which are carried out at night, have struck within 10 miles of Phnom Penh in areas where the civilian population is usually fairly dense.

While tactical strikes by fighter-bombers are not planned but arise each day from the requests from Cambodian commanders, the B-52 strikes are planned on the basis of requests by the Cambodian High Command. After being screened by a panel at the embassy, they are passed on to the Seventh Air Force for the final approval, which is conveyed to the Cambodian command through the embassy with the schedule for the strike.

The embassy panel, which meets every day, is a civilian-military group, reportedly consisting of five high embassy officials. The chairman is the deputy chief of mission, Thomas O. Enders, also a career diplomat, who is said to have the deciding voice. Ambassador Swank is not a member of the panel and does not usually attend its sessions, but he is said to be kept closely informed.

The Cambodians submit their requests for B-52 strikes on a form that requires a description of the target and its justification and certification that friendly forces, villages, hamlets, houses, monuments, temples, pagodas, shrines and similar structures are not within specified distances of the target area—in other words, that the target complies with "rules of engagement."

According to the Lowenstein-Moose report, Mr. Enders said that approximately 40 percent of the requests are turned down—which apparently means that the embassy considered some targets too close to populated areas. There have also been unofficial reports that the Seventh Air Force, for the same reasons, has rejected strikes approved by the embassy.

The embassy panel also screens requests for some if not most of the strikes by F-111 swing-wing jets. Since these are low-flying tactical fighter-bombers, it is not clear why they are grouped with the B-52's in the screening process.

The number of bombing sorties—a sortie is one mission by one plane—in Cambodia rose by mid-March to nearly 250 a day and stayed close to that through April 18, according to official figures provided for the Lowenstein-Moose report. No official figures are available for the period since April 18, but informants here indicate that the daily sortie rate is still over 200.

Although most are tactical strikes by fighters, nearly 60 a day are the vast raids by B-52's—nearly always in groups of three—which would make a total of about 1,700 a month. According to military informants, that is more B-52 raids than were being flown monthly in all of Indochina in 1971, the last year for which full statistics are available. In Cambodia in that year the monthly rate of B-52 raids ranged from a low of 20 to a maximum of about 250.

Cambodia is clearly undergoing her heaviest bombing—and some of the heaviest ever conducted in the Indochina conflict. Much of the capacity formerly directed against the whole region is now reserved for Cambodia. Further, whereas the preponderance of air strikes in Cambodia used to be directed against North Vietnamese and Vietcong supply routes in the eastern third of the country, the bulk are now devoted to tactical support of Cambodian troops under attack in the rest of the country, where population density is higher. In other words, the bombing is designed not simply to disrupt the Ho Chi Minh supply trail but to prevent Cambodian population centers from being overrun.

Despite repeated requests by newsmen, the Nixon Administration has refused to divulge any figures on the cost of the current bombing, but estimates by Washington in the past indicate that it is costing $7-million to $10-million a day, which is over $2-billion on an annual basis.

The Administration does not include this expense in computing aid to Cambodia; it lists $180-million as its total military aid for the year.

The rules of engagement in the air war are officially secret, but according to the informants they include a prohibition against bombing within 500 yards of
a school or pagoda and a prohibition against bombing undamaged buildings unless friendly forces are under fire from them.

However, it is clear from the monitored radio conversations that the rules are not always followed.

On Tuesday, for example, a spotter pilot was talking with the control plane about a strike requested by a Cambodian commander. Following are excerpts from the conversation:

CRICKET: You say there are enemy in the structures and they are firing from the structures.

SPOTTER: I say there are enemy in the structures. They are not firing from the structures at this time.

CRICKET: Are there any undamaged structures in the immediate area?

SPOTTER: No in the immediate area. Those three structures look in pretty good condition from the air. I don't believe they're damaged.

Cricket then apparently requested approval for the strike from the control center—and presumably from the Americans there—and from the Seventh Air Force in Thailand. Some pauses ensued. A few minutes later Cricket informed the spotter that the approvals, including that of Uniform Sierra, had been granted.

Cricket said: "You've got a valid target there. Request you come to [garbled] frequency and request air."

Thus the spotter was told to change to a different radio frequency and direct the attack planes to the target. Despite the prohibitions against bombing undamaged buildings unless Communist forces were firing from them, this target was approved and bombed.

No reliable figures are available on civilian casualties and civilian damage from the bombing, nor are there any reliable figures on refugees created by it.

Neither the American Embassy nor the Cambodian High Command divulges bombing errors or accidents, although other informants have confirmed several recent ones.

CRASH AT THE AIRPORT

An accident the Americans could not conceal was the crash of an A-7 Corsair into a military camp just beyond the Phnom Penh airport a week ago, killing about a dozen soldiers and civilians and wounding a score of others. The cause is said to be under investigation.

Civilian bombing victims have turned up in Phnom Penh hospitals, but not in large numbers. With the roads throughout the country periodically cut, casualties are not likely to reach the capital.

Damage to civilian structures can be seen on some of the roads out of Phnom Penh.

Embassy officials say that the responsibility for taking precautions against harm to civilians rests squarely on the Cambodian Government, but they contend that if the American side has any doubts or if the map being used to plan a bombing strike is not up to date, the Seventh Air Force will conduct further reconnaissance before approving the target.

[From The Washington Post, Apr. 28, 1973]

AIR STRIKES AT 240 A DAY IN CAMBODIA

(By Michael Getler)

In a generally gloomy assessment of U.S. military involvement in Cambodia, Senate investigators yesterday reported that since mid-March U.S. warplanes have been carrying out about 240 bombing raids a day in that country in an air war largely directed from the U.S. embassy in Phnom Penh.

In contrast to heavy U.S. B-52 and fighter-bomber attacks during March against North Vietnamese supply lines running through Cambodia into South Vietnam, the Senate report also confirms the shift of about 80 percent of the bombing effort in April to help beleaguered government forces contain Cambodian Communist troops.

The Senate investigators, James G. Lowenstein and Richard G. Meade of the subcommittee on U.S. Security Agreements and Commitments Abroad, reported after a trip to Southeast Asia that "the United States had become far mo
deeply and directly involved than ever before in the conduct of the war in Cambodia."

Conceding that it was, in the opinion of virtually all U.S. civilian and military officials in the area, only U.S. air power that enabled the government forces to survive thus far, the report says air power also appears essential for the current government to continue fighting. It would also be essential for survival of any new broader-based government formed under President Lon Nol, they believe.

The investigators said they found no indication that the Cambodian Communists and their North Vietnamese supporters were interested in a cease-fire at this time, and were likely to keep up the pressure on the government at least through the remainder of the day season in May and June.

The investigators suggested that if the Cambodian Communist factions ever do agree to a cease-fire they will undoubtedly insist on a role in the government and an end to the U.S. bombing. In that sense, they believe, such a solution might be more attractive to the Communists than an outright takeover of the government which might not result in an end to the air attacks.

Subcommittee Chairman Sen. Stuart Symington (D-Mo.) charged that the staff report confirms that what is going on in Cambodia is essentially a civil war and that the U.S. bombing is devoted primarily to support of Lon Nol, a premise which the administration has steadfastly rejected.

"We now have new commitments" in Cambodia, Symington said, "being undertaken without prior congressional knowledge or approval."

Symington claimed the U.S. air action was "illegal," violating "the intent" of legislation passed in 1971 specifically designed to limit the involvement of American personnel in any war in Cambodia and to avoid the type of embassy involvement that had been used in the air war in Laos.

The Cooper-Church amendment bars U.S. ground combat troops from Cambodia and also prohibits U.S. "advisers to or for military, paramilitary, police or other security or intelligence forces in Cambodia."

"While that amendment does not specifically mention air operations, legislators who oppose current U.S. actions say the legislative history of the amendment makes it clear that air operations are also ruled out except when needed to protect U.S. ground forces in South Vietnam."

The statistics in the report on the level of U.S. air operations, and the areas where they are being carried out, were approved by the Defense Department and mark the first time such information has been made public.

Symington claimed that the data showed air strikes were being carried out in populated areas and that safeguards to avoid civilian casualties were less stringent than those applied in Laos.

The report also provided the first detailed glimpse into the sizeable role of the U.S. embassy in controlling the air strikes.

The investigators, who reported considerable initial reluctance by the embassy to cooperate in their investigation, said the embassy itself served as a communications link between the Cambodian general staff, where requests for strikes are initiated, and U.S. Seventh Air Force headquarters in Thailand, where the U.S. embassy claims, all strikes are authorized.

Communications with a U.S. battlefield command plane, over Cambodia, with an embassy official aboard, are also handled through the embassy's control center as well as radio links to the U.S. forward air control pilots who actually guide the bombers in on their attacks.

The embassy acts as an on-the-spot coordinator of these control planes, which land and refuel at Phnom Penh daily but which apparently do not remain overnight.

A panel of civilian and military officers validates each request for B-52 and F-111 strikes, though the embassy itself appears to have little to do with raids in eastern Cambodia where there is little government presence and where the U.S. bombs heavily, with government permission, to hit North Vietnamese supply and base camp areas.

The embassy role is much greater, the report claims, elsewhere in Cambodia where government forces are said to be fighting units made up almost exclusively of local communist insurgents.

Targets are plotted on a map that is supposed to show details down to the size of a house but which is "several years old." They are validated by an embassy bombing panel chaired by the deputy chief of mission, a civilian. About 40 percent of the strike requests in these areas are turned down at the embassy.
Also on the panel is the U.S. defense attache, an Army colonel, two other civilian officials and a brigadier general who is officially head of the U.S. military equipment delivery team.

But the report says that since he outranks the defense attache, the equipment delivery team head has either been given or assumed a role as “senior military adviser” to the ambassador and is consulted on all military decisions, including the daily bombing targets.

In addition to an average of some 184 tactical fighter-bomber strikes and 58 B-52 raids daily since March 15 (though the rate of fighter-bomber strikes reportedly declined slightly in April), the investigators report Air Force C-130 transports have also been dropping leaflets occasionally, sometimes up to 12 million in a day.

The administration contends that the U.S. bombing operations after the Vietnam cease-fire are both legal and authorized under the same authorities that permitted the President to negotiate the cease-fire.

The raids are being carried out, it is claimed, at the request of the Cambodian government and to force Hanoi to end its support of the insurgents and live up to the cease-fire agreements affecting Cambodia.

While it seems clear from the report that many raids are at the request of the Cambodian government, the report also notes an embassy role in transmitting “U.S. Air Force proposals” to bomb in eastern Cambodia where Hanoi’s forces are aimed mostly at South Vietnam.

This takes place after “some sort of clearance process which was never further explained,” the report says. Unexplained is how such proposals fit into the context of “all” raids being at Cambodian request. This area, say investigators, has always been vague and presumably dates back to some older and even broader Cambodian authority granted for U.S. air action.

[From The Economist (London), Apr. 21, 1978]

**Can All the King’s Bombers Put Cambodia Together Again?**

As the Cambodian regime continues to lose its hold over its provincial outposts, it is starting to look like the town council of Phnom Penh. The outlook looked gloomier still on Wednesday, when the communists captured the once popular beach resort of Kep, down by the South Vietnamese border. The fighting still raged around the nearby provincial capital, Takeo, and the ragged battalions of both sides pushed each other back and forth across the deserted market square of Tram Khnar. The usefulness of the Cambodian army—an inchoate, hastily assembled body of men who have begun to desert in alarming numbers—is largely confined to garrison duty in the major towns and to marching up and down the highways in an attempt to clear them after the American bombers have driven the communists back into the jungle. Despite a month and a half of heavy bombings by the Americans, who are said to be flying 60 B-52 missions and 250 fighter-bomber raids daily, Phnom Penh’s communications are still insecure.

Most of the emergency supply convoy sent up the Mekong river got through after the South Vietnamese helped to drive communist gunners and ambush parties away from the banks, which means that the capital is no longer in immediate danger of running out of food and fuel. But stocks are down to almost nothing, and the roads both to the fertile rice-bowl province of Battambang and to the seaport of Kompong Son are insecure.

The government’s efforts to clear Highway 1, leading towards South Vietnam, typify the problems of keeping supply routes open in jungle country that is ideal for ambush. On Saturday, after heavy American bombing, the Cambodians were able to claim that the road was now open as far as the ferry post of Neak Luong, some 40 miles east of the capital. The following day the communists mounted an ambush, killing several senior army officers, and cutting the road about 28 miles east of Phnom Penh. By Monday, only 16 miles were usable. Operating in unwieldy conventional units, the Cambodian army has been confined to a handful of key roads and has not been willing or able to move across country and tackle the guerrillas in their own style. Nor has the government been able to mount the kind of political offensive in the countryside that might have helped to create a popular resistance to the communists.

At least a move was made, belatedly, to form a more representative cabinet...
on Wednesday, when the prime minister, Mr. Hang Thanh Hak, stepped down. The new cabinet was expected to include some of the leaders of the 1970 coup against Prince Sihanouk who have since been driven into opposition—possibly including Mr. Sirik Matak, Mr. In Tam, or Mr Son Ngoc Than. The initiative for the change almost certainly came from the Americans, and the details may have been worked out during the recent visit of President Nixon’s special envoy, General Haig, to Phnom Penh.

A broader based government may dull the attractions of the “Sihanouk solution” that is still being mooted by some people. The exiled prince, who recently claimed to have toured parts of Cambodia, has not increased his credibility as a possible future leader under some compromise arrangement between the Americans and the Chinese by a recent speech in which he denied that there were North Vietnamese or Vietcong forces in his country, although their number is estimated to be 45,000.

The other big question now is to what extent the South Vietnamese and the Thais will be ready to help President Lon Nol. Despite denials, it seems clear that the South Vietnamese carried out some limited operations on the Cambodian side of the border or the end of last week, when they moved up an armoured column to help to clear the communists out of the Mekong valley and helped to relieve a Panamanian cargo boat, the Mina-II, that was pinned down by rebel gunners. The right of hot pursuit across the vaguely defined border has anyway been exercised for years. The South Vietnamese may be strongly tempted to help to retake Kep, which is after all just across the border. But this capacity to mount bigger operations in direct support of the Cambodian army will be limited by the dangerous situation at home, which had tied down most of their mobile reserve. For their part, the Thais seem in no great hurry to get involved. Last week, Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn declared that Thailand would send neither regular forces nor mercenaries into Cambodia, although the training program for Cambodian troops would be stepped up. It looks as if President Lon Nol can count only on the bombers.

This week the Americans also launched new bombing raids into Laos, which awakened some fears in the American Senate that the bombing would eventually be extended to North Vietnam as a punishment for communist violations of the ceasefire agreement. In Laos, the initial American strikes were around That Vieng, a town to the south of the strategic Plain of Jars that was seized by the communists in a major armoured operation on Monday—a clear violation of the ceasefire. Prince Souvanna Phouma, the Laotian prime minister, asked for the bombing in order to deter the communists from striking at other towns. It is clear from what is happening in South Vietnam’s neighbours, as from the steady build-up of communist forces and equipment inside South Vietnam itself, that the ceasefire merely gave the communists time to catch their breath before pressing ahead with the new phase of the war.

[From The Far Eastern Economic Review, Apr. 23, 1973]

BACK TO THE BOMBING

(By T. J. S. George)

Hongkong—What seemed to be the last act in the American scenario for Cambodia unfolded last week. As the communist stranglehold on Phnom Penh tightened, the second invasion of Cambodia was mounted from the South Vietnamese side—just as the first had been, three years ago to the month. Marshal Lon Nol followed up with the removal of his Cabinet and the call for a new “political council”; for several months the American stage managers in Phnom Penh had been urging Marshal to “broad-base” his government, and the shaky President had been stalling. Now, evidently, he was too weak even to stall.

Calling the shots in Laos as well as in Cambodia, Washington ordered B-52 strikes in Pathet Lao country, with the excuse that the communists in general and North Vietnam in particular had grossly violated the terms of the ceasefire. Given the B-52’s proven powers of persuasion, it appeared that the only hopes for a cessation of the continuing air war in Indochina rested with US Congress, where consternation was mounting over the Nixon version of “peace with honour.”
By all accounts, the air punishment was particularly gruesome in Cambodia. American bombers were running up 60 sorties a day, a sort of Indochina record. Western Diplomatic circles in Phnom Penh reported that much of the bombing was indiscriminate and, in the nature of saturation bombing was causing high civilian casualties. Unannounced (except for the Australians), many diplomatic missions evacuated their personnel.

Through the destruction and chaos, the fact remained that the guerilla noose around the Cambodian capital was unexpectedly strong. Food does not seem to be in really short supply in Phnom Penh, thanks to the legendary richness of the soil, but almost everything else was. And the mounting popular frustration was a clear reminder of the precariousness of the Lon Nol government.

That the Government has been dangerously unrepresentative has been obvious for a long time, even to the Americans. Hau Thi Nhu had become Prime Minister last October following the resignation of Son Ngoc Thanh. If Thanh was a veteran rightist leader with well-known CIA backing for many years, Hak was a chameleon, in turn leftist and rightist before joining the Socio Republican Party of Col. Lon Non, the power behind Lon Nol's throne.

The one-party Socio Republican Cabinet had been set up against the express instructions of the Americans. But the American concept of a "broad-based" Cabinet merely implied the inclusion of a trusted friend like Sriik Matak, whose case was argued strongly by Spiro Agnew himself when he last visited Phnom Penh. Lon Nol's fears of being eclipsed stood in the way of any broad-basing—at least until last week.

Lon Nol may now be forced to form a new Cabinet that includes some of America's friends in Phnom Penh. Apparently, Washington is calculating that a political change along with an all-out military campaign will seal the fate of the Khmer communists and ensure the survival of a US-leaning regime in Phnom Penh. In the light of such a politico-military strategy, the South Vietnamese push into Cambodia makes Nixouan sense: Gen. Alexander Haig had visited American allies in the region last month and, on his return to Washington, Nixon had held a special meeting of the National Security Council. The South Vietnamese move followed this sequence of events.

But American calculations pay scant attention to the demonstrated strength of the liberation forces in Cambodia. Prince Norodom Sihanouk, fresh from his secret visit to the liberated zones, has already given additional proof of this strength. For one thing, it is clear by now that the Khmer Rouge triumvirate—Khieu Samphan, Hon Youn and Hu Nim—is alive and active; the liberation forces will not lack an effective and extremely intelligent leadership for negotiation and administration. For another, Sihanouk himself undoubtedly has the unreserved support of progressive elements, inside and outside Cambodia. Lon Nol, whatever Cabinet-guffling is forced upon him, is no match for such a purposeful force. He is a poor peg on which to hang American pinups of a "Free World" Cambodia.

[From The Washington Post, Apr. 24, 1973]

U.S. STILL CLAIMS HANOI FIGHTING IN CAMBODIA

(By Murrey Marder)

The State Department sought yesterday to restore the U.S. claim that the North Vietnamese are fighting in Cambodia by stressing that the Hanoi forces supply "combat support" and advisers and man some "crew-served weapons."

At issue is whether the fighting against the American-supported Cambodian regime is conducted primarily by Khmer Rouge (Cambodian) insurgents, or by a mixture of Khmer Rouge and North Vietnamese forces. The United States officially has emphasized North Vietnamese participation, to help justify continued American bombing in Cambodia.

The official U. S. rationale was undermined by reports from Phnom Penh over the weekend. American officials there were quoted as conceding that there is no documented or otherwise verifiable evidence that North Vietnamese or Vietcong combat units are attacking the Cambodian regime. Cambodia is attempting to portray the attackers as predominantly Vietnamese Communists.

State Department officials contended yesterday that the information reported from U. S. embassy sources in Phnom Penh on Friday was "somewhat out of context."
State Department spokesman Charles W. Bray said he understood "that the insurgent infantry engaged right around Phnom Penh are largely Khmer insurgents."

But "it is also our belief," said Bray, "that those insurgents are trained, supplied and supported by the North Vietnamese army and also perhaps the VC, from whom they also draw some of their cadre." In addition, he said, "the NVA and possibly also the VC generally man the crew-served weapons which are being used in support of the insurgents."

"So our overall assessment," Bray said, "continues to be that the insurgents are fighting with NVA-supplied logistic, advisory and, in some respects, combat-support assistance."

When asked if the State Department therefore was conceding, as reported, that there are no identifiable North Vietnamese combat units fighting against the Cambodian regime, Bray parried, "Let me look into that."

Pentagon officials said the reference to North Vietnamese "crew-served weapons" refers to artillery and mortars. These officials said it is unclear whether the North Vietnamese are firing the weapons for the Khmer Rouge or advising in the firing.

References to North Vietnamese forces in Cambodia are constantly complicated by attempts to distinguish between troops based there as logistic and support forces for Communist units in adjoining South Vietnam, and units who may be aiding the Khmer Rouge.

American officials generally agree that the bulk of the estimated 40,000 Vietnamese Communist troops in Cambodia are aimed at South Vietnam. Defense Secretary Elliot L. Richardson, however, said on April 5 that "there is a very substantial proportion now of North Vietnamese forces fighting the Cambodian government" and "in addition, there are 30,000 or 40,000 North Vietnamese troops" supporting Communist units in South Vietnam. It was this claim that was directly challenged by the weekend reports from Phnom Penh.

State Department spokesman Bray was asked yesterday how the United States justifies the support it provides for the Cambodian government's troops, while it assails North Vietnamese support for the Khmer Rouge insurgents.

"Well, there are several things we are not doing," Bray replied. He said the United States is "not providing cadres," advisers "in the field" or "crew-served weapons." The United States is also supplying great amounts of firepower through continuous bombing by B-52s and fighter-bombers, plus American forward-spotter aircraft, Bray said, "to assist the Cambodians in their own defense."

The spokesman repeated the U.S. rationale that forces on the Communist side spurned the "unilateral cease-fire" offered by Cambodian Premier Lon Nol on Jan. 28. U.S. spokesmen never add, however, that Lon Nol's offer was accompanied by a demand that North Vietnamese forces should "immediately withdraw from Cambodian soil," unlike the standstill cease-fire in South Vietnam which left North Vietnamese troops in place there.

[From the Boston Globe, Apr. 22, 1973]

**No Evidence That N. Vietnamese Engaged in Ground Combat in Cambodia**

(By H. D. S. Greenway)

PHNOM PENH—There is no verifiable or documented evidence North Vietnamese and Vietcong troops are actually engaged in combat in Cambodia, US Embassy sources report.

There are an estimated 40,000 Vietnamese Communist troops at present in Cambodia, the American sources said. Two-thirds are logistics and support troops, and the rest are aimed against South Vietnam and have not represented a "significant combat force" in the Cambodian fighting since the Vietnam cease-fire was signed.

This is in apparent contradiction to official Washington's justification of the American bombing here. The Administration has contended recently that the massive increase in American bombing in Cambodia was designed to induce the North Vietnamese to live up to the Paris accords.

B-52s have often been used to bomb North Vietnamese supply lines in eastern Cambodia. But since the end of January, when the present Communist
offensive began, B-52s and American fighter bombers have been used in direct support of Cambodian government troops in the heavily populated areas of central Cambodia near the capital. Previously, it has been said that the Cambodian insurgents were more often than not led by Vietnamese officers and advisers. However, embassy sources said this was not true and that "all estimates indicate" that Cambodian government troops were fighting Cambodian insurgents led by Cambodian officers.

There may be Vietnamese cadres with some insurgent units, but "no one has been able to prove it," an embassy source said. Intelligence was "pretty damn spotty," but on the whole Vietnamese influence on the Cambodian insurgents seemed to be declining.

American officials also said that there was no immediate military threat to Phnom Penh. There were an estimated 10 to 15 insurgent battalions within 25 miles of the capital but no confirmed sapper units in the Phnom Penh area.

Countrywide, isolated government positions had been attacked and overrun, the sources said, but there was no imminent danger that the Cambodian government would collapse. In the far northwest of the country Cambodian troops actually had gained ground, the source said, but this had largely gone unreported.

The Cambodian government has gone to great pains to brand their enemies as Vietcong or North Vietnamese rather than ethnic Cambodians because it is easier to rally people against the hated Vietnamese than against their own kind. On Tuesday the ministry of information issued instructions to journalists here that henceforth the forces attacking the Khmer Republic should be referred to as "Vietnamese Communists and non-Communist forces without nationality."

[From The New York Times, Apr. 21, 1973]

SOME U.S. OFFICIALS DOUBT CAMBODIANS FACE VIETNAM REDS

(By Malcolm W. Browne)

Phnom Penh, Cambodia, April 20—Official American sources here said today that since the Vietnam cease-fire three months ago, there had been no documented evidence that Vietnamese Communist troops are serving in combat roles in Cambodia.

The statement is a direct contradiction of the official Cambodian Government position that enemy forces in this country are chiefly Vietnamese.

It also appeared to conflict with the reason given by Secretary of Defense Elliot L. Richardson for continued American bombing in Cambodia. He said that the object of the bombing was to force North Vietnam to honor Article 20 of the Paris agreement and withdraw its troops from Cambodia.

The American sources, questioned by reporters about the apparent contradictions, declined comment.

In some parts of Cambodia, Vietnamese Communists may be serving with Cambodian insurgent units as advisers, the sources said, and regular Vietnamese Communist units continue to operate in the border areas of Cambodia against Saigon Government troops.

But, the sources maintained, current insurgent attacks on the Kampot areas of the coast on the Gulf of Siam, the town of Takeo, south of here, and the approaches to Phnom Penh itself, are entirely the work of Cambodian insurgents and not of Vietnamese.

One source said that the Vietnamese influence on Cambodian insurgent forces was continuing to decline. The assessment has been corroborated in recent weeks by Cambodian officers in the field and by residents of villages in combat areas.

AREAS HEAVILY BOMBED

Kampot, Takeo and the approaches to the capital are all areas in which American raids by tactical fighter-bombers and by B-52s have been particularly heavy in recent weeks. It is clear, therefore, that American bombing has been intended not so much to drive out the Vietnamese as to sustain the feeble resistance offered by the forces of President Lon Nol to an indigenous insurgent army dominated by Communist-led units.

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The proximity of insurgent forces to the capital was underscored by heavy fighting within a mile of the suburban town of Takhmau, only seven miles from downtown Phnom Penh.

Street fighting and mortar duels were under way just beyond the town on the banks of the Tonle Sap River this afternoon. However the military headquarters in Takhmau was struck earlier this week by 50 shells and several infantry attacks. Enemy activity there has been frequent without so far actually overrunning or even seriously damaging Takhmau.

The American sources reiterated the belief that the Cambodian insurgents themselves were not homogeneous in political orientation—that some were Communists and some adherents of Prince Norodom Sihanouk and that others belonged to different political factions.

Earlier this week the Cambodian Government ordered reporters to refer to the enemy in all cases as Vietnamese Communists. The Government censored references to "Cambodian insurgents," "insurgents," or even "Communist forces" unmodified by "Vietnamese."

The American sources estimated that there were about 40,000 North Vietnamese and Vietcong troops in Cambodia, including those in the border area adjoining South Vietnam. Of the total, not more than a third are combat troops, the sources said, and those are not interested in Phnom Penh and maybe not even in Cambodia.

DOUBT THREAT TO CAPITAL

There are 10 to 15 hostile battalions of 100 to 400 men each within a 25-mile radius of Phnom Penh, the sources said, but no Vietnamese troops were known to be with those units. The hostile force, the sources said, poses no immediate threat to Phnom Penh even in terms of demolition attacks.

A villager south of here, backing the statements that Vietnamese influence on the insurgents was declining steadily, said: "We always know when Vietnamese are around—their presence around here is as noticeable as yours. No Vietnamese have been fighting us here for months."

At Cambodian Army high-command headquarters in Jakman, Col. Khieu An, Chief of Staff for Government forces in Kandal Province, said in an interview that heavy pressure on the shattered and deserted village of Siem Reap, seven miles south of Phnom Penh, had forced defenders to withdraw. They moved about a mile east along the road to Jakman, the colonel said. At that point, the said, the Government troops were reinforced and were holding a position along the road.

"We are getting the American support we need and I am not worried about the situation," the colonel said.

Siem Reap—not to be confused with the Siem Reap that is near Angkor Wat—has been fought over many times and was abandoned by its permanent residents months ago. All its houses were destroyed long ago, though vines with brilliant red and purple blossoms still grow on the stilted foundations of the buildings.

Meanwhile, it was reported that Cambodian Government forces carried out a reinforcement by sea yesterday for the hard-pressed troops defending Kampot, on the Gulf of Siam. Ships were said to have brought in a battalion from the small port of Ream, 40 miles west, and more troops were being airlifted to Kampot today.

On Tuesday troops identified as Cambodian insurgents forced elements of two Government battalions to abandon the former resort town of Kep. The defenders have been forced to withdraw westward in the direction of Kampot. Kampot is an important regional population center, and its loss would be serious. At last report Government troops seemed to be holding their ground.

Rebel troops also continued to attack the encircled province capital of Takeo, 40 miles south of Phnom Penh, but the defenders were said to be well supplied and in no immediate danger.

[From The New York Times, Apr. 21, 1973]

U.S. REPORTS PLANE MISSING IN CAMBODIA

Honolulu, April 20 (UPI)—An Air Force Phantom jet was reported missing in Cambodia by the United States Pacific command today.
The command said that the plane had been participating in raids in Cambodia Wednesday when it disappeared. Search operations have been unsuccessful, and both crew members have been declared missing.

The Phantom was the second American plane reported lost in Cambodia since the Vietnam cease-fire was declared on Jan. 28. On April 7 the command reported that an observation plane had been shot down and the pilot killed.

The command also said that American planes continued raids against suspected Communist positions in Cambodia today for the 44th day. The command said routinely that the raids were conducted at the request of the Cambodian Government but gave no other details.

No air operations were conducted today over Laos, it added.

[From the Baltimore Sun, Apr. 21, 1973]

U.S. AID DISCOUNTS HANOI ROLE IN CAMBODIAN WAR

Phnom Penh, Cambodia (AP)—The war in Cambodia has become an exclusive fight between native guerrillas and government forces, with the North Vietnamese in the background keeping guard over supply trails into South Vietnam, a United States Embassy official said yesterday.

In fact, the informant added, North Vietnamese infiltration into Cambodia seems on the decline and there is no "verifiable, documented evidence" that Hanoi Army regulars or Viet Cong guerrillas from South Vietnam are now leading the native rebels into battle against the forces of President Lon Nol's government.

TOTAL PUT AT 25,000

"Vietnamese troops have not been a significant fighting force in Cambodia since the Vietnam peace agreement," said the official, who declined to be identified.

The North Vietnamese and Viet Cong in Cambodia are believed to number around 25,000 men. The informant said their role lately has been limited to logistics concerning operations across the border in South Vietnam.

Cambodian insurgents are believed to number about 40,000 and control about two-thirds of this Indochinese nation's countryside. The government has about 200,000 men under arms.

Two major groups make up the rebel force: the Khmer Rouge, or Cambodian Communist party, and the Khmer Rondah, a force recruited by followers of Prince Norodom Sihanouk after his ouster as chief of state in 1970.

The U.S. informant said that the forces cutting off highways and in position close to Phnom Penh are Khmer rebels.

The Nixon administration has authorized U.S. air strikes in Cambodia on the grounds that the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong remain in the country in violation of the Vietnam cease-fire pact signed in Paris January 27.

President Lon Nol's government insists that the enemy it is fighting are Vietnamese Communists. It has banned mention of Khmer rebels in news dispatches about the fighting.

But Cambodian commanders in the field freely tell correspondents that the foe is native.

KEP IS CAPTURED

In other remarks, the U.S. Embassy source confirmed that the coastal village of Kep, the center of Cambodia's saltwater fishing industry, has fallen in the insurgents' hands. The government censors had refused to pass the story when Kep fell Tuesday.

According to the informant, two government battalions are defending positions between Kep and Kampot, another fishing village 15 miles to the west. One battalion of reinforcements has been sent in by sea from the naval base at Ream, near the Kompong Som seaport, and another may be sent in by air.
Phnom Penh, April 20—There is no verifiable or documented evidence that North Vietnamese and Vietcong troops are now engaged in combat in Cambodia, U.S. embassy sources said here today.

There are an estimated 40,000 Vietnamese Communist troops presently in Cambodia, the American sources said. Two-thirds are logistic and support troops and the remaining third are aimed against South Vietnam and have not represented a "significant combat force" in the Cambodian fighting since the Vietnam cease-fire was signed.

This is in apparent contradiction to official Washington's justification of the American bombing here. Recently, Secretary of Defense Elliot Richardson said that the massive increase in American bombing here was designed to induce the North Vietnamese to live up to the Paris accords.

B-52 bombers have often been used to bomb North Vietnamese supply lines in eastern Cambodia. But since the end of January, when the present Communist offensive began, B-52s and American fighter-bombers have been used in direct support of Cambodian government troops in the heavily populated areas of central Cambodia near the capital.

Previously, it had been said that the Cambodian insurgents were more often than not led by Vietnamese officers and advisers. Today, however, U.S. embassy sources here said that this was not true adding that "all estimates indicate" that Cambodian government troops are fighting Cambodian insurgents led by ethnically Cambodian officers.

There may be Vietnamese cadres with some insurgent units, but "No one has been able to prove it," an embassy source said. Intelligence was "pretty damn spotty," but, on the whole, Vietnamese influence on the Cambodian insurgents seemed to be declining, the source said.

Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has said publicly that North Vietnamese troops are only training and advising the Communist Cambodian forces.

Defense Secretary Elliot Richardson, however, described the North Vietnamese as also fighting in Cambodia. Pentagon spokesman Jerry Friedheim was asked Thursday which of the statements was true. He replied that North Vietnamese have been fighting alongside as well as training and advising the Cambodian guerrillas.

American officials in Phnom Penh also said that there was no immediate military threat to the Cambodian capital. There were an estimated 10 to 15 insurgent battalions within 25 miles of the capital but no confirmed demolition units in the Phnom Penh area.

Countrywide, isolated government positions had been attacked and overrun, the sources said, but there was no imminent danger that the Cambodian government would collapse. In the far northwest of the country, government troops had actually gained ground, the sources said, but this had largely gone unreported.

On Tuesday, the seaside resort of Kep fell to the insurgents and there is now a threat to the nearby town of Kompot, the sources said. Elements of two government battalions were moved yesterday from the Cambodian naval base of Phnom Penh about 25 miles to the west. A fourth battalion was scheduled to be brought in by air today, weather permitting, the sources said.

The provincial town of Takeo, south of Phnom Penh was still under siege, the sources said, and, taking "constant but not terribly intense" fire every day. There were no critical shortages and the garrison continued to resist, the sources said.

The Cambodian government has gone to great pain to brand their enemies as Vietcong or North Vietnamese rather than ethnic Cambodians, because it is easier to rally people against the hated Vietnamese than against their fellow Cambodians.

On Tuesday the Ministry of Information issued instructions to journalists here that henceforth the forces attacking the Khmer Republic should be referred to as "Vietnamese Communists and not Communist forces without nationality."
WASHINGTON, April 8—A key Administration official said today that North Vietnam 'fully understood' in the last hours of the Vietnam negotiations that the United States would continue bombing in support of Cambodia's Government until a cease-fire was achieved there.

The official, a participant in the Paris negotiations who asked not to be identified, said that Henry A. Kissinger read a statement into the record on Jan. 23, the day he and Le Duc Tho initiated the Vietnam cease-fire agreement.

In that statement, Mr. Kissinger reportedly said that the United States would observe cease-fires in Laos and Cambodia once they were reached, but until then felt justified under the terms of the Vietnam agreement to continue military activity in those countries.

NO OBJECTION REPORTED

According to the Administration official, Mr. Tho, Hanoi's chief negotiator, did not raise an objection to the Kissinger statement.

This footnote to the negotiations was provided by the official in an interview to justify the Administration's contention that the continued bombing of Cambodia had been legitimized and was necessary to prod the Communist side into reaching a cease-fire with the Cambodian Government.

Mr. Kissinger himself apparently alluded to his private statement when he said in a television interview on Feb. 1 that "our position is clear and has been made clear to the North Vietnamese during the negotiations."

"We will observe any cease-fire that is established in Laos and Cambodia," he said.

The United States ceased military operations in Laos after the cease-fire was signed there in February. Air action was stopped in Cambodia on Jan. 28 when President Lon Nol ordered a cease-fire but began again when fighting resumed on a heavy scale late in February.

The Administration has said that a cease-fire in Cambodia has been more difficult to negotiate than in Laos because there was more than one group battling the Lon Nol Government. In addition to North Vietnamese in Cambodia, there are Khmer Rouge, a left-wing group, as well as forces loyal to Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the former leader.

The Administration has been reluctant to speak publicly about various private interpretations of the agreement worked out with North Vietnam in the closing phases of the negotiations. Administration officials have acknowledged that several exist, and are included in the stenographic minutes of the negotiations kept by Mr. Kissinger's staff.

At his news conference on Jan. 24, Mr. Kissinger was asked whether there were any "secret understandings," and he gave an ambiguous answer.

He said first that "there are, with respect to certain phrases, read into the record, certain statements as to what they mean, but these have been explained in these briefings and made clear.

Mr. Kissinger then said "there are no secret understandings." A few seconds later, however, when responding to another question, he broke his chain of thought to say:

"I want to make one point with respect to the question about understandings. It is obvious that when I speak with some confidence about certain developments that happen with respect to Laos and other places, that this must be based on exchanges that have taken place, but for obvious reasons I cannot go further into them. The formal obligations of the parties have all been revealed, and there are no secret formal obligations."

The Administration—chiefly through Secretary of Defense Elliot L. Richardson—has contended that the continued bombing of Cambodia was "a follow-up in a small and limited way" to the Vietnam cease-fire agreement and was justified by the agreement itself.

In the agreement, Article 20 called on foreign countries to put an end to all military activities in Cambodia and Laos, but set no deadline. The Administration has argued that until a cease-fire is achieved, Article 20 is not applicable.

Several members of Congress, however, have contended that the President
has no legal justification to continue military activity in Cambodia now that the last American troops have been withdrawn from South Vietnam.

EAGLETON JOINS CRITICS

They have cited previous Administration statements defending involvement in Cambodia as necessary solely to protect the Americans in South Vietnam.

Senator Thomas F. Eagleton, Democrat of Missouri, joined the critics by issuing a statement today in which he attacked the Administration for justifying bombing in Cambodia on the basis of Article 20.

"If we accepted this incredibly vague provision as justification," he said, "we could well be committed to the defense of Cambodia indefinitely. If such an important commitment is to be made, it must be made by Congress."

Mr. Eagleton said that Mr. Nixon had no constitutional authority to continue air strikes in Cambodia and said he supported legislation proposed by Senators Frank Church, Democrat of Idaho, and Clifford P. Case, Republican of New Jersey that would prohibit military activity in Indochina not authorized by Congress.

Secretary Richardson told a House Appropriations subcommittee today that he could not say when the bombing of Cambodia would stop.

"It has to be looked at on a day-to-day basis," he said, "Our objective is to bring about full compliance with the cease-fire agreement."

 Asked whether the United States would renew its bombing of Vietnam, Mr. Richardson said that "we have to keep open the possibility that in case of flagrant violations, we might have to provide significant help to South Vietnam. But he said that he did not expect this would be necessary in the near future at least.

[From The New York Times, Apr. 4, 1973]

PRESIDENTIAL POWERS: CAMBODIA BECOMES A CRUCIAL TEST

(By John W. Finney)

Washington, April 3—In the growing controversy over the President's war powers, American military involvement in Cambodia is once again raising the question of the Commander in Chief's authority to "make war" without the specific approval of Congress.

With no apparent Congressional sanction, President Nixon has ordered bombing to continue in Cambodia after the cease-fire in Vietnam and the withdrawal of American troops from the South.

The military and political purpose of the bombing is clear—to force the Communist side to accept a cease-fire in Cambodia—but the Administration is finding itself caught in a legal tangle over the President's constitutional powers to continue a war that he was proclaimed to be at an end.

In a curiously unpredictable way, the American involvement in Cambodia, far more than that in Vietnam, has brought the constitutional question to the fore in Congress, and thus the executive branch.

The first time was in the American "incursion" into Cambodia in 1970—an operation that Mr. Nixon justified as necessary to eliminate Communist supply sanctuaries—but that his Congressional critics termed an unwarranted extension of the war.

The action led to the first Congressional restrictions on the President's war-making powers: a measure prohibiting the reintroduction of ground troops or advisers into Cambodia or Laos.

The incursion also prompted a public outcry, and on June 3, 1970—three weeks before the American troops were withdrawn—Mr. Nixon declared in a television report to the nation that "the only remaining American activity in Cambodia after July 1 will be air missions to interdict the movement of enemy troops and material where I find that is necessary to protect the lives and security of our men in South Vietnam."

U.S. BOMBING GOES ON

All American forces were withdrawn from South Vietnam six days ago, presumably nullifying at least that one justification for military action in Cambodia.
Meanwhile, American bombing has continued there—apparently at an intensified rate in recent days—partly to interdict North Vietnamese supplies moving toward South Vietnam but also to support the anti-Communist Government of President Lon Nol, who is hard pressed by insurgent forces.

Thus far the new Congressional challenge to the assertion of Presidential power has not crystallized, but on Capitol Hill the question is being raised whether Mr. Nixon has constitutional authority for it.

Senator J. W. Fulbright, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, started the interrogation last week with a statement in which he asked: "Does the President assert—as kings of old—that as Commander in Chief he can order American forces anywhere for any purpose that suits him?"

In what is generally regarded as a murky constitutional division of war powers between Congress and President, the question may have been overstated. Thus far there has been no clear-cut formal answer from the Administration.

**INTRICATE EXERCISES**

In many ways the justification for action in Cambodia is far more difficult than it was in Vietnam, where successive Administrations went through intricate exercises to find legal and constitutional support for military involvement.

The executive branch could rely somewhat on obligations to South Vietnam assumed under the SEATO treaty, although there was always a question whether it provided clear authority. Far more important was the Tonkin Gulf resolution, in which Congress authorized the President in 1964 to take all necessary steps to repel Communist aggression in Indochina.

In the case of Cambodia, on the other hand, the Administration can lean on neither the SEATO treaty nor the Tonkin Gulf resolution. Unlike South Vietnam, Cambodia eliminated herself from the protection of the SEATO Treaty in 1955. This was recognized in 1970 by Elliott L. Richardson, the Under Secretary of State and now Secretary of Defense, who stated in a letter to the Foreign Relations Committee that the treaty "has no application to the current situation in Cambodia."

As for the Tonkin Gulf resolution, it was repealed by Congress in 1970 with the acquiescence of the Nixon Administration.

"LEGAL GYMNASTICS" SEEN

Now the Administration, caught between the positions it maintained on Vietnam and Cambodia on the one hand and its repeated declarations that the United States would not assume a commitment to protect the Government in Phnom Penh on the other, is going through what its critics describe as "legal gymnastics" to find justification for the continued bombing.

The predicament is illustrated by the on-again-off-again White House plans to issue a statement defining the President's authority. A statement has been drafted by State Department lawyers, but the White House has been reluctant to make it public.

As a result the burden has fallen on Mr. Richardson, who, in a series of ad-lib opinions before television cameras, has offered the argument that the bombing is justified to wind up a "lingering corner" of the war.

"Basically," he said Sunday on the National Broadcasting Company television program "Meet the Press." "I believe that our constitutional authority rests on the circumstances that we are coming out of a 10-year period of conflict. This is the windup. The fighting in Cambodia is a kind of residue; it is the area where least of all there is now being observed the provisions of the agreements entered into in Paris."

The Richardson argument is that the bombing is justified because it is a continuation of a military action that had the sanction of Congress. Implicit is the view that the President is authorized to bomb in Cambodia to force North Vietnam to live up to the Paris cease-fire agreement, particularly Article 20.

That article, a general statement without enforcement procedures or deadline, calls on foreign powers to end all military activities in Cambodia and Laos. Administration officials have disclosed that it was understood that it was understood when the agreement was negotiated that the United States would continue bombing until a cease-fire was reached in Cambodia.

In the view of the critics in Congress, the Administration is getting into the position of relying on a secret understanding of a vague provision in a peace agreement not ratified by Congress to justify the bombing. "If we accepted
this incredibly vague provision as justification, we could well be committed to the defense of Cambodia indefinitely,” Senator Thomas F. Eagleton, Democrat of Missouri, observed in a Senate speech today.

More ominous to the critics is the possibility that the President, applying the same logic to North Vietnamese violations of the agreement, could use them as the basis for renewing military action in Vietnam.

The Eagleton statement reflects another underlying concern: that the Administration is being dragged into a commitment to defend the Lon Nol Government, something the Administration has said it would never do. If such a commitment is undertaken, the critics argue, it must be with the approval of Congress.

Such is the balance—or imbalance—of the war powers, that the President is considered likely to prevail by continuing the bombing—even without offering a legal justification. For the moment the critics can find no legislative vehicle to stop it, in effect granting the case of Mr. Nixon.

A possibility remains that Congress may eventually retaliate with legislation restricting the President’s authority to engage in military actions. The bombing may provide the impetus.

[From The Washington Post, Mar. 30, 1973]

THE CAMBODIAN ISSUE: PRESIDENT OR KING?

On June 3, 1970, Mr. Nixon promised he would henceforth bomb in Cambodia only “to protect the lives and security of our forces in South Vietnam.” Those forces have now gone home. But the President continues to bomb. The contradiction is acute and it is made the more so for the President by the fact that its implications extend beyond Cambodia. In Paris, Mr. Nixon made Hanoi and the Vietcong a deal hinging in part on his threat—reaffirmed by implication last night—to start bombing them again under certain conditions. Now, by completing troop withdrawals, he has removed his sole previously claimed rationale to bomb anywhere in Indo-China. He is in the position of a man who threatens to shoot in a jurisdiction where there is no justification by his own terms, to use firearms.

One begins to understand the administration’s frantic and so far futile search for a reason for the Cambodian bombing that will make it look like Mr. Nixon is doing something other than roughly and arbitrarily asserting American—and Executive—power. One official, conceding constitutional justification is a joke, submitted that “the justification is the re-election of President Nixon.” By that theory, he could level Boston. Others suggest Mr. Nixon is merely “responding to a request” from the Cambodian government, as though any such request confers its own legitimacy. It is said the United States will stop bombing when the Communists in Cambodia stop shooting. That will happen when they topple the government, perhaps quite soon. What will Mr. Nixon do then?

The plain truth is that Mr. Nixon bombs to save a policy which, in its Cambodian aspect, was bankrupt from the start. The 1970 American intervention into Cambodia—ostensibly conducted to clean out the sanctuaries, buy time for Vietnamization and protect Americans in Vietnam—in fact made little sense if Mr. Nixon were not prepared to continue propping up a pro-American government in Phnom Penh indefinitely. Nonetheless, Secretary of State Rogers insisted (May 13, 1970) that the U.S. would not “become militarily involved in support of the Lon Nol government—or any other government” in Phnom Penh. “I’m talking about U.S. troops or air support or something,” he underlined. Now Mr. Nixon tramples on his own and Mr. Rogers’ pledges not to adopt Lon Nol.

In 1970, Mr. Nixon, describing his Cambodian adventure strictly in terms of its Vietnam impact, hailed it as “a decisive move ... the most successful operation of this long and difficult war.” In fact, in the adventure’s Cambodian aspect, he bought into ocean-front property which was already underwater. The Cambodian insurgents, although divided among themselves, are collectively mopping the floor with the Lon Nol troops, whose abundant American supplies and air support are patently inadequate to offset their own poor training, leadership and motivation.

Mr. Nixon should stop bombing Cambodia at once. He may not quail at Senator William Fulbright’s threat of public hearings, although we would hope all
senators with a concern for constitutional government and the Senate's integrity would demand such hearings. But the President might further consider that he is bombing not only Cambodia but his remaining chances of getting reconstruction aid for Hanoi.

If the bombing is halted, Lon Nol might well decide to head for the Riviera, and the insurgents would probably take over Cambodia. The prospect is not much in doubt; nor is it very fearsome. The United States can expect to do very little to avert it, even by perpetual bombing. The contending Cambodians will need time to sort out their own feuds; they will be chiefly interested in how things go in Cambodia. In the incomplete but prevailing cease-fire situation in Vietnam, it cannot be nearly as important as before whether Hanoi has extra military supply routes and sanctuaries in Cambodia. Hanoi's and the Vietcong's decisions in South Vietnam will depend on many factors, not solely on who runs Phnom Penh.

By bombing, Mr. Nixon tears at the American political fabric and harmfully asserts a strictly American responsibility for what happens in Cambodia. Instead, he should be respecting the law and temper of the United States, and he should be trying by diplomacy to draw outside and local states into an Indochina-wide settlement that will not stand or fall on the unilateral application of American power. Evidently the President has still to learn he is not an absolute monarch in the United States. Has he also to learn he is not King of Cambodia—or perhaps some kind of Southeast Asian emperor?

[From The Washington Post, Apr. 4, 1973]

CEASE-FIRE—RATIONAL IS SOUGHT

(By Murrey Marder)

Only a week after the last American troops left South Vietnam, the barricades are rising each day in Congress to challenge President Nixon's authority to continue bombing in Cambodia. The contest is still in a positioning stage on both sides, hearings in the Senate and House illustrated yesterday. A war-weary Congress, often outmaneuvered by the executive branch in the past over Indochina war powers, is reluctant to launch a new frontal challenge over Cambodia. The national mood is still quiescent about the remnants of war in Indochina that refuse to go away. But all the prospects are that a confrontation over presidential war powers in Cambodia is coming and each side is girding for it.

Administration officials privately concede that the hopes they held when the Vietnam cease-fire was signed Jan. 27 for also dissolving the conflict in Laos, plus the more complex tangle in Cambodia, have crumbled considerably since January.

The Nixon administration is far more on the defensive over the use of presidential powers in Cambodia than the United States ever has been for justifying the use of American power in Indochina.

All the older justifications have been stripped away over the years. The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution of 1964, on which the Johnson administration relied, was repealed Jan. 12, 1971, with the Nixon administration stating that it was not depending on the resolution anyway.

The Southeast Asia Treaty, also invoked by President Johnson, does not apply to Cambodia. The government of Premier Lon Nol disclaimed inclusion in SEATO when it came to power in March, 1970, as ousted Prince Norodom Sihanouk similarly excluded Cambodia from coverage.

In addition, the Vietnam cease-fire accord states that "North and South Vietnam shall not join any military alliance or military bloc," and it also repledges respect for "the neutrality of Laos and Cambodia." Thus there are no alliance ties that can apply to Indochina to justify employing U.S. arm, if existing agreements and declarations are honored.

Through the Nixon administration years, the declared constitutional justification for the use of armed forces in Indochina was to protect the withdrawal of U.S. troops. Before and since the troops were all withdrawn from South Vietnam, legal experts searched the statute books seeking rationalizations for continued American bombing of Communist troops in Cambodia.
"There are no easy answers," said one administration source yesterday, echoing a rueful refrain. Several draft rationalizations have been produced in the State Department's legal office, and the most recent version is, new reported, awaiting White House action—with concern that it might only widen the dispute.

What have been produced are variations on two generalized themes: the President's constitutional authority as Commander-in-Chief to pursue actions in which he has been engaged, and Article 20 of the Vietnam cease-fire accords. This article calls for "an end to all military activities in Cambodia and Laos," plus a withdrawal from those countries of all troops, military advisers, personnel and war material.

Losen on paper, has a cease-fire, signed Feb. 21 but still awaiting any enforcement provisions.

Cambodia still lacks not only the glimmer of a cease-fire agreement, but even identifiable participants to begin negotiating one. A unilateral cease-fire declared by the Lon Nol government was ignored by the Communists, and while American officials deplore the continued fighting by North Vietnamese troops there, the bulk of the battle actually is conducted by indigenous Red Khmer forces.

This "kind of a lingering corner of the war" in Cambodia, as it has been described by Defense Secretary Elliot L. Richardson, is plaguing U.S. strategists more than they will admit in public. The best evidence is the continued daily bombing by American B-52s. This is what has aroused the congressional challenge to President Nixon's authority to pursue that war, originally justified solely in defense of U.S. troop withdrawals from South Vietnam.

Richardson, before a House subcommittee yesterday, elaborated on the alternative argument that the Nixon administration has sought to develop. It turns on the failure on the Communist side to live up to all the terms of the Vietnam cease-fire, with its cross-references, through Article 20, to Cambodia and Laos.

"If the President had the authority to pursue the cease-fire agreements," said Richardson, "he has the authority to secure adherence with those agreements." Therefore, Richardson contended, "He needs no new grant of authority to continue doing the kinds of things he was doing before the peace agreement was signed," when it is "not being adhered to."

Critics on Capitol Hill, who include increasing numbers of Democrats and Republicans, scoff at this interpretation. "The issue," said Sen. Thomas F. Eagleton (D-Mo.), who joined the outcry yesterday, "is whether the President can legally continue his action without the authorization of Congress. I must answer that question with an emphatic 'no.'"

What makes the Cambodian dispute especially sensitive is that in the intense debate that followed the American thrust into Cambodia in 1970 to attack Communist sanctuaries there, unusual legislative restrictions were placed on U.S. operations there to prevent "another Vietnam."

Not only were American combat troops and military advisers barred from Cambodia, but strict limits were placed on the numbers of Americans who could be in Cambodia at any time—200.

Arthur W. Hummel Jr., deputy assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee yesterday that it has been necessary to "juggle" Americans in and out of Cambodia to stay within that force level. To do so, said Hummel, sometimes U.S. personnel based in Cambodia have to leave for a few days when "visitors" come in.

U.S. "failure to give air support to the forces of Cambodia," said Hummel, in defense of the administration's new rationale, "could have a deleterious effect on the achievement of an actual cease-fire in Cambodia."

"I strongly disagree with the administration's justification," countered Sen. Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.), "and see it providing further grounds for entanglement."

What is at issue, Sen. Jacob K. Javits (R-N.Y.) has said, is not whether U.S. interests are served by bombing in Cambodia, but whether "the President alone" can make such a determination.

The administration is now seeking to invoke a presidential right to enforce an international agreement that was never submitted to Congress for ratification.

Secretary of State William P. Rogers told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Feb. 21 that there was little "time" to submit the Jan. 27 Vietnam cease-fire accord for ratification, "I do not detect any opposition" to it, and most importantly, it contained "ambiguous phrases and clauses and provisions. . . ." To try to spell them out, said Rogers, would have killed any accord.
MOST U.S. BOMBING IN CAMBODIA IS TO AID SAIGON, PENTAGON SAYS

(By Charles W. Cordry)

Washington—The heaviest weight of American bombing in Cambodia is being directed against the old North Vietnamese supply routes and border bases that still are being used for infiltration into South Vietnam, defense sources said yesterday.

Though air strikes are being mounted throughout the country in support of the Lon Nol government forces, the big blows are falling in the eastern border regions from the tri-border area where Cambodia joins Laos and Vietnam southward to the Parrot's Beak area which juts toward Saigon.

The air campaign thus has the major purpose of protecting South Vietnam, authorities said, as well as the announced intent of keeping pressure on Communist forces battling Phnom Penh's forces. The goal is to bring about a cease-fire in the last remaining Indo-chinese country where none has been negotiated.

There has been a huge step-up in the American effort since mid-March, coinciding not only with Phnom Penh's mounting troubles but with the large infiltration into South Vietnam, defense sources said.

CAMBODIA AIRLIFT CALLED SHOW OF SUPPORT BY U.S.

(By Tammy Arbuckle)

Phnom Penh.—The American fuel "airlift" to Cambodia which began yesterday is an exercise in diplomacy linked to Gen. Alexander Haig's discussions in Saigon and Phnom Penh rather than a concrete move to relieve Phnom Penh's supply problems, well informed sources said here today. "The (United States) administration wants to demonstrate to the Cambodians that if they get into serious trouble the United States will help them and give them whatever is necessary," sources said.

The "airlift" apparently consists only of a single C130 transport carrying fuel daily in addition to the 10 daily C130 arms flights to Phnom Penh from Bangkok. The C130 carries 6,000 gallons of fuel, much of it helicopter jet fuel.

Informed sources here quoted U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia Emory G. Swank as saying the airlift would carry only "absolute essentials" as the United States does not want to be in a position where Cambodia becomes dependent on bigger airlifts and abandons its own defense of the Mekong river route and the country's highways.

But the airlift was apparently timed to coincide with talks by Gen. Haig in Phnom Penh yesterday to give him bargaining power in what is believed to be one of the purposes of his visit to Saigon and Phnom Penh—solution of the problem of South Vietnamese non-cooperation in getting fuel, rice and other essentials through to Phnom Penh via the Mekong River. The latest river convoy is arriving here in dribbles and drabs after fighting its way through Communist rocket ambushes and the captains are complaining the South Vietnamese failed to protect them.

U.S. airpower gives the convoys protection in Cambodia but cannot be used in South Vietnam under the Paris agreement.

The Viet Cong are following the old Indochina tactic by making their attacks in the Cambodia-South Vietnam border area where the lines of territorial responsibility are fuzzy.

In the past the Viet Cong units often sat on provincial boundaries in South Vietnam, making it essential for several province commanders to cooperate to destroy them, rather than one government force being able to operate freely. Now the United States is faced with the task of getting South Vietnamese and Cambodian cooperation in the all-important task of keeping Phnom Penh's essential rice supply flowing.

Haig is believed to have informed Marshal Lon Nol of the results of talks in Saigon on cooperation.

The Cambodian government has given no official details of Haig's discussions here. Replying to questions today, Cambodian Information Minister Kem Reth
said, "The first meeting (between Haig and Lon Nol) did not solve the military and political problems so they are meeting again."

"We notice that recently Hanoi leaders have violated the Paris cease-fire. Interested nations would like to see peace re-established in the area and these nations are getting together."

Kern Reth called the Lon Nol-Haig discussions confidential, but said they were trying to "find a formula to make the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong respect the Paris accords."

Diplomats took these statements to mean there were facets to discussions other than relieving Phnom Penh's crucial supply problems, but they said this phase of the Cambodian fighting is a definite attempt to throttle supplies into Phnom Penh, to cause popular unrest in the capital and to force the Cambodian government to negotiate.

"First, they cut the roads, then the river and now there is an enemy force just 15 miles northwest of Pochentong Airport which is worrying us," informed sources said.

"The airport would be the final logical step in cutting off Phnom Penh from the outside world, sources said. The U.S. airlift, however, means the mechanism has now been put in place for larger U.S. airlifts if they should become necessary, diplomats said. It is obvious here, however, that that point has not been reached so far as the United States and Cambodians are concerned, for fuel was coming in by road today from the seaport of Kompong Som. Cambodians announced that Route 4 connecting Kompong Som with Phnom Penh has been cleared of Communists for the first time in months.

A convoy of 120 trucks started from Kompong Som this morning headed for Phnom Penh and is expected in the capital shortly. Another 80 trucks left here today bound for Kompong Som empty to pick up fuel.

[From the Far Eastern Economic Review, Mar. 12, 1973]

CAMBODIA--THE INVISIBLE TRIO ON STAGE

(By T. J. S. George)

Hongkong—There have been renewed communist efforts in recent weeks to raise the profile of Cambodia's ghostly Khmer Rouge trio—Khieu Samphan, Hou Youn and Hu Nim. Reports last week that President Lon Nol has reversed his earlier stand and offered to negotiate with the communists add to the significance of these moves.

The Lon Nol offer is the first sign in three years that Phnom Penh is beginning to recognise the inevitable. In the only Indochina state still without a ceasefire agreement, the hopelessness of the Lone Nol regime's position had been becoming more and more obvious. Recent attempts by US Vice-President Spiro Agnew et al to get Washington's blue-eyed boys inducted into the Government failed to alter the fact that there can be no settlement in Cambodia, without taking the communist resistance movement into account.

But the resistance has had its own difficulties. And the absence among its factions of one strong, unifying force such as the Vietnamese communists have had is not the most important of these. The practical problem which the resistance has yet to solve is to convince the world that the men who have been named as constituting its leadership are in fact alive and kicking.

Khieu Samphan is officially designated deputy prime minister, minister of defence and commander-in-chief of the Cambodian national liberation armed forces. Hou Youn and Hu Nim are respectively minister for the interior, community reforms and cooperatives and minister for information and propaganda.

The Lon Nol government never tired of repeating the claims made by Prince Norodom Sihanouk when he was Head of State that the three underground leaders had been executed. When Sihanouk, as head of the Peking-based Royal Government of National Union, later named the men as leaders of the government, Phnom Penh laughed derisively.

It was in February last year that Sihanoukist circles took the first tentative move to show that the underground trio were active in the battlefields. They released in Paris photographs of the three men said to have been taken in the "liberated" zone of Cambodia (Review, Feb. 12, 1972).