

NATION WARNS OF DRV ROLE IN CAMBODIA, INDOCHINA

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[Editorial: "Where Do These Rockets Come From?"]

[Text] We would like to say that what Thai Ambassador Anand Panyarachun in Cambodia said about Cambodia and South Vietnam were "words of wisdom" but we would be wrong-- they were "words of fear". Except perhaps for our ambassador in Phnom Penh, Mr Anand has a better idea of what is going on in Cambodia than any other Southeast Asian because all Southeast Asian countries have pulled back their diplomatic personnel from Phnom Penh on grounds of security.

Mr Anand has boned up on Cambodia for over two years since he was the key man in securing sufficient number of votes in the UN General Assembly so that Prince Norodom Sihanouk's government-in-exile will not replace the Phnom Penh government. In two critical voting sessions in the General Assembly, Mr Anand worked hard, and both times the present government was voted in by the scanty majority of two votes.

When Mr Anand speaks on Cambodia, he must be listened with respect because not only does he know what he is talking about but also he represents in Washington the most important neighbour of Cambodia. So, when Mr Anand is afraid, we have reason to fear. Ambassadors do not normally talk to the press but Mr Anand has taken this unusual step in Washington to alert the American Congress as to the consequences that might arise if the United States does not come to the aid of Cambodia and South Vietnam when both these countries are facing a type of aggression which they are incapable of handling.

We hear time and again of rockets falling in Phnom Penh and Saigon. If the congressmen in Washington stop their partisan thinking for one minute and ask themselves "where do these rockets come from? Did the Khmer Rouge manufacture them or the North Vietnamese?", then they will be able to get a better picture of the war that is going on. About 80 percent of all the war material used by North Vietnam, Viet Cong, Pathet Lao and the Khmer Rouge comes from the Soviet Union. The other 20 percent comes from East Europe, mainly small arms and ammunition, and from China.

Prince Sihanouk may think that if he takes over in Phnom Penh he would have total support of Peking. But this is extremely unlikely. If and when Phnom Penh falls to the communists, the first question is, will Sihanouk be allowed to take over? Already there is much talk that Khieu Samphan has taken over the leadership of the Khmer Rouge since he is on Cambodian soil.

Further, Sihanouk must understand that the kingmaker in Indochina is not Russia or China but North Vietnam and she will decide who should rule Cambodia. If she was going to take any outside advice, it will be Soviet advice and not China's, because for over 15 years it was Russia that fully helped North Vietnam with both arms and economic aid.

These are realities which the American Congress must understand. There are also non-political moral considerations. It was not late President Ngo Dinh Diem who went to Washington and pleaded with late President Dwight Eisenhower to send troops to South Vietnam. The American advisors and the troops went to South Vietnam in pursuance of the John Foster Dulles' theory of "brinkmanship." Then Presidents Kennedy and Johnson escalated the war and President Nixon negotiated a fragile truce which nobody believed would be adhered to by the North Vietnamese or the Viet Cong.

The moral consideration for American congressmen is that they should answer for themselves the following questions: "Why did you fight in Indochina? Why did you pull out of Indochina? If you now think Indochina is going to the dogs, why didn't you let it go to dogs in the first place?" If the American congressmen answer these questions to themselves and then refuse to aid Cambodia in her direst hour, the world will know what stuff they are made of.

If the dominoes in Indochina start rolling, what is the point of having organizations like SEATO, CENTO, NATO, the security agreement with Japan and the verbal assurances to Israel? Looking back, perhaps late Gen Charles de Gaulle was right because sensing that France should not for her defence depend on America, went ahead to produce his own nuclear weaponry. [sentence as published]