

parliamentary democracy can become a farce."

The Nato-connected Sulzberger comments that the Shah's dislike of democracy is understandable in view of the problems of "chaotic Italy and paralyzed Trukey" and that "democracy's effectiveness is declining in many corners of the earth."

INDOCHINA

U.S. FORCES ON ALERT TO "EVACUATE" PHNOM PENH

March 17 (IPS)--Pentagon and State Department sources confirmed today that U.S. military forces are on alert for possible evacuation of U.S. personnel from Phnom Penh. As the media reported heavy rebel assaults on Phnom Penh, the helicopter carrier USS Okinawa and other vessels remained poised off the coast of Cambodia in the Gulf of Siam for an evacuation operation.

KHMER ROUGE ATTACK PHNOM PENH; POPULATION IN PANIC

March 17 (IPS)--Military sources in Phnom Penh said that the Khmer Rouge forces "continue to inflict punishing mortar and artillery attacks as well as ground assaults against the defensive perimeter of Phnom Penh's Pochentong airport, while whittling away the last bastion of government forces at Pochentong airport, according to a UPI dispatch: "Meanwhile, the population in Phnom Penh is in panic, with some people discussing the possibility of intense attack against the capitol within 24 hours," the report continues.

CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT TROOPS SURROUNDED AT TOWN NEAR PHNOM PENH

March 17 (IPS)--Cambodian government troops who yesterday took the key town of Toul Leap, five miles from Phnom Penh's Pochentong airport, have now been surrounded and cut off there by Khmer Rouge forces, reports today's New York Times. Reporters trying to get into the town were told that the road to it was cut and that the town was under heavy shelling.

SIHANOUK SAID PREPARED TO TALK WITH SECONDARY PHNOM PENH LEADERS

March 17 (IPS)--Senator Mike Mansfield claims that Prince Sihanouk would be "willing to enter into talks with those in a lower bracket" if the U.S. removes the top leaders in Lon Nol's Cambodian government." Mansfield's comments, reported in today's Christian Science Monitor, follow appeals by the Baltimore Sun and various U.S. Senators for him to open contacts with Sihanouk, his long-time personal friend.

STATE DEPARTMENT REVERSES CAMBODIAN AID POLICY

Washington, D.C., March 18 (IPS)--The Administration, with an assist from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, yesterday moved to keep the all but dead issue of military aid to Cambodia alive. According to Washington Post news accounts, the Administration, in a reversal of a State Department position of last week is now asking the House Foreign Affairs Committee to reconsider the aid request even if the Committee wishes to include provisions to set a total cut off date for the aid.

THIEU ABANDONS CENTRAL HIGHLANDS

New York, March 18 (IPS)--In what today's New York Times describes as "one of the most momentous" decisions of the Vietnam war, South Vietnam decided Monday to abandon the Central Highlands provinces of Kontum, Pleiku and Darlac. High South Vietnamese government officials told UPI that President Thieu has agreed to hand the "indefensible" Central Highlands region to the communist forces in return for a communist promise of safe passage for the area's 250,000 residents.

FRENCH CONDEMN SAIGON'S "GANGSTER" GOVERNMENT

March 19 (IPS)--Following the assassination of AFP correspondent in Saigon, Paul Leandri, by the Vietnamese police March 14, both the French government and the Paris Press corps are letting it be known that the Thieu government's crimes have by now gone far beyond what is deemed "tolerable" by the "reasonable" French people, according to the March 18 issue of Le Monde.

All indications are that the French government will use the Leandri assassination to break its last remaining ties with the Thieu government.

FRENCH GOVERNMENT DESERTS LON NOL REGIME

March 19 (IPS)--According to the Paris daily, Le Monde of March 18, the French government has given up all pretense of actual diplomatic relations with the Lon Nol government in Cambodia, because of the need "to disengage from the Cambodian quagmire before it is too late."

Le Monde correspondent Patrice der Beer from Phnom Penh writes that the French government is now primarily concerned with keeping in touch with the Khmer Rouge "rebels" who control 90 per cent of Cambodian territory, in order to ensure good diplomatic relations with them after they take power.

EVANS AND NOVAK: INDOCHINA DEFEAT CAUSED BY CONGRESS AID CUTBACKS

March 20 (IPS)--Syndicated columnists Evans and Novak of the Washington Post alleged today that: "North Vietnam's offensive

was clearly prompted by the mood on Capitol Hill. Just as presidential intervention saved South Vietnam from the Communists in 1965, congressional disengagement may deliver the country over to Hanoi in 1975." The efforts to pin the "bloodbath guilt" of a communist victory in Indochina on Congress were backed up by Washington Post reports of riots and anti-american sentiment in the Cambodian press.

NEW YORK TIMES PLAYS UP KISSINGER DOOM AND GLOOM

March 20 (IPS)--Today's New York Times portrays a morbidly pessimistic Henry Kissinger. Reporter Bernard Gwertzman, following Kissinger around in the Mideast, notes that "a sense of almost fatalistic gloom seemed to pervade Secretary of State Kissinger's party today....Reporters aboard the plane were given an appraisal of the over-all world situation that was the most pessimistic they had heard in some time....All around the world, American diplomatic influence is on the decline, newsmen were told."

SAIGON ARMY MADLY RETREATS, WHILE KEY BATTLE SHAPES UP AT TAY NINH

March 20 (IPS)--Amid widely fluctuating reports about which provinces the South Vietnamese Army (AVRN) is now evacuating, a critical battle which has only been sparsely reported in the U.S. press is shaping up at Tay Ninh City, 60 miles northwest of Saigon. A picture pieced together from the New York Times, UPI and updated radio reports in the U.S. and Europe, reports that the entirety of the Central Highlands, including Phu Bon, Quang Duc, Binh Long, Lam Dong, and Tuyen Duc Provinces have been abandoned or were in imminent likelihood of being abandoned by the AVRN, in addition to the three provinces already announced yesterday as abandoned--Pleiku, Kontum and Darlac. In addition, in the north, Quang Tri Province has definitely been abandoned, and Hue, the capital city of Thua Thien, is being evacuated and is almost certain to fall soon.

PHILIPPINES GOVERNMENT URGED TO NEGOTIATE VIETNAM TRUCE

March 20 (IPS)--As the South Vietnamese troops are retreating in disarray, Deputy Premier Phan Quang Dan of South Vietnam has called on the Philippines government to help negotiate a new Vietnam truce, according to a UPI dispatch. Philippine President Marcos, after meeting with the South Vietnamese Deputy Premier and Ambassador in Manila, said he is calling his top advisory council on foreign policy to discuss possible steps the Philippines might take to further such negotiations.

THIEU ORDERS SCORCHED EARTH POLICY, CREATES THOUSANDS OF REFUGEES

New York, March 20 (IPS)--According to a UPI report this morning, South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu has ordered a "scorched-earth policy" to be conducted by AVRN troops as they abandon large portions of the northern half of Vietnam. The cities of Hue and Pleiku have reportedly been ordered to be levelled, according to

the dispatch. A government official was quoted as saying that "We're following a scorched earth policy like the Russians used against Hitler."

SAIGON CONDUCTING "EXTERMINATION BOMBINGS" AS DESPERATE REAR-GUARD ACTIONS

New York, March 22 (IPS)--Hanoi radio reports confirmed yesterday that the streams of so-called "refugees fleeing to safety" from the victorious communist advance through most of the northern South Vietnam are in fact being herded by force by Saigon troops whose scorched earth retreat is destroying entire towns. "Saigon is conducting extermination bombings of many of the district towns and provincial capitals abandoned by Saigon troops....Musclemen are compelling the people to follow the retreating army. Hundreds of thousands of people have been rushed into disguised concentration camps newly built with U.S. aid in the provinces of Tay Ninh, Thua Thien, and Quang Tri."

U.S. WORKERS CHEER COMMUNIST VICTORY IN SE ASIA: "WE'RE WINNING!"

March 22 (IPS)--Labor Party field reports confirm not only that workers in the U.S. will not fund a war in Southeast Asia, but that they are viewing the victories of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia and the communist forces in Vietnam as their own victory. At unemployment centers in Detroit, workers who have been following the developments of Rockefeller's looting expedition in Southeast Asia, responded to briefings on the most recent developments by saying, "Good, that means we're winning," identifying their interests as those of the communists and the U.S. Labor Party.

PRG CALLS FOR AID FOR RECONSTRUCTION

March 23 (IPS)--The Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam issued a statement in Hanoi yesterday calling on the peoples' of the world to aid in the reconstruction of Indochina. "We wish to call on the peoples of the world for aid in order to safeguard the life of more than a million of our compatriots who have been liberated. The base of production has been completely destroyed by the war. We must establish the basis for a new daily life. We appeal for humanitarian aid for the people who face these conditions."