

PRG
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PRG Press Briefing - April 16, 1970

1. Q. (deGunzburg - AFP) - We have received a message from Prince Norodom Sihanouk that he continues to call his people to the struggle against the Phnom Penh regime, and that he will take part in it in the underground, but at the same time that he will not come back to power even if the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique is removed from power. I would like to know your opinion on this. Do you still consider him as the chief of state of Cambodia?

A. To my knowledge, the chief of state of Cambodia, Norodom Sihanouk, has called upon the Khmer people as a whole to arise and fight to regain independence, neutrality, and sovereignty for Cambodia. Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Chief of State of Cambodia, has also shown the illegal and anti-constitutional character of the putschist clique of Lon Nol-Sirik Matak. As far as the population and the PRG of South Viet-Nam are concerned, the Prince is the legal chief of state of Cambodia. I would like to recall here a passage of the statement issued by the PRG on March 26, 1970: "The PRG of South Viet-Nam and the South Vietnamese population warmly hail and unreservedly support the just measures for national salvation outlined in the historical proclamation of March 23 by Norodom Sihanouk, Chief of State of the Kingdom of Cambodia, and the Khmer people's ^{just} struggle against the American imperialists and their lackeys with a view to safeguarding the sacred national rights and contributing to maintaining peace in Indochina and in Asia."

2. Q. (de Gunzburg - AFP) - However, there is something new in

this since he does not want to come back to power and he favors a People's Socialist Republic of Cambodia. I would like to know your opinion on this?

A. We believe that at the present time Prince Norodom Sihanouk is the legal chief of state of Cambodia. As for the future, it will depend on the decisions made by Prince Norodom Sihanouk and the Khmer people.

3. Q. (Fenton - Baltimore Sun) - Can you tell us if you have received any news since last week concerning our journalistic colleagues who disappeared in Indochina?

A. We understand very well the preoccupation of our journalist friends. We have received the petition that you addressed to our delegation as well as to the other delegations. As far as this question is concerned we can provide you with the following reply: The NLF and the PRG have always practiced a policy of clemency and humanity in regard to the numerous foreign journalists who have become lost in the liberated zones of South Viet-Nam. The French and Japanese newsmen present here certainly know this. As far as the information concerning the supposed capture of foreign journalists in Cambodia by the Popular Armed Forces of Liberation, they are entirely fallacious. The Liberation Press Agency, the press agency of the PRG, published a communiqué yesterday in which it rejected this information as having no foundation whatsoever.

4. Q. (Valery - New York Daily News) - If you do not have them, don't you have any other information regarding who has them, what is their fate, etc.?

A. We have inquired about developments which might be taking place in South Viet-Nam. We have no other information on the subject.

5. Q. (de Gunzburg - AFP) - I wonder if you have any information about the drownings reported in this morning's press, about the bodies floating down the Mekong and about the causes of the drowning of Vietnamese in Cambodia?

A. We, of the PRG Delegation, are like you. We are deeply moved and indignant upon learning reports and seeing the photographs released by the press, concerning the bodies of hundreds of our compatriots who were massacred and whose ^{tied} bodies were seen in the Mekong. As pointed out in the statement issued by the Foreign Ministry of the Republic of South Viet-Nam, the Prasaut massacre is not an isolated case, rather it is one of many massacres committed against Vietnamese nationals by the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique since its coup d'etat three weeks ago. In passing, I would also like to talk about the hypocritical attitude of the Thieu-Ky-Khiem Administration. The Thieu-Ky-Khiem Administration claims that it took steps to come to the help of Vietnamese nationals in Cambodia, while it is precisely that Administration which is openly in collusion with the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique to bring its troops and arms into Cambodia in order to massacre the Khmer people and Vietnamese nationals. The bodies of our assassinated compatriots found on the Mekong are irrefutable evidence that the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique has committed and is still committing barbarous crimes against our compatriots.

6. Q. (Goldsmith - AP) - Can you tell us whether the PRG has established friendly relations or has had any contact with the Unified National Front of Cambodia?

A. As I just recalled for you in the PRG statement of March 26, 1970, we warmly acclaim and unreservedly support the just measures for national salvation, as outlined in the historical proclamation of March 23 by Norodom Sihanouk, chief of state of the Kingdom of Cambodia. One of those measures was the formation of the Unified National Front of Kampuchea.

7. Q. (Valery - New York Daily News) - So the formation of this Unified National Front is quite recent?

A. To our knowledge, yes.

8. Q. (de Gunzburg - AFP) - You said right here, that the Thieu-Ky-Khiem Administration has sent troops and arms to Cambodia to massacre the Khmer people and Vietnamese nationals. In fact Mr. Thi, in his statement, said exactly the same thing about the Saigon Administration and the U. S. Does that mean that you believe that U. S. troops and Saigon troops actually ^{took} part in the massacre of Vietnamese civilians in Cambodia?

A. Through their overt collusion with the reactionary Lon Nol-Sirik Matak group, through the use of troops, airplanes, and artillery, and by sending officers to carry out bombing operations against the territory of Cambodia, the American aggressors, the Thieu-Ky-Khiem Administration, as well as the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique are those who committed massacres against the Vietnamese who have been living for a long time in Cambodia, and against

the Khmer people themselves. You surely know that this collusion is no longer a secret or rather it is now only an open secret.

9. Q. (Japanese newsman) - You cited a Liberation Press Agency communiqué on foreign journalists but when did the Agency publish this? Was this communiqué broadcast by your radio?

A. This communiqué was published yesterday.

10. Q. (Japanese newsman) - Then the Front has no responsibility as to the fate of foreign journalists?

A. If foreign journalists become lost in the course of their professional activities in the liberated zones of South Viet-Nam -- as it happened last year to two Japanese journalists -- we come to their aid and we set them free.