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ENGLISH VERSION

This is the text of the open letter from a group of Cambodian intellectuals to their colleagues in the world intellectual community. It was referred to in Wireless Files dated July 21. The letter was adopted May 12 by a meeting in Phnom Penh of 400 Cambodian educators, writers and other intellectuals. It is suggested that Posts make it available discreetly to suitable individuals in the intellectual and information communities. Since it is purely a Cambodian document, it is believed that open, attributed distribution should not be attempted, as this might tend to dilute its usefulness.

A picture of the three Cambodian intellectuals who held a press conference in Washington, at which they handed out copies of the letter, is being serviced.

POST REMARKS: (Posts are requested to comment on planned usage and potential effectiveness of material. Appraisals should be frank, with specific concrete suggestions and criticism wherever appropriate. Upon completion return copy to the Press Service, U.S. Information Agency.)

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AN OPEN LETTER

FROM THE INTELLECTUALS OF CAMBODIA

TO

OUR INTELLECTUAL FRIENDS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

The people of Cambodia have been and are currently facing open North Vietnamese and Vietcong aggression. In view of the seriousness of the situation, the Intellectuals of Cambodia held a Congress on May 12, 1970 to :

1. Draw the attention of intellectuals throughout the world to the grave situation existing in Cambodia ;
2. Assure that our foreign friends have an understanding of the crimes of the North Vietnamese and the Vietcong and the desire of these unwanted foreigners to use the territory of Cambodia to their own advantage with no regard to the integrity or the will of the Cambodian people ;
3. Assure the intellectuals of the world we wish to face and to master our own problems without the introduction of foreign advisors, soldiers or other manpower ;
4. Appeal to our intellectual friends to give us both moral and material assistance; and
5. Proclaim the sincere and deep belief that the Cambodian people will successfully overcome the dangers of oppression that peril our country today.

THE SITUATION

Cambodia's political, social and economic problems today stem directly from years of mismanagement under the Sihanouk regime. Few foreigners knew the man — Prince Norodom Sihanouk. Few realize how close he brought Cambodia to the brink of disaster.

Sihanouk's hollow « peace » policy was designed to appease the North Vietnamese and the Vietcong, to allow Vietnamese communists free access to Cambodia's border provinces, to allow our enemies to use our territory to carry on and to prolong a war that had been branded by the world as a criminal aggression.

Some say that Sihanouk was duped by his wife and by his family. Some believe that he did not realize that they were amassing a fortune from moving war supplies to the sanctuaries Sihanouk had granted to the Communists to use as bases for their aggressive war. For years Sihanouk was the « Mythical Prince, » charging off one way or another on his white horse while leading his country down his « neutral » course. But it soon became evident that Sihanouk « neutrality » was leading the Cambodian people to total domination by the Communists.

As Sihanouk's family continued to amass a fortune at the expense of the people, and, as the yoke of communist domination descended on Cambodian shoulders, the intellectuals and the people rose up to protect their country and their human rights.

Sihanouk, the myth. The Cambodians became painfully aware that he was neither a champion for peace nor for neutrality. His final legacy to Cambodia was partial occupation by Vietnamese communists while much of the country found itself under the control of this dedicated enemy of our people. Under Sihanouk, the economy had paralyzed. Progress, the human spirit and imagination came close to being snuffed out.

Sihanouk, the myth — a dangerous myth. And today we find him a fallen King, a lackey of the North Vietnamese, of the Vietcong, and of his Chinese masters in Peking. From that city, Sihanouk, the myth, is slandering his people while posing as their leader.

Sihanouk, the myth. Was he a patriot any more than he was a « champion of peace and neutrality? » Can a man who appeals to foreign enemy troops to support his claim to leadership be called a patriot? Hardly.

Sihanouk's communist supporters have left their deadly mark on Cambodia. They have assassinated those who have defended their country and our basic beliefs — teachers, students, national leaders. Their brutal efforts to subjugate and dominate are well-known to our people. Cambodians well remember the communist-inspired and communist-executed assassination of two of our deputies, Suos Saoun and Kim Phon. Death alone was not enough. The communists cut out their livers, impaled them on long poles and paraded through the streets. Other animal acts, gruesome acts, followed.

These are Sihanouk's friends and supporters.

AN APPEAL FOR HELP

Cambodia has appealed for assistance from many countries. Some of the countries have supported Sihanouk, some have broken diplomatic relations, some are non-committal and others have given a modicum of support to our desperate fight to preserve our nation.

We realize that the organization of the *maffiosi* allows for swift reaction. Not so, necessarily, for those who seek law and order. Justice requires examination. This we recognize. We now await friendly nations to support our bid to be a proud partner, an equal partner. We will not be sold out to the North Vietnamese or to the communists. We demand territorial integrity. We will not die as a nation.

The Americans gave us some help, and the communist aggressors' propaganda mills immediately denounced the Americans as the real aggressors. Let nobody be fooled. One must remember that in the middle of April of this year the North Vietnamese and the Vietcong were preparing to march on Phnom Penh, our capital, attacking Saang, only twenty miles away. America's limited help aided us in thwarting that threat.

As you read these lines, we ask you to put aside your political doctrine, your « domino theory » or other theories, your bitternesses against the Americans or others involved in the problems of Southeast Asia. Stripped of these trappings, you will

understand that **CAMBODIA WANTS TO SURVIVE**. We wish to be in concert with those nations which respect the Rights of Man and the simple ethics that civilized parents teach their young children.

We are a people more capable of love than of hate. We are loyal. We are hospitable. These traditions have been challenged, and we are compelled to fight for our existence.

We need your support.

WHAT IS OUR POSITION

What do we want? We want to be Cambodians living within our own cultural patterns, obeisant to none, proud of our heritage and respected by our neighbours and friends.

— We are fighting and will fight our enemies who respect neither law nor religion, who, to succeed in their aims, show no respect for life. They have killed, looted, and have raped our women.

— We are fighting an enemy desirous of not only military victory but ~~as well~~ the enslavement of the mind as well as the body. They want domination in every respect. And so, to destroy our culture and our heritage, they have attacked our schools and universities and have killed students and teachers alike in order to strike fear in the minds of our youth.

— We are fighting an enemy that knows and uses all methods of subversion to ruin the economy and to try to break the spirit of the people. They have blown up bridges to cut our road network. They have derailed trains. They have attacked in our factories and our ports.

The enemy has struck a wicked blow at the Cambodian people by bombing and burning our hospitals, dispensaries and maternity clinics. But far more serious is their wanton murder of doctors and government health officers.

— It is no exaggeration to brand the policy of our North Vietnamese and Vietcong enemies as **GENOCIDE**. We have closely observed their policies and their tactics in their war against our people. Their ultimate goal is to destroy the Cambodian people and the Cambodian culture.

Considering the above, **WE SOLEMNLY ACCUSE THE VIETCONG AND THE NORTH VIETNAMESE AS WELL AS THEIR MENTOR, THE PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA, OF TRYING TO ERASE CAMBODIA AND THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE FROM THE FACE OF THIS WORLD.** And Sihanouk, the puppet of these forces, is to be despised for the part that he has taken against his own countrymen.

The annals of history will lay the full blame for the current crisis in Southeast Asia at the feet of the communist leaders in Peking and Hanoi and to their fellow travellers and misguided henchmen, of which Sihanouk is a prize example.

These leaders have the gall to cry out « American aggression! » This is a joke in Cambodia. The Americans came with some aid for us, for the Cambodians themselves to ward off the North Vietnamese and Vietcong attack. Had our enemies succeeded, we would have been swallowed up, Cambodia would be no more. We, the Cambodian people, are grateful

to the United States. Whatever the motivation of the American government, the aid it extended allows us to be here today and permits us to send this message.

We realize how difficult it is for you to visualize our situation here. Your countries may be a land hundreds or perhaps thousands of miles from Cambodia. Your customs, traditions, environment and way-of-life are different. We are a small country struggling to rebuild what Sihanouk destroyed during his twenty years as the country's leader. We must catch up. We must do the work ourselves. We do not ask others to do our tasks. We ask only such material aid as will help us rebuild our weakened nation.

And we ask you to remember that **THIS IS NOT AND HAS NEVER BEEN A CIVIL WAR.** Cambodia has been invaded by foreign enemies, the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese.

We also wish to express our gratitude to the Government of South Vietnam and all the other countries that have come and will come to our aid.

OUR FAITH

In closing this long message, we would like to reassure you and our many friends around the world that we have full faith in our ability to save our country. We know that our cause is just. **OUR COUNTRY MUST BE FREE**, free of the tyranny of the infamous Prince and free from the domination of the North Vietnamese and the Vietcong.

LONG LIVE CAMBODIA !