

NIHON KEIZAI (Full)

TOKYO

September 26, 1973

FILE SUBJ.

DATE SUB-CAT

Interview with Ambassador to Cambodia SUGIURA; Key to Peace Lies in "KISSINGER Visit to China"; One More Big Battle Before Situation Sees Settlement

Following Vietnam peace, talks for the establishment of a coalition government were concluded in Laos, and the Indo-China Peninsula made a big step forward toward peace. However, in Cambodia alone, both the military and political situation is in a state of confusion, as ever before. This paper, therefore, sought an interview with Ambassador to Cambodia Noboru SUGIURA, who is back home temporarily to attend the Conference of the Ambassadors to the Asia-Pacific region, and asked him about the military situation surrounding Phnompenh, and prospects for peace. At this interview, Ambassador SUGIURA clarified the following views: (1) There will probably be one more big battle between the Government Forces and the Liberation Forces before March of next year; (2) It is not thought likely that either the Government side or the Liberation Forces side can enter into talks for the establishment of a coalition government and for peace, until after that; and (3) Among the big powers, China is taking the position of rejecting the existence of the LON NOL Government, and therefore, the key to peace lies in how this point will be adjusted when U.S. Secretary of State KISSINGER visits China. (Interview by Political News Section Chief OCHI)

Question: What is the military situation surrounding Phnompenh?

Ambassador SUGIURA: To state the conclusion first, the question is the rear supply situation for both sides. As regards the question of supply, the U.S. is giving aid meticulously, such as foodstuff aid and supply of fuel and gasoline needed for the operation of electric power plants. It will probably also help in such matters as the supplying of some amount of weapons and replacement parts for airplanes. Meanwhile, the decrease in aid to the SIHANOUK Regime has already been mentioned by Prince SIHANOUK himself since last year to the beginning of this year. Furthermore, the Cambodian people do not have the vigorous spirit of bringing in weapons and ammunition from the North, with the perseverance shown by the Vietnamese people, following the HO Chi Minh Trail, in order to continue the fighting. I think the prospects for the Liberation Forces side are very dark in the supply field.

At the present time, the initiative of the war lies with the Liberation Front side. Phnompenh is now in a defensive position, and therefore, it is in a somewhat disadvantageous situation, but it is engaging in an almost equal contest. A good example of this is seen in the case of Kompong Cham. The Liberation Forces destroyed the city, but they did not go so far as to seize the city. They withdrew their forces, and digging trenches outside of the town, they are taking the position of being able to attack at any time, training their cannons on the town.

Question: How do they regard the moves of Prince SIHANOUK over there?

Ambassador: There are many persons in the LON NOL Government, who had been Prince SIHANOUK's subordinates. Kyu San Fan [phonetic] (Deputy Premier of the Royal National United Front of Kamphuchea), who is now attacking Phnompenh was once a political enemy of Prince SIHANOUK, who had been suppressed by the Prince. The soldiers of the Liberation Front have no connection with Prince SIHANOUK. Rather, they are forces fostered by Hanoi. This is a big weakness for Prince SIHANOUK.

It seems that in the Liberation Front, Hanoi has the right to speak out. As for the relationship between Hanoi and Prince SIHANOUK, it is good at times, and bad at other times, and it seems delicate. Furthermore, when engaging in such a war, the army's right to speak out inevitably becomes strong, even within the Liberation Front. In such a case, the right to speak out, on the part of Premier PEN NOUTH and others, who belong to the SIHANOUK Faction but who are not military men, becomes weak. Even if Prince SIHANOUK returns, he will not return in his former position. Even though his position as Chief of State may be the same, it will not be as in the past, in point of his real strength.

Question: However, it seems that he has visited the liberated areas and had pictures taken ...

Ambassador: The young women soldiers welcoming Prince SIHANOUK were in pig-tails. However, that is not the custom in Cambodia. Also, some Chinese merchants in Pnompenh, upon hearing the taped recordings, commented that "they have the accent of the Vietnamese or like us, and it is not the accent of Cambodians." There are many doubtful points, and it is not believed at all in Pnompenh.

Question: What is the degree of the stability of the LON NOL Government, and what are the future prospects?

Ambassador: The frontline of the other side is situated at only about 10 kilometers from the center of the city, and the military situation dominates all other things. It is not possible to say that it is stable or that it is unstable. However, to put it bluntly, it is not fulfilling the functions of a government.

If I were to go a step further and make some comment, in connection with the military situation, I think I can say as follows: It is now being said that it is a collective leadership system, made up of President LON NOL, former Second Prime Minister SIRIK MATAK, former Chief of State CHENG HENG and former Prime Minister IN TAM. However, CHENG HENG is an intellectual and does not have much real political power. IN TAM makes speeches which are loudly cheered by the people, but he does not have any special backing behind him. LON NOL has been looking after the armed forces from the days of Prince SIHANOUK. He has strong influence over all military leaders above the medium-ranking officers. SIRIK MATAK is a member of the Royal Family, and he does not have influence over the armed forces. As a person cannot do anything unless he has support from the armed forces, I think the U.S. will have no choice but to prop up LON NOL, to the last.

Prince SIHANOUK is also saying that "if Premier PEN NOUTH is included in the Cabinet, it will be all right with me." Also, people from East European countries, including the Soviet Union, also say that "since LON NOL is the responsible person, he will probably have to be retired, for the time being, but it will be all right if SIRIK MATAK and IN TAM were to join the Cabinet. In that case, the U.S. can also save its face."

Question: Will it be that kind of a coalition government which will be established as a result of the coming of peace?

Ambassador: It seems that way. The U.S. has been supporting the Pnompenh Government, at any rate. The Soviet Union also half-supported it. Apart from the question of whether the LON NOL Government is a lawfully constituted government or not, there are such countries as Japan, France, the U.S., the Soviet Union, Poland, and Czechoslovakia, which recognize the fact that there exists the LON NOL Government in Pnompenh. Against this group, there is the other group which asserts that LON NOL does not exist and that the SIHANOUK Government is the sole, legitimate government. Among the big powers, these two groups are in confrontation.

Therefore, if U.S. Secretary of State KISSINGER visits Peking, he will have to adjust the positions of these two groups. Premier CHOU En-lai of China takes the position that the LON NOL Regime is nothing but a rebellious army. If KISSINGER were to embark on the task of mediation, as one of his new tasks, he will have to harmonize the position of China, which is that "the Pnompenh Government does not exist," and the Soviet position that it "exists."

Question: When do you think such talks will take place?

Ambassador: That will depend on when the Secretary of State will go. Besides, in regard to the military situation, I think they will have another test of power. The Liberation Forces side cannot seize Pnompenh, even if they were to say that they will take the city. As for the Pnompenh side, its ending the fighting now would mean a complete surrender. Therefore, it will not be able to conduct negotiations to its advantage unless it regains its strength once again and hits the communist forces. Therefore, both sides need to have one more battle. Furthermore, for the Pnompenh side, the dry season will be inconvenient, as the water-level of the Mekong will drop. When the water-level of the river drops during the dry season, boats can carry only about one-third their normal load. They can also be easily hit and sunk. Therefore, it will have to launch an offensive before March, without fail.

At any rate, according to the commonly accepted observation, there will be one more big offensive against Pnompenh. It may be endurable if it is only rocket attacks, but if several hundred cannonshells are fired a day, safety of lives cannot be guaranteed, and it may be that we will have to evacuate Japanese nationals on a full scale, in the end. After surviving this kind of a military crisis, I think they will enter into peace negotiations.

Question: How are Japan's connections with the Indo-China Peninsula regarded in Cambodia?

Ambassador: As can be seen from the example of South Vietnam, France has the biggest vested interests in the Indo-China area. Unless the war in Indo-China is ended quickly and unless it is reconstructed, French property and vested interests will be destroyed. In that meaning, I think France will do something.

As for Britain, many countries of the former British Commonwealth are seeking aid from it. Therefore, it cannot aid Indo-China on a grand scale. West Germany is placing main emphasis on Indonesia. The U.S. has decided to withdraw.

In the end, the only country left is Japan. It is placed in a position where, whether it likes it or not, it will be forced to give aid to Cambodia and Laos, in the same way as it has been aiding the THIEU Government. Long-term projects, such as reconstruction from the war devastation and development will have to be put off until later, and for the immediate future, urgent aid, with a strong humanitarian nature, will have to be given toward this area which has been greatly damaged by war, in a bilateral form. I think that after that, when peace is realized, and when it becomes possible to have multilateral talks, large-scale reconstruction and development and will be considered.

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TOKYO SHIMBUN (Full)

September 27, 1973

Difficult to Hold Japan-ROK Periodic Ministerial Conference for Some Time to Come: Parliamentary Foreign Vice Minister MIZUNO

Parliamentary Foreign Vice Minister MIZUNO, at the Upper House Foreign Affairs Committee meeting on the 26th, stated as follows regarding the outlook for the holding of the Japan-ROK Periodic Ministerial Conference, which has been postponed due to the KIM Dae Jung incident: "Under the present situation, it will be difficult to hold it for some time to come, even after Prime Minister TANAKA returns home from his visits to Europe and the Soviet Union in the middle of October." He thus clarified the outlook that the holding of the Ministerial Conference will be put off for a long time.

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YOMIURI (Full)

Eve., September 29, 1973

U.S. Worried about Unexpected Situations; On KIM Dae Jung Incident;  
SNEIDER Letter to LDP Afro-Asian Problem Research Council

The KIM Dae Jung incident is now in a state of having been grounded, with the ROK side taking an attitude of rejection toward Japan's position, which calls for the restoration of the original state. At this time, the LDP's Afro-Asian Problem Research Council Representative Sponsor Tokuma UTSUNOMIYA received a letter from U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific SNEIDER. This letter says that KIM Dae Jung is a respected leader of the Opposition Party and that the State Department is deeply worried about the arising of an unexpected situation regarding the person of KIM. It also conveyed the U.S. Government's basic position that it is interested in the investigations being made by the Governments of both Japan and the ROK and that "it desires that the offenders will be tried under law."

This letter was the reply to a letter which UTSUNOMIYA sent earlier, on August 27, addressed to Secretary of State ROGERS (at the time). It was hand-delivered to UTSUNOMIYA by U.S. Embassy First Secretary Toshio G. TSUKAHIRA, who called at UTSUNOMIYA's office in the 1st Lower House Dietmen's Hall, toward the evening of the 28th.

Secretary of State ROGERS announced, immediately after the arising of this incident, that "the U.S. Government is gravely concerned." Since then, there were contacts with the ROK Government, but later, the Secretary of State was replaced by KISSINGER. For this reason, there even appeared speculations among informed sources that there may have been some changes in its attitude, within the U.S. Government. However, it was made known by this SNEIDER letter that there has been no change in any way in the position of the U.S. Government, and furthermore, it strongly indicated its views toward maintaining the personal safety of KIM Dae Jung, by saying that the U.S. Government is worried about the arising of unexpected situations. Still further, even though it takes the position that it is basically a question which should be settled between the Governments of Japan and the ROK, it expresses, in an unusual move, the attitude that "it desires the trying of the offenders under law."

Concerning this, UTSUNOMIYA stated as follows: "It is clear that it expresses the U.S. Government's wish that the true facts should be made clear at the earliest possible time and that efforts should be made for its settlement, even in order to prevent the worsening of Japan-ROK relations over this incident. We also intend to make still greater efforts to have KIM Dae Jung returned to Japan physically. The Japanese Government should also demand of the ROK Government the restoring of the situation to its original state and the taking of measures for the clarification of the true facts. We will also extend co-operation for this, from the side. This position of the U.S. Government, expressed in the SNEIDER letter is beneficial for the future of Japan-U.S. and Japan-ROK relations, and we welcome it and are grateful for it."

UTSUNOMIYA distributed this letter to the members of the Afro-Asian Problem Research Council.

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SANKEI (Full)

Eve., September 28, 1973

No Official Notification to Government on Midway's Port Entry

Chief Cabinet Secretary NIKAIDO, at a press conference after the Cabinet meeting on the 28th, said, in regard to the question of the U.S. aircraft carrier Midway's entering Yokosuka Port: "At the present time, we have not received any formal notification from the U.S. side yet. However, even without formal notification, it can enter the port at any time. There is no problem whatsoever regarding this question, from the standpoint of the Security Treaty. However, there are the people's sentiments, and therefore, we hope that the length of its stay will be shortened as much as possible."

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TOKYO SHIMBUN (Full)

September 26, 1973

Decisive Battle Before Peace Unavoidable; Ambassador SUGIURA on Cambodian Situation; Time Will Be Around December; Both Sides About Equal in Strength at Present

The war situation in Cambodia, which is now the focal point in the Indo-China situation, after the start of peace in Laos, is now in a state of a brief respite, with the fighting stopped, for the present, in the form of the Government Forces' repelling the offensive of the Liberation Forces against Kompong Cham, the third biggest city in Cambodia. However, Prince SIHANOUK of the Liberation Forces side prophesizes the development of a large-scale offensive against Pnompenh, the capital, in the dry season, from the end of this year to next spring. On the other hand, however, with the assumption of the post of U.S. Secretary of State by KISSINGER recently, new moves in the work of bringing about peace and settlement to Cambodia by big powers concerned, centering on the axis of the U.S.-China pipeline, are also to be expected. This paper's Foreign News Section Chief Hiroshi IDETA met with Ambassador to Cambodia Noboru SUGIURA, who is now back home briefly, at the Foreign Ministry on the 25th, and asked him about the present situation and outlook for Cambodia. The said Ambassador especially noted the following points: (1) In the military situation at the present time, the Liberation Forces side and the Government side are exactly about equal; (2) As for peace and settlement, the big powers will move, heading in the direction of a "coalition government," with the top leaders of both sides retiring; and (3) However, the mood for peace negotiations will not ripen on either side, until there is one more decisive battle, militarily, and the outcome of the military situation from around this autumn will especially be a decisive factor.

-- How is the military situation in Cambodia?

Ambassador: The present situation is that both sides are just about equal, although the Government side is on the defensive. For both sides, the problem in the future will be supplies. The Pnompenh side is receiving military and economic aid regularly from the U.S., so far. On the other hand, according to Prince SIHANOUK, North Vietnam and China have stopped giving military aid. The other side is skilled in fighting, but there are problems regarding supplies, and in that meaning the situation is about equal.

-- Prince SIHANOUK is saying that an offensive will be launched against the capital city in December ...

Ambassador: The offensives of the other side took the pattern of attacking for one week, and then resting during the next week. However, its offensives against Pnompenh just before the suspension of bombings by the U.S. Air Force, and the offensives against Kompong Cham continued on a one-month or a two-month basis. If they are to set aside about two months as the preparation period after this, December will coincide with the timing for the starting of an offensive.

At any rate, no definite outcome has been reached between the two sides, militarily, and even as can be seen from the example of South Vietnam, no mood for talks will appear unless they have another decisive battle, and no conclusion can be reached in regard to the situation, either. Although the Government side has been driven into the present situation through the fighting which continued for three years until now, it has not yet come to feel that it has been defeated. The SIHANOUK side also has no intention of stopping, without reaching an outcome, when it has come to this point, after great trouble. One more bloody contest of strength cannot be avoided.

The Government Forces succeeded in the defense of Kompong Cham. However, that was accomplished by throwing in the main strength for the defense of the capital city, and at the price of leaving the capital undefended. Therefore, no overall assessment can yet be made.

-- Will it be impossible for negotiations to make progress during this year?

Ambassador: To put it clearly, it depends on the intentions of big powers. However, there is a conflict between the positions of the U.S. and the Soviet Union, which recognize the existence of the present Pnompenh Government, and that of China, which holds that the SIHANOUK Government alone is legitimate and that the LON NOL Government does not exist. It is thought that French President POMPIDOU, who recently visited China, fulfilled the role of conveying to China a peace plan, on which the three big powers, that is, the U.S. the Soviet Union and France, have reached agreement through the U.S.-Soviet and U.S.-French summit talks. It seems, however, that the conflict still remains. It is thought, after all, that the reported visit to China by U.S. Secretary of State KISSINGER will open the door to new developments.

-- What is the decisive factor for a compromise?

Ambassador: It will be the question of the nature of the coalition government to be established in Cambodia in the future. The U.S. cannot disregard the basic line of CHOU En-lai diplomacy, which consistently upheld the support for the SIHANOUK Regime all through the past three years. According to the diplomatic missions of the Soviet bloc, it is said that the Soviet Union is thinking of a coalition government of the "two factions," after having the two top leaders (President LON NOL and Prince SIHANOUK) retire.

In that case, the faces of both sides can be saved. North Vietnam is also not thinking of ruling Indo-China, and it will probably be satisfied if a government hostile to Hanoi is removed from Cambodia. China is supporting one side's being represented by KYU Sam Phan [phonetic] (Deputy Premier of the Royal National United Front Government of Kampuchea), who has strong influence toward Hanoi.

-- What is the possibility of the self-collapse of the LON NOL Government?

Ambassador: It is the military situation which is determining the situation in Pnompenh, after all. Consequently, the right to speak out on the part of the armed forces is absolutely strong. It is President LON NOL, who is a military man, after all, who has influence over the armed forces. It is because of this that he can pull the armed forces along with him. If there should be collapse from within, that will mean the collapse of the armed forces. That will depend completely on the military situation.

-- What will be the situation in the case of an all-out general attack being started against the capital?

Ambassador: Speaking from the example of the attack and defense of Kompong Cham, it is doubtful whether the other side can occupy the capital city. However, completely different from the situation to date, there is the danger of the other side firing into the city relentlessly, and with the city being laid to waste and the other side's occupying a part of the capital, the Government becoming unable to function. The other side may resort to some spectacular moves militarily while the U.N. General Assembly is in session.

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YOMIURI (Full)

October 1, 1973

"Tax Imposition on US Military Bases" Expanding; Misawa Formula Being Studied by Tokyo Metropolis, 2 Prefectures, and 12 Cities, Towns, and Villages

The problem of "local-tax imposition on US military bases," starting with Aomori Prefecture Misawa City's having firmed up a policy to levy the inhabitants' tax and the municipal property tax upon the military personnel, military civilians, and the trailer-houses within Misawa Air Base, has begun to show a rapid expansion to other areas including Okinawa Prefecture. Tokyo Metropolis, two prefectures, and 12 cities, towns, and villages are studying local-tax imposition. Most of the US military bases are "tax-free" under the Japan-US Status of Forces Agreement, based on the Security Treaty. Although some people say that levying of local taxes will be practically difficult, those autonomous entities will demand payment by the country, which concluded the Treaty, of the "unpaid portions", which have hitherto been left out of tax imposition, as "deficits," for the following reasons: "The presence of the bases has caused great trouble to the local side. This cannot be left as it is, with mere grants of base countermeasures funds by the State which are small in amount."

The autonomous bodies which have begun to study tax imposition on US military bases are Tokyo Metropolis; 2 Prefectures -- Kanagawa and Okinawa; 9 Cities -- Tachikawa and Akishima in Tokyo; Yokohama, Kawasaki, Yokosuka, and Ebina in Kanagawa Prefecture; Iwakuni in Yamaguchi Prefecture; Fukuoka City; and Koza City in Okinawa; 1 Town -- Ayase-cho, Koza-"gun" (county), Kanagawa Prefecture; and 2 Villages -- Kadena and Chatan in Okinawa.

These autonomous bodies have had the following trouble for many years: "The noise of jets is terrible, and the development of the City has been obstructed" (Akishima City). "For the ensuring of the safety of the air routes, even the height of the chimneys of private factories has been restricted, and there are obstacles to industrial development" (Iwakuni City). They have shut their eyes to these, because it is stipulated in the Status of Forces Agreement that "taxes shall not be imposed" on the facilities belonging to the US Forces, such as base offices, hangars, etc., within the US military bases, and the inhabitants' tax shall not be levied on military personnel and military civilians.

However, Misawa City took the view that "Even US military personnel are using municipal roads and water-supply facilities and, therefore, they are under obligation to pay the inhabitants' tax. The trailer-houses within the base are private houses, which are outside the objects of the stipulation of 'no tax imposition'." Misawa City clarified its policy to levy taxes retroactively to 27 years ago or the beginning of the stationing of the Security Forces there, marking as objects of tax imposition about 3,400 military personnel and military civilians stationed at Misawa Air Base, 290 trailer-houses, and electric power and gas consumed at the Base. In the case of Misawa City, concrete taxation methods have not yet been decided due to such reasons as that the US Forces side has not approved on-the-spot taxation surveys within the Base. The total amount of taxes is reportedly about ¥7,000 million.

The said autonomous bodies regarded this Misawa formula as "reasonable," and are showing restless moves, such as inquiring about the actual situation in writing or through other methods. Above all, in the case of Okinawa Prefecture, they are attaching importance to the point that at Kadena Air Base, etc., the golf courses and clubs, which are "tax-free" facilities, are being used also by general people and are thus "money-making" facilities. They have shown a concrete taxation