

# MARINES FLY OUT, MISSION COMPLETE

## PACIFIC STARS AND STRIPES

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U.S. MARINES SCRAMBLE FROM A HELICOPTER WHICH LANDED THEM ON KOH TANG ISLAND IN MAYAGUEZ RECOVERY.

UPI

(Continued on Back Page, Col. 1)

## Thailand Angered, U.S. Pulls Marines

BANGKOK (UPI) — Thousands of demonstrators burned an effigy of President Ford in Bangkok Thursday in protest against his sending U.S. Marines to Thailand as part of the operation to recapture the American freighter Mayaguez and its crew from the Cambodian Communists.

With the rescue and retrieval operation completed successfully, Washington moved swiftly to repair its strained relations with Bangkok by flying out the last of a 1,100-man Marine contingent from Thailand Thursday night.

Prime Minister Kukrit Prama, whose credibility was threatened by the U.S. decision to ignore his diplomatic protest against sending Marines based on Thai soil onto Cambodian soil, said his government is

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## S. Vietnamese Reds Ready To Open Ties With U.S.

SAIGON (AP) — A top official of the new South Vietnamese government said in a speech at a victory celebration in Saigon Thursday that his country is willing to open diplomatic relations with the United States.

Nguyen Huu Tho, chairman of the advisory council of the Provisional Revolutionary Government, told the celebration:

"The PRG will open diplomatic, economic, cultural and friendship relations with all countries of the world provided those countries respect the sovereignty of our country and will not interfere in our internal affairs."

He said the United States must "carry out its responsi-

bilities as provided by the Paris agreement of 1973." He did not elaborate on this point, but the PRG has been demanding that the United States recognize it as the government of South Vietnam and "respect the sovereignty of Vietnam."

The United States closed its embassy — which was later looted by Saigonese — a day before the PRG forces marched into Saigon. The United States has never recognized the PRG as a government.

South Vietnam also informed the United States on Thursday that Algeria will take over the South Vietnamese Embassy in Washington and will represent the new Saigon regime there.

A diplomatic note sent to

Washington said the Provisional Revolutionary Government is the "only legal representative of the people of South Vietnam." It continued: "The former Saigon government has been abolished and its various agencies in the United States have lost their representation.

"All the properties of these agencies, movable and real estate, as well as dossiers and documents, are now placed under the management of the PRG of South Vietnam."

The communique said the PRG has given Algeria "the power of representing it to take over and protect all properties, dossiers and documents belong-

(Continued on Back Page, Col. 4)

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Raiding a tiny island under heavy fire from Cambodian troops, the Marines, Navy and Air Force freed the pirated freighter Mayaguez and its crew Thursday in a fierce battle to uphold American honor and "freedom of the seas."

Pentagon officials said helicopters, dodging brutal small arms fire under cover of darkness, plucked what they hoped was the last of the 160-man Marine force from Koh Tang island in the Gulf of Thailand at 9:10 a.m. EDT.

But in the post-battle confusion, the officials said they could not be sure all the Marines and airmen from downed helicopters had been rescued and no firm casualty figures would be available before Friday.

Pentagon sources said it appeared the surprisingly tough Cambodian garrison — an estimated 150 to 400 men equipped only with machineguns, rifles and other small arms — killed at least one Marine and one airman, wounded "many" and shot down three helicopters and crippled two others during the 14-hour battle.

Pentagon officials confirmed one Marine was known to have died when he stepped on a mine and one airman was listed as "missing" from the crew of a downed helicopter.

The sources said tentative reports also suggested as many as 14 Americans — eight Marines and six airmen — might be missing, and two destroyers circled Koh Tang with loudspeakers searching for possible stragglers long after the Mayaguez and its 39 crewmen were back in American hands.

But Pentagon officials said the number of missing — if any — would not be known until an accurate muster could be taken of the evacuated assault forces. They said some Marines were scattered among four departing warships, while others rode

## 'World Will See Cargo'

MENLO PARK, N.J. (AP) — The owners of the ship Mayaguez promised Thursday to open the vessel and its cargo "to the world" to rebut Cambodian charges that the ship was spying.

The chairman of Sea-Land Service Inc. said the company's ship would arrive in Singapore early Saturday, New York time.

"The world will see this ship, its cargo and its men," said Michael McEvoy, Sea-Land board chairman, at a news conference at company headquarters here. "They will see that Sea-Land and its employees were not involved in spying activities."

He said the container ship's cargo, insured for about \$5 million, included 107 containers of commercial freight, 90 empties and 77 containers of military supplies.

There were 26 containers of replacement parts and supplies for military equipment, two containers of military mail, three of food for U.S. soldiers, eight of nonfood supplies for sale in commissaries and 38 of liquor, beer, soda and other provisions for GI clubs and commissaries, he said.

"There were no arms, no hazardous or secret equipment," McEvoy said.

He said the company has received only one message from Capt. Charles T. Miller, commander of the ship, after the crew was returned to his vessel by the U.S. Navy.

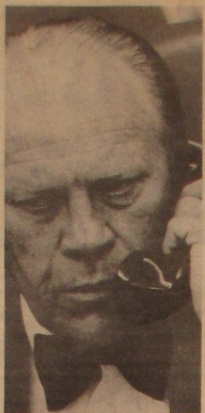
It read: "DEPARTED 15th ..... 1970 ..... 10.47 latitude ..... 402.7 longitude ..... ETA SINGAPORE 1500 ..... 17th ..... CREW ALIVE AND WELL."

The times, on the 24-hour clock, refer to local time.

The company radioed back: "Your conduct and that of the crew is in the highest tradition of the American Merchant Marine."

The captain was also told that Sea-Land and its parent company, R. J. Reynolds Industries Inc., plan to fly the crew home from Singapore to reunite them with their families, McEvoy said.

McEvoy said the original report of a crew of 39, including the captain, still stood, despite Pentagon reports of a crew of 40.



PRESIDENT FORD



## Sailing Into the History Books

Pentagon spokesman Joseph Laitin shows news pictures of three ships involved in rescuing the Mayaguez. The ships are the Holt (left), Wilson (right), and Yega.

## Had to Cover Marines Ford Firm on Air Strike

WASHINGTON (UPI)—Hours after completion of his gravest international crisis, President Ford told the Shah of Iran in a welcoming ceremony Thursday that "the U.S. commitment to peace and progress for the world has remained firm."

A White House spokesman, meanwhile, said Ford told congressional leaders "I would never forgive myself" for not ordering an air strike on the Cambodian mainland if the U.S. Marine rescue of a pirated American merchant ship and her crew had failed.

Press Secretary Nessen said the President feared that, without an air strike, 2,400 communist troops stationed on the mainland might have been ferried to the island where the Marines landed.

Ford was smiling as he welcomed the Shah in an outdoor, 21-gun salute ceremony at the White House. It was his first public appearance since announcing before dawn that the Marines had recaptured the freighter Mayaguez and rescued its 45-man crew on his orders.

"The U.S. commitment to peace and progress for the world has remained firm, even

while the world has changed," Ford told the Shah.

White House Press Secretary Ron Nessen later told reporters the President's military decision was an anguished one.

He said Ford ordered an accompanying air strike at Ream airfield on the nearby Cambodian mainland to protect the Marine assault force of nearly 200 men from some 2,400 communist troops on the mainland.

"I would never have forgiven myself" if the Cambodian troops had attacked the Marines, Ford told congressional leaders, according to Nessen.

"The President said it would be too great a risk not to have this supportive action on the mainland," Nessen said.

The Shah, whom Ford called one of the world's "senior statesmen," and his wife, arrived on the south grounds of the White House by helicopter from Williamsburg, Va. Ford and the Shah will conduct talks during a four-day stay centering on the international energy situation and high oil prices.

## Allies Mum —but Yanks Back Ford

WASHINGTON (UPI) — President Ford received overwhelming support from the American public for his limited military action in the Mayaguez incident but apparently no endorsement from other governments, the White House said Thursday.

Press Secretary Ron Nessen said that in two and one-half days between the capture of the merchant vessel by Cambodian gunboats and the release of the ship and its crew, the White House received 4,171 telegrams and letters calling for strong action and approving the President's methods.

There were 520 written messages opposed to Ford's action and 30 "assorted comments," Nessen said.

Telephone calls to the White House in this period ran 1,978 in favor of Ford and 157 against.

Some 4,000 telegrams are stacked up and remain unopened and unread, Nessen added.

Asked if any United States allies had commented on Ford's handling of the affair, Nessen said the State Department reported "no official messages received on this matter from other countries."

## 'A Success' — Schlesinger

# Dod: Force Was Only Way

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Diplomacy failed, but a "measured" military response to the Cambodian seizure of the American merchant ship Mayaguez was a success, Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger said Thursday.

He said the 40 crewmembers were released as a direct result of Marine and Air Force attacks on the Cambodian held island of Koh Tang and the

Ream airfield on the mainland near the port of Kompong Son.

Despite fighting on Koh Tang which continued through the night after the crew was released, and a number of Marine casualties, Schlesinger termed the operation "eminently successful."

Cambodian resistance on the island "has been reasonably stiff throughout," he said.

"I do not believe there will be many inclined to persistently argue with what has been a laudable and successful operation," he said.

Schlesinger, at a 3:30 a.m. EDT news conference, was asked if any Marines were killed, and he said only "Yes, sir."

Later, Pentagon sources said two Marines were killed and

eight wounded, with fighting still going on.

Asked why the Mayaguez crew was returned, he said:

"They arrived at the (destroyer) Wilson as a result of what is presumed to be the decision of Cambodia to deliver them up in order to terminate combat actions."

Schlesinger said combat started because diplomacy failed, characterizing the seizure as "an illegal act—a hijacking."

"To the diplomatic efforts there was not an adequate response."

The military action, he said, "represents a firm and measured response to the high-handed and crude use of force."



JAMES SCHLESINGER

## Bucher: What WE Expected

POWAY, Calif. (AP) — Lloyd M. Bucher, who was skipper of the ill-fated spy ship Pueblo, said Thursday that the rescue of the Mayaguez "gives Americans back a little pride."

The Pueblo was taken by North Korean gunboats in 1968 without resistance from U.S. warships. Bucher and his 82 surviving officers and crewmen were held captive for 11 months.

Bucher said the Pueblo might have been saved by a quick invasion by Marines such as his strike Wednesday night.

"I certainly expected this type of operation to be mounted for us... we all expected it."

Bucher, who now lectures for a living and is writing a second book, said "the very fact that this effort by our government has been successful will discourage people in the future from attempting to get away with barbarism or piracy."

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# Mayaguez, Crew Free—Marines Leave

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helicopters to Thailand enroute to Pacific bases.

"It's all jumbled up at this point," one officer said.

The Marines landed on Koh Tang Wednesday as part of a successful U.S. military "firm and measured response" to force Cambodia to give up the Mayaguez and its 39 crewmen.

There were other elements in the operation—an air strike on Ream airfield near the mainland of the Cambodian port city of Kompong Som, and an "old-time sea boarding" of the Mayaguez itself—but the battle of Koh Tang was the most dramatic and most dangerous.

The attack got under way at early Thursday when the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon, acting under direct orders from President Ford, ordered the initiation of an assault they had started planning only two and a half days earlier.

Some 208 Marines were immediately loaded aboard 11 Air Force Jolly Green Giant helicopters at U-Tapao Air Base in Thailand, the Defense Department said.

By 7 p.m. three of the helicopters were hovering over the destroyer USS Holt, dropping 48 Marines onto the destroyer's deck in preparation for boarding the Mayaguez.

At 7:15 p.m., the first helicopter, nearing the end of a 170-mile flight from U-Tapao, swung in toward the beach but was shot down about 100 feet offshore.

A second helicopter tried to land at 7:20 p.m. and also was shot down and crashed landed on the beach. Its Marines and those in a third helicopter also shot down on the beach swarmed out and silenced the machine gun installation on the landing zone on the eastern side of the island.

By 8 p.m. a total of seven helicopters had discharged Marines on Koh Tang.

One was hit taking off but limped back to U-Tapao streaming fuel. Another was hit before it could touch down and limped to safety without discharging its Marines, also streaming fuel as it went.

At 8:20 p.m., the Holt swung alongside the Mayaguez and 10 minutes later the Marines on the destroyer swarmed onto the merchant ship. They found hot tea and warm rice in the galley but no people.

On the island, Marines were fighting their way toward the shacks aided by close air

support from A6 fighters and fire from the five-inch guns of the destroyers Holt and Wilson.

At 10:45 p.m., the Wilson saw a small boat approaching. Twelve minutes later, unaware of the significance of that boat, A7s from the carrier Coral Sea bombed Ream airfield, destroying 17 Cambodian planes. Officials had feared might attack the island or the merchant ship.

At 11:13 p.m., the situation changed with a sharp surprise that altered American plans.

The destroyer Wilson radioed that the small boat was a Thai fishing boat, flying 30 white flags and carrying all 39 of the Mayaguez crewmen. Precisely how the crewmen got aboard the Thai boat remained unclear, but it appeared they and the Thais might all have been prisoners released at the same time.

The Pentagon said it appeared the Mayaguez crew had been held on the island one night and then spirited toward Kompong Som for the rest of their brief period in captivity. He said the crew apparently was released after the Marines landed on Koh Tang and before the airstrike hit the mainland because the Cambodian government wanted to avoid further warfare.

With the Mayaguez crew aboard the Wilson, the Marines on Koh Tang were ordered to draw back to the beach. By then the initial wave had been

reinforced with 70 additional Leathernecks.

Pentagon sources said what might have otherwise been a smooth evacuation was complicated at that point because five of the 11 original helicopters had been disabled and no others were available.

A decision was made, officials said, to keep the Marines on the beach until the Coral Sea—steaming at top speed toward the island. The advantages, they said, were that the flight to safety would then be cut to 10 minutes and the Coral Sea could add its own three helicopters to a shuttle operation.

But the Cambodians used the daytime lull to build up their forces around the landing zone. When the first evacuation flights headed in, several helicopters tried to land and were driven off by heavy rifle and machine gun fire.

By darkness, the hostile fire had been beat down. Small boats from the destroyers were deployed along the shoreline and helicopters started coming in to pick up the waiting Marines.

At 9:10 a.m., 14 hours and 55 minutes after the initial assault, the last Marine left the beach. No helicopters were hit by gunfire and there were no accidents reported despite the tricky night time evacuation, the Pentagon said.



Demonstrators in Bangkok burn an effigy of President Ford to protest the use of U.S. Marines from Thai bases in the incursion into Cambodia. (UPI)

## Marines Flow Out of Thailand

(Continued From Page 1)  
considering a complete review of Thailand's longstanding alliance with the United States.

But he said Thailand would stop short of a complete break in relations with Washington. "We have to respond, because otherwise the United States will continue this sort of thing," Kukrit told newsmen after disclosing he was reviewing several options in dealing with the Ford Administration's decision to ignore bilateral agreements on the use of U.S. forces here, which call for prior consultation with Thailand on all troop movements.

Several thousand protesters, mostly student leftists, gathered in a Bangkok park to demonstrate against the U.S. action. A few charged that Kukrit acted in collusion with the United States and agreed with the Ford administration's tactics in regaining the freighter and its 40-man crew.

They burned an effigy of the American president before disbanding peacefully.

But Kukrit said his diplomatic protest, presented to the U.S. Embassy here within 12 hours after the Marines were airlifted into U-Tapao air base in the predawn hours, was ignored. "It is obvious that Thai-U.S. relations have to be reviewed," he said.

Foreign ministry sources said that Kukrit was considering three options:

—Recalling the Thai ambassador from Washington temporarily, advising them that the United States acted on its own in forcibly retrieving the Mayaguez.

—Circulating a diplomatic note to all embassies here formally advising them that the United States acted on its own in forcibly retrieving the Mayaguez.

—Accommodation with its new Communist neighbors and hoped to take a large step in that direction with the arrival Friday of a delegation from the Provisional Revolutionary Gov-

## Death Threat To Hostages

Compiled from AP and UPI  
VIENTIANE, Laos — Student demonstrators have threatened to kill three American hostages unless the Laotian coalition government, increasingly dominated by the Communists, removes allegedly corrupt officials and right-wing reactionaries from power, diplomatic sources said Thursday.

Government officials flew to Savannakhet in southern Laos to try to negotiate the release of the Americans who were seized there Wednesday.

A U.S. Embassy source said although the students are not likely to carry out their death threats, they are being taken seriously.

The hostages included Sanford J. Stone, the senior U.S. official in general Laos. Stone is from Cleveland, Ohio. The other two Americans held with him are Charles R. Peary, 63, of Salem, Va., an administrative officer, and Daniel P. Stry, 28, of Columbus, Ind., an economist.

The State Department in Washington said it has received word that the Laotian government plans to intercede on behalf of the Americans who the department said were confined to their homes.

The Americans were reported to be under house arrest after earlier having been held in the provincial governor's house. The U.S. Embassy said erratic radio contact with Savannakhet indicated the three were unharmed.

ernment in South Vietnam. It appeared the United States was determined to remove the embarrassment of the Marines before the Viet Cong delegation arrival, U.S. sources said that

## Viets Ready for Ties

(Continued From Page 1)  
ing to the former Saigon government, located in the United States.

"The PRG demands that the U.S. government comply with international laws and traditions and take efficient measures to protect properties of the Republic of South Vietnam located in the United States and will help the Algerian Embassy in its job of taking over and managing the embassy of the former Saigon government."

The last ambassador of the ousted Saigon government, Tran Kim Phuong, said in a telephone interview he is proceeding as quickly as possible to "close the embassy down in good order." He said he had no idea how long the task would take.

Phuong said he has not made any plans on what he will do after he finishes closing the embassy.

All of the top civilian leadership attended the opening ceremonies of the three-day celebration, including Huynh Tan Phat, president, and Ma-

## Rocky's a Texan Now

RAYMONDVILLE, Tex. — Vice President Nelson Rockefeller now is an honorary citizen of the south-Texas county of Willacy. The county commissioners voted Rockefeller the honor, in recognition of his recent purchase of about 6,000 acres of the county, which is mostly in the

the Marines were being flown out of Thailand within hours after the last Marine was lifted by helicopters off the Cambodian island of Koh Tang, where most of the fighting took place.

The theme of the celebration was to honor Ho Chi Minh, the late leader of North Vietnam. A huge picture of Ho was hung from the front of the presidential palace and could be seen from blocks away. A giant reviewing stand also was built for the occasion.

He died on Sept. 3, 1969, after a heart attack. He was 79. PRG and North Vietnamese flags are also being flown in the city for the occasion.

On Wednesday the PRG announced it had confiscated all installations left behind in Saigon by the U.S. government, including the embassy and consulate buildings.

In a communique dealing with real estate, the PRG said all private properties, houses and apartments abandoned by the occupiers are now under the management of the PRG Committee for Land and Houses.

It placed a ban effective immediately on all new construction and said all real estate sales must be approved and certified by the land and houses committee.

It said buildings rented to the Americans and the former Saigon government as billets are "confiscated."

## Temperatures

By United Press International

May 15	
Bangkok	84 100
Chikase	72 45 Seoul
Gum	82 77 Taipei
Izake	70 61 Tokyo
Manila	94 76
Albany	80 44 Louisville
Altoona	59 49 Memphis
Anniston	75 49 Memphis
Archangel	54 49 Moscow
Athens	79 61 Milwaukee
Bilings	75 43 Moscow
Birmingham	81 64 Orlando
Boston	64 45 NYC
Buenos Aires	71 52
Buzon	61 51 Okla. City
Chicago	71 43 Omaha
Cincinnati	76 47 Phila.
Cleveland	72 43 Phoenix
Denver	74 44 Pittsburgh
Des Moines	80 56 Portl., O.
Detroit	71 43
Duluth	53 45 St. Louis
Fortranca	68 44
Fortge	50 44 Richmond
Hong Kong	75 53 Singapore
Houston	80 64 San Fran.
Ind'polis	74 50 St. Paul
Juneau	63 25 St. Antonio
Kansas City	78 53 San Diego
K. Lumpur	81 66 San Francisco
Las Vegas	66 49 Shreveport
Little Rock	68 49
London	67 50 Tucson
L.A.	70 57 Washon.