

## Russians say U.S. delays talks

United Press International  
MOSCOW — A Soviet commentator, saying the U.S. administration takes its promises "extremely lightly," Tuesday accused the White House of deliberately dragging out the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks.

In an editorial in the Soviet Communist Party daily Pravda, Professor I. Kremer said President Carter is engaging in a "demonstration of muscles" in the hope of capturing votes for his party in November's congressional elections.

He warned that in the Soviet view, the U.S. leadership is dragging European allies down a "dangerous path" which will lead to a "reinforcement of confrontation."

"The American administration, which more than a year ago declared its desire for a radical arms reduction, is in fact adopting maneuvers to drag out under various pretexts definitive agreement on outstanding questions at the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT)," Pravda said.

"Especially concerned is provoked in this respect by the fact that the leaders of the present U.S. administration take their promises and obligations extremely lightly."

"Everything was there. A promise to cut present defense spending by \$5-7 billion per year and the intention as soon as possible to conclude an agreement with the Soviet Union on the freezing of further developments of armaments and other important plans and promises."



Battalion photo by Karen Thompson

### Hanging in there

John Kerr, a junior genetics major from Midland, is participating in the Army Summer Compression Program at A&M. This five-week program, which is geared mainly toward transfer students, allows a student to qualify for advanced ROTC.

## Thai officials report heavy fighting with Communists

United Press International  
LAHANSAI, Thailand — The well-paved, two-lane highway to Lahansai passes through green rice fields and tall cassava (manioc) groves.

It seems remote from the violence of Communist revolution — until a car slows and swerves to avoid a gaping hole blown in a bridge three days before by a land mine.

Officials say the Thai government's battle with Communist insurgents in areas like this along the Cambodian border has reached a crucial stage. The Communists are trying to convert their political influence into military control.

"There is fighting every day. Most of it never gets reported in the press," said district officer Capt. Wirapan Jangskri. "Only the large attacks ever get noticed in Bangkok."

In the last six months, large-scale attacks in this Cambodian border district 200 miles northeast of Bangkok have picked up considerably, Wirapan said. Cambodian troops are backing the insurgents.

"One attack recently involved about 50 Thai Communist guerrillas and about 150 regular Cambodian troops," he said. Witnesses told him the Thais mostly wore green uniforms while the Cambodians were in black and spoke Cambodian.

Along with the upsurge in terror attacks the Communists have turned to an age-old battle tactic between Thailand and Cambodia — mass kidnappings.

First used by both the Thai and Khmer kingdoms to provide labor and soldiers over four centuries ago, mass kidnappings in the past six months have taken over 800 Thai villagers to insurgent camps inside Communist Cambodia.

Tawin Boonsom, a 43-year-old cassava planter, said:

"The communists have given out pamphlets and warned everyone. The pamphlets say this is a battle zone. They said the Communists can protect us from the government soldiers only if we go with them. They say we will have good land to farm in a safe place."

That "safe place," Thai officials said, is Cambodia.

Shopkeepers in the sleepy district town and in the nearby market place of Bangrat said many people had left the district and business was terrible.

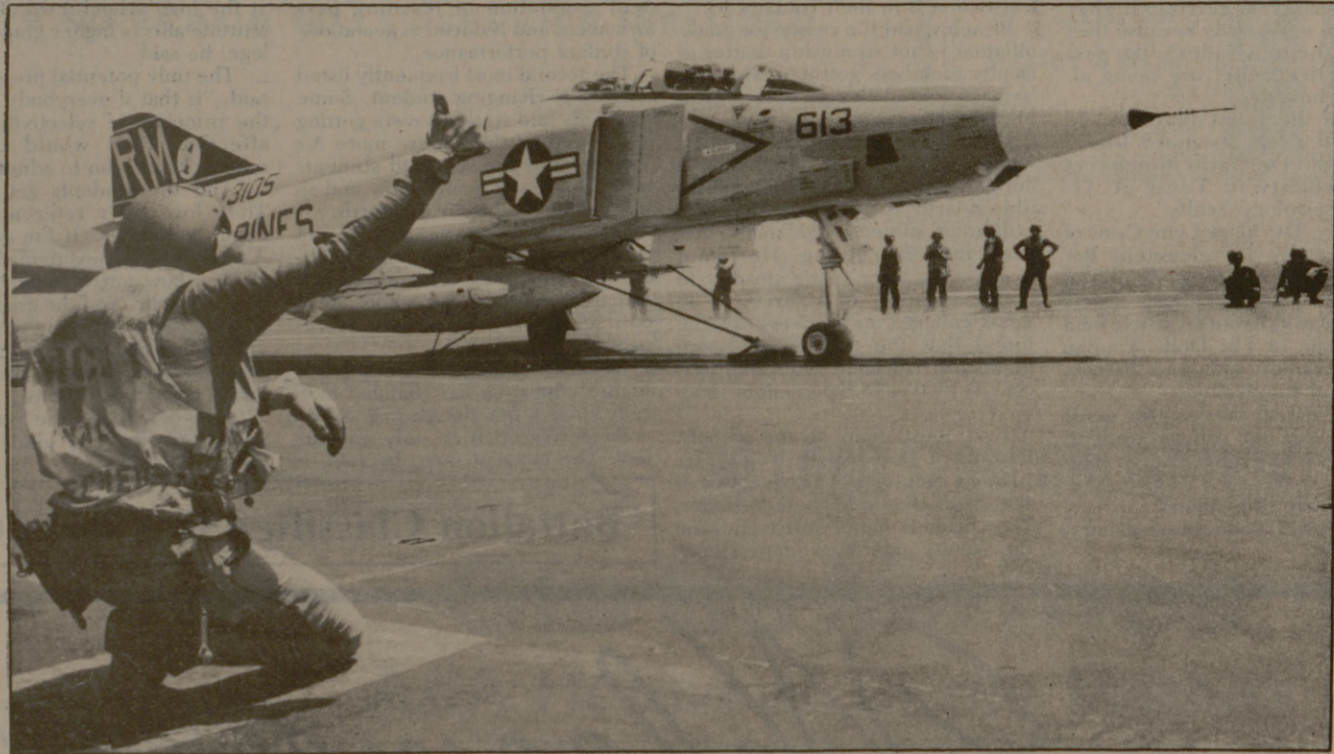
Agricultural Extension agent Songserm Hoiuthai said "many farmers felt exploited by the Chinese middlemen who control cassava and rice prices so they felt sympathetic to the Communists."

"But now the Communists have made them afraid to go into the forest to plant their crops. Sometimes people go to their fields and never come back."

But Lahansai Police Chief Maj. Suthi Kasuwan said, "The Communists have made a mistake. Indiscriminate terror has not cowed the villagers, it has made them fight back."

Suthi, who carries grenade shrapnel in one arm from a Communist ambush, said, "If the communists didn't use such tough methods we would have a difficult time getting the villagers to help us. But now they come and ask for weapons."

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