

★
★
★



FILE PHOTO OF THE U.S. MERCHANT SHIP SS MAYAGUEZ, WHICH WAS SEIZED BY CAMBODIA MONDAY IN THE GULF OF THAILAND.

U.S. SHIP ATTACKED, SEIZED BY CAMBODIA



Vol. 31, No. 133 Wednesday, May 14, 1975

No Laos Pullout Planned as of Now

WASHINGTON (UPI) — President Ford does not plan "at this time" to order a Saigon-like evacuation of Americans from Laos although the Communists appear to have increased their political pressure there, a White House spokesman said Monday.

Press Secretary Ron Nessen told reporters the United States was watching the situation in Laos "very closely" but "the policy is not to evacuate at this time."

The State Department said there are approximately 1,000 Americans in Laos. It added that the military situation continues to be calm and there had been no report (Continued on Back Page, Col. 1)

WASHINGTON (UPI) — An unarmed American merchant vessel reported Monday it had been seized under fire by a Cambodian naval vessel. President Ford termed it "an act of piracy" and warned of "serious consequences" unless the ship is promptly released.

Announcement of the incident came from White House Press Secretary Ron Nessen, who said the container ship Mayaguez, had been fired on, seized on the high seas and taken into the Cambodian port of Kampong Som along with its 40-man American crew.

There were immediate demands from some members of Congress that the administration take quick action to assure release of the ship and crew. A State Department spokesman said "we are taking immediate steps" along that line, but declined to elaborate.

Pentagon sources, however, said the aircraft carrier Coral Sea and several other ships had been ordered to sail for the Gulf of Thailand, where the seizure occurred.

They said the ship movements did not mean the United States had decided to use force—that it is standard procedure to send ships to a trouble spot so that if they are eventually needed, they will be available.

Sources said a primary concern was to win the release of the crew, indicating use of force was low on the list of options since the Cambodians could easily retaliate by punishing the crew.

Nessen told reporters at the White House that Ford "condemns this seizure as an act of piracy." He said the President held an emergency 45-minute meeting with the National (Continued on Back Page, Col. 1)



Congress Angry, Calls for Action

WASHINGTON — Members of Congress reacted with shock and anger to the seizure of an American merchant ship by Cambodia.

Sen. James L. Buckley, R-N.Y., urged President Ford to "order immediate punitive air and naval attacks on appropriate targets in Cambodia" in retaliation for the capture of an unarmed American merchant ship.

Calling for swift counter-action, Buckley said, "In no other way can we underscore

the fact that we will no longer tolerate acts of international banditry.

"In no other way can we guarantee the future safety of American vessels in international waters," the New York conservative warned.

Sen. John Sparkman, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said the United States should attempt to retrieve the captured container ship Mayaguez "any way we can," including by force.

"If a person stands at you, you've got a right to shoot back," Sparkman said.

Sen. James H. Allen, D-Ala., said in the Senate floor the seizure was "an outrage which we can't let go unchallenged."

"I don't favor precipitate action," Allen said. "But it's a question of national honor. We should take whatever means are necessary to recover the ship and its crew. If force is necessary, then force must be used."

Rep. Dante Fascell, D-Fla., chairman of a House subcommittee on military affairs, said, "Clearly, the United States (Continued on Back Page, Col. 1)

R.P. Planning to Take Over Clark?

MANILA (AP) — The Philippine government is making plans to convert Clark Air Base, America's largest overseas military installation, into a university complex in expectation of a U.S. withdrawal, a well-informed columnist reported Monday.

"We are already drawing plans for the day when we can make the Americans go," wrote Teodoro F. Valencia, who

is closely identified with the martial law regime of President Ferdinand E. Marcos.

"Clark will become a big university complex, to move not many of the overcrowded institutions of higher learning in the greater Manila area," he said.

Valencia added that a "new big city" will be built around the original Clark headquarters 20 miles north of Manila and

that the target ranges and reserves at Clark and Subic Naval Station will be converted into agricultural areas. Modern superhighways will connect both areas to Manila, he said.

Meanwhile, State Department officials said Monday they are unaware of the reported plan.

While expressing American willingness to discuss changes in Clark's status with Philippine authorities, the officials said the

U.S. "presumably" will hold on to Clark until 1991, when the bilateral security agreements governing the U.S. presence in that country expire.

One official left open the possibility of an earlier American withdrawal from Clark if changing political circumstances in the area make such a move desirable. Short of that, he said, the U.S. is willing to agree to (Continued on Back Page, Col. 1)