

Thieu warns Hanoi of possible invasion

SAIGON—President Nguyen Van Thieu warned Wednesday night that South Vietnam would be forced to attack North Vietnamese forces "in their own territory" if Hanoi did not stop its aggression and withdraw its troops in South Vietnam.

In his strongest statement to date on the possibility that South Vietnamese units might cross into North Vietnam, Thieu hinted that South Vietnam's allies, presumably including the United States,

would assist in any such thrust. U.S. airpower has been used to help South Vietnamese forces in their campaigns in both Cambodia and Laos.

It was believed that Thieu had informed U.S. Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker and Gen. Creighton W. Abrams, commander of U.S. forces in Vietnam, before he issued his special statement Wednesday night. The statement was broadcast throughout Vietnam, underscoring its importance.

Thieu was quoted by the official Vietnam Press Agency last week as saying that a South Vietnamese drive into North Vietnam was "only a matter of time." Dr. Henry Kissinger, President Nixon's national security adviser, in a comment on that statement said a campaign in North Vietnam was not "the dominant probability at the moment" but the White House has declined to rule out such a move in the future.

In his statement Wednesday Thieu said the possibility of South Vietnam attacking North Vietnam was based on "legitimate self defense." "If the Communist North Vietnamese would soon awaken to the reality, and not put us in a situation which forces us to attack them right in their own territory."

North Vietnam's determination to cripple the 24-day-old allied campaign in Laos against the Ho Chi Minh Trail was underscored by a report that Communist crews based in North Vietnam for the first time in the war fired Soviet-built missiles at two American airplanes flying over South Vietnam. A third plane was made the target of a missile over Laos.

South Vietnamese commanders Wednesday sent 2,400 more men into Laos aboard U.S. helicopters, boosting the Saigon task force to 18,000 troops.

U.S. remains silent on invasion threat

WASHINGTON—The White House said Wednesday there has been no discussion at the policy-making level of the U.S. government about support for a possible South Vietnamese invasion of North Vietnam.

President Nixon doubtless will be asked about President Nguyen Van Thieu's latest invasion threat, broadcast Wednesday in Saigon, when he holds a news conference at the White House tonight, starting at 9 p.m. EST.

The half-hour session with newsmen, his first since Feb. 17, will be carried live on radio and television. The White House said Nixon wanted to limit the questioning to foreign policy. Press Secretary Ronald Ziegler had no direct comment on Thieu's statement warning the Communists not to "put us in a situation which forces us to attack them right in their own territory."

Ziegler said, however, that "there's been no policy discussion within this government on that matter." The State

Department refused all comment on Thieu's remarks.

Reports from Saigon said Thieu conferred with U.S. Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker and Gen. Creighton W. Abrams, the U.S. military commander in Vietnam, before making the statement, which was issued to reporters and then broadcast on Vietnamese radio and television.

At his Feb. 17 meeting with reporters, Nixon refused to rule out U.S. support for a South Vietnamese invasion of North Vietnam, which Thieu said Wednesday would be in his country's "legitimate self-defense" against Communist aggression in the south.

There is some feeling in Washington that Thieu's statement might have been intended to throw Hanoi's military forces off balance at a time when the South Vietnamese are encountering stiff Communist resistance in their offensive to sever the Ho Chi Minh trail supply lines in southern Laos.



Testimony rebuts Calley contentions

FT. BENNING, Ga.—Company commanders were given no orders during a briefing to massacre civilians at My Lai, three veterans of the operation testified Wednesday at the court-martial of Lt. William L. Calley.

Lt. Col. Frederic W. Watke, who commanded a helicopter company at My Lai, Staff Sgt. Lones W. Warren, a military policeman, and William C. Riggs, a former Army captain now living in Midland, Tex., were called by the government as rebuttal witnesses.

All three attended a company commander briefing held by task force commander, Lt. Col. Frank A. Barker Jr.

on March 15, 1968, the day before an American infantry sweep through the village of My Lai. Barker was later killed in a helicopter accident.

The defense contends that Calley's commander, Capt. Ernest L. Medina, attended the Barker briefing and later held one of his own during which he relayed instructions that everything and everyone in the village was to be destroyed.

Calley, who is charged with the premeditated murder of 102 South Vietnamese civilians during the operation, has admitted executing villagers, but said he was merely following orders.

Riggs, who like Medina was a company commander at My Lai, said the briefing by Barker was "a pretty much standard briefing, nothing out of the ordinary that I recall."

Riggs emphasized "there was no statement at the briefing to the effect to kill women and children."

Warren, who said it was customary for him to attend briefings since he was senior MP for the task force, also said he heard no orders to "kill all women and children," or orders not to take prisoners.

Mideast prepares for war

Egypt has placed its troops on full alert along the Suez Canal in anticipation that it will be forced to reject an extension of the Middle East cease-fire scheduled to expire Sunday, Cairo political sources said Wednesday.

The sources said a similar alert was in effect on the Israeli side of the canal and noted that both sides had greatly increased reconnaissance flights over each others' lines in recent days.

At the United Nations, diplomatic sources said Wednesday the United States was urging Secretary General Thant to appeal for extension of the cease-fire before any action was taken by the Big Four powers.

They said, however, Egypt would not open fire unless it was forced to by Israeli provocations, and predicted the Egyptians would be willing to maintain a cease-fire until they felt all diplomatic efforts for peace had been exhausted.

In Jerusalem, Israel continued a round of diplomatic soundings aimed at preventing Big Power or United Nations Security Council intervention in the Middle East peace talks.

Foreign Minister Abba Eban met with the ambassadors of Argentina and Japan in his series of talks with the envoys of nations seated on the Security Council.

He and Premier Golda Meir had similar meetings Tuesday with U.S. Consul General M.J. Owen Zurhellen.

At Wednesday's meetings, diplomatic sources said, Eban again stressed Israel's total rejection of either big power or security council intervention in Jarring's peace mission.

The Big Four ambassadors are scheduled to meet again in New York Thursday. The meeting follows statements by both the Soviet Union and Britain calling on Israel to make public its plans for withdrawal from Arab land captured in the 1967 Middle East War.

Rail talks failing

WASHINGTON—Contract talks between the nation's railroads and the United Transportation Union were on the verge of deadlock Wednesday, with the government ready to offer its own settlement proposals if the negotiations collapse.

"It does not look good," said Assistant Secretary of Labor W.J. Usery Jr., the government's top mediator in the 17-month contract dispute involving 150,000 train crewmen who are free to strike nationwide at any time.

The UTU has not set a strike deadline, but has legally been free to strike since a congressional moratorium on walkouts expired at midnight Sunday.

The union and the railroads have been unable to agree on work rule changes the carriers say are necessary to make operations more efficient and less costly.

Chief railroad negotiator John P. Hiltz said there had been virtually no progress in the talks since the middle of last week. He said so far tentative agreement has been reached on one of five proposed rule changes, and partial agreement on one other.

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FBI shows pictures to Senate employes

WASHINGTON—FBI agents Wednesday showed Senate employes the photographs of three young men in an attempt to identify possible suspects in Monday's bombing of the U.S. Capitol.

The photographs were reportedly pictures of young white men, probably in their 20s. Two of them were described as "hippie looking."

Asked about the pictures, an FBI spokesman said: "We have no comment to make."

The FBI, which has charge of the investigation, sought to interview all Senate employes who worked in the Capitol Saturday and Sunday—the hours preceding the explosion that shook the building early Monday.

The bomb was detonated in an unmarked men's rest room, normally

used only by senators, 30 minutes after an anonymous telephone caller told the Capitol switchboard there would be an explosion to protest the U.S. support of the South Vietnamese military operation in Laos.

Because of the site and time of the explosion, Senate leaders expressed belief it was an "inside job" by someone familiar with the complex layout of the building and the working hours in the area remained sealed off Wednesday.

An Army bomb expert testified before Senate subcommittee Tuesday that the bomb could have been made of up to 20 pounds of dynamite, carried into the building in a brief case, and detonated by a timing device.

Security, meantime, was intensified, but remained spotty. At some entrances packages and briefcases were searched, while at others no checks were made.

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