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FUNK MINISTER INTERVIEWED BY NCNA CORRESPONDENTS

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[Text] Peking, August 5 (HSINHUA)--Keat Chhon, minister delegate to the prime minister of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia, told HSINHUA in an interview today about the American people's raging tide of protest sweeping the whole of America against the Nixon administration's expansion of aggression in Indo-China which he had heard and seen during his stay there. He sternly condemned the traitorous Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique for its fascist crime of frantically suppressing the Khmer people after its usurpation of power under the instruction of U.S. imperialism.

Keat Chhon said that the Royal Government of National-Union of Cambodia exposes and condemns all the manoeuvres or attempts of any organization or anyone who tried to convene an international conference on Cambodia. The objective of such a conference, he said, is to justify or legalize the fascist Lon Nol-Sirik Matak administration and cover up the aggression against Cambodia by the U.S. imperialists and their Saigon, Bangkok and other lackeys. Under the leadership of the National United Front of Kampuchea, the Khmer people and their National Liberation Army have won splendid victories in battle. Complete victory belongs to the Khmer people and their United Front.

Keat Chhon was a former minister of the Cambodian Royal Government. After the coup d'etat staged by the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak rightist clique, he was sent to the United States to seek aid for the rightist clique. He arrived in Peking on July 15 to join the National United Front of Kampuchea with Head of State Samdech Norodom Sihanouk as its chairman. His replies to questions posed by HSINHUA correspondents follow:

1. Question: As you have stayed for some time in the United States, would you please say a few words on the American people's struggle against the policy of aggression of the Nixon administration?

Answer: In the past few months a tempest of people's protests against the Indo-China war launched by the Nixon administration has swept the whole of the United States. Since the invasion of neutral and peaceful Cambodia by the U.S. and puppet troops, the protests have become so widespread and vehement that they brought extreme worries to the U.S. leaders.

Several hundred thousand students and hundreds of American universities have organized the movement of struggle in different forms: strikes, demonstrations on streets, occupation of college buildings, cutting off a road traffic, refusal of conscription, etc... At the beginning of May, some 100,000 students from all parts of the country, together with thousands of other people of different social strata, occupied the so-called ellipse square adjoining the White House to hold a protest meeting against the invasion of Cambodia by U.S. troops. The demonstrators condemned the expansion of the war of aggression in Indo-China; they denounced the crimes committed by Nixon's police at Kent University (Ohio) where four students were killed by the police during a peaceful demonstration. They compared the massacres of the people of the three Indo-Chinese countries by the U.S. aggressor troops to the massacre in Kent University. Defining the forms of struggle in future, this protest meeting demanded the immediate and total withdrawal of the U.S. troops from Indo-China.

Nixon, who had uttered honeyed words on the previous day to appease the anger of the youth and the people, took refuge in his room in the White House like a cornered beast and dared not appear before the demonstrators. In addition he called out several thousand policemen and troops armed to the teeth to protect him.

So far I have only recounted an episode of the struggle. In reality, few days pass without demonstrations or meetings taking place in different parts of the United States against the aggressive policy of the administration. If the students and Afro-Americans are very active, so has the movement spread to all social strata. The functionaries and employees of many ministerial departments have signed petitions against the policy of the administration. The professors have participated in the movements of the students. Thousands of lawyers have offered their free service to defending the youth prosecuted by the courts of Nixon for having refused to go to fight in Indo-China. Artists, painters, doctors and religious circles etc ... have held meetings demanding peace. Workers have held strikes condemning the war of aggression in Indo-China. In certain places, the demonstrators blocked the entrances of barracks. This struggle movement has shaken the Congress and sharpened the contradictions even among Nixon's close collaborators. Nixon is panic-stricken at such a magnitude.

Allow me to express here my admiration for the fighting spirit of the American people. I appreciate highly their present struggle which is integrated with the world movement against U.S. imperialism whose system is in the course of total disintegration as a result of the various internal crises, the economic and financial crises in particular. I avail myself of this opportunity to salute the struggle of the Afro-Americans for emancipation. What tragic destinies are in store for Nixon and his like? In attempting to save, by means of their criminal acts of aggression against Cambodia, the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique from the flames of the patriotic struggle of the Cambodian people and to put down the revolutionary war of the Vietnamese, Laotian, Palestinian and other people, they have created very favourable conditions for the development of the revolutionary movement of the American people within the United States itself. This is precisely "lifting a rock only to drop it on their own feet."

2. Question: The Nixon administration is using its lackeys in South Vietnam and Thailand to carry on the war of aggression against Cambodia on the one hand, and is doing its utmost in playing with the "peace talk" fraud on the other. Would you please comment on this counter-revolutionary two-faced policy of U.S. imperialism?

Answer: U.S. imperialism has used the "stick and carrot" policy against the American people. It also attempts to carry it out in Cambodia. Let us see the facts which lay bare all these vicious manoeuvres.

The U.S. imperialists, let us repeat, engineered a coup d'etat and installed the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak fascist regime in Phnom Penh. The Khmer people are rising to overthrow the traitors. Coming to their rescue, the Nixon administration ordered the U.S. troops and the Saigon and Bangkok puppet troops to invade Cambodia in the hope of suppressing the struggle of the Cambodian people. But closely united under the banner of the National United Front of Kampuchea with Head of State Samdech Norodom Sihanouk as its chairman, the Cambodian people and the National Liberation Armed Forces have mounted crushing counter-attacks in the diplomatic, political and military fields and won brilliant victories over the aggressors and their lackeys while the people all over the world, including the American people, have energetically condemned the policy and acts of aggression of the Nixon administration.

In order to camouflage their crimes and defeats and being bent on saving the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique, the U.S. imperialists are straining themselves in playing with, as you have well said, the "peace talks" fraud. "Diplomatic" plots organized by Nixon against our people and the fraternal peoples of Vietnam and Laos are being hatched from Washington to Djakarta, from Manila to Bangkok via Saigon. Nixon's envoys, carrying the pilgrim staff of "peace," go from one capital to another to vaunt the virtue of American peace. They are playing this comedy while their aircraft continue to commit monstrous crimes in dropping tons of bombs on the liberated areas of Cambodia and the troops of their Saigon and Bangkok puppets continue to occupy vast territories of Cambodia.

I can declare to you that our government exposes and condemns all the manoeuvres or attempts of any organization or anyone who tries to convene an international conference on Cambodia the objective of which, whether confessed or not, is to justify or legalize the fascist Lon Nol-Sirik Matak administration and to cover up the aggression against Cambodia by the U.S. imperialists and their Saigon, Bangkok and other lackeys. The Royal Government of National Union demands the immediate total and unconditional withdrawal of the U.S. and satellite troops from Cambodia and the other Indo-Chinese countries as well as the surrender, pure and simple, of the traitorous Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique and Son Ngoc Thanh and his like.

3. Question: Would you please tell how the traitorous Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique sells itself to U.S. imperialism, betrays the national interests and continues to suppress the Cambodian people?

Answer: Since the signing of the Geneva agreements in 1954, the U.S. imperialists have never allowed Cambodia to pursue a policy of peace, neutrality, independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. They have resorted to every treacherous means to turn Cambodia into their colony and their base for aggression in Asia. The plots and activities of sabotage and subversion organized by the U.S. imperialists are numerous and in which Lon Nol-Sirik Matak and company are involved to various degrees.

Last March, taking advantage of the absence of Samdech Norodom Sihanouk, head of state, who was on a trip abroad, the U.S. imperialists ordered the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique to usurp power.

Immediately after the seizure of power, the fascist Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique tore off its mask by openly betraying the national interests of the Cambodian people. Although it asserted otherwise, it has put an end to the policy of neutrality, independence, peace, sovereignty and territorial integrity. The balance-sheet of the fascist regime is disastrous. The U.S. imperialist war of aggression against Cambodia, occupation of a vast area of the country by the Saigon and Bangkok puppet troops, destruction of schools, universities, factories, plantations, cities, fields and forests, several thousand innocent people were savagely killed; the economy of the country is completely disorganized, prices of daily necessities are skyrocketing; national honour has been sullied, and the present Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique of Phnom Penh has become a puppet regime of the Saigon and Bangkok puppets.

The fascist nature of the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique was revealed in the first days of its existence. In several provinces, this clique savagely suppressed the people demonstrating against the coup d'etat. Faced with the irresistible movement of people's struggle, the fascist regime has proclaimed martial law to govern Phnom Penh. Every notion of freedom and every elementary right are non-existent there.

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Any critic of the minister of defense (sic) risks at least 25 years' imprisonment, if not a death sentence. Listening to the Voice of the FUNK or Radio Peking or Radio Hanoi is liable to a penalty of 15 years' imprisonment. The traitors of Phnom Penh issued an order of general mobilization to enlist our compatriots of both sexes between 18 and 60 to serve as cannon-fodder for them. It is in this way that they send the youth and students to the front to be killed in their place.

In the face of these acts of treason of the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique, in the face of the barbarous acts committed by the occupationists, Saigon and Bangkok puppets, and in the face of the criminal aggression of the U.S. imperialists, the Khmer people and their National Liberation Army under the leadership of the National United Front of Kampuchea have mounted crushing counter-attacks and won splendid victories. At present, the pincer movement of the people's army is tightening on Phnom Penh and the days of the fascist clique are numbered. Complete victory belongs to the Khmer people and their United Front. I take this opportunity to extend our deepest gratitude to the Chinese people, the Government of the People's Republic of China, the beloved great leader Chairman Mao Tsetung and his closest comrade-in-arms Vice-Chairman Lin Biao, for their steady and powerful support to the cause of our people.