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Muskie, Edmund S., "Statement by Senator Edmund S. Muskie on the News of United States Military Actions in Cambodia" (1970). *Speeches*. 440.

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IMMEDIATELY

MUSKIE SPEAKS ON CAMBODIAN DEVELOPMENTS

**Statement by Senator Edmund S. Muskie of Maine
On the News of United States Military Actions in Cambodia
April 29, 1970**

The Administration's decision to commit military assistance to Cambodia is a cause for gravest concern. This is the first widening of our military involvement in Indo-China since President Johnson halted the bombing of North Vietnam in 1968.

This may be a good time to recall the President's statement of April 20—just nine days ago:

"We have now reached a point where we can confidently move from a period of 'cut and try' to a longer range program for the replacement of Americans by South Vietnamese troops. . . . I am, therefore, tonight announcing plans for the withdrawal of an additional 150,000 American troops to be completed by the spring of next year. . . . This far-reaching decision was made after consultation with our commanders in the field. It has the approval of the government of South Vietnam. . . . The decision I have announced tonight means that we finally have in sight the just peace we are seeking. We can now say with confidence that pacification is succeeding. We can say with confidence that the South Vietnamese can develop the capability for their own defense."

Did the President have in mind the military action announced today, when he spoke to the nation nine days ago?

happened

If not, what has / the circumstances in Vietnam and Cambodia in the past nine days to require such an escalation of the war?

North Vietnamese troops and the Vietcong have been operating in eastern Cambodia for years. They have had virtual freedom of action in that country. The President's statement to the nation indicated no grave concern, and news accounts since then have suggested that the South Vietnamese were having some successes along the border.

The President has chosen military action which can only lessen the chances for a negotiated settlement at this time, and increase the probability of an escalation in the war. He took this action against the bi-partisan urgings of members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, other members of the Congress and a substantial number of American people.

When President Nixon spoke to the nation, April 20, he stressed the importance of seeking a 'better, shorter path to peace—through negotiations.' There is a serious implication in today's news that he has moved, instead, toward a military effort on a wider front.
