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✓ SIHANOUK VOICES OPINIONS ON CURRENT SITUATION IN CAMBODIA

CAMBODIAN INFORMATION AGENCY (Clandestine) in French to Southeast Asia and the Far East
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[Text] Kampuchea 16 March AKI--In order to inform the public of developments in the Cambodian situation since the 18 March 1970 coup staged by the treasonous Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique at the U.S. imperialists' instigation, the CAMBODIAN INFORMATION AGENCY has asked the Prince Head of State to comment on the situation in Cambodia during the past year, the activities of NUFK and RGNUC, prospects for our people's war of national liberation, and the situation facing U.S. imperialism and its henchmen.

We have the honor to reproduce here the answers Prince Norodom Sihanouk, head of state, kindly sent us:

I thank you for your message dated 10 March 1971, and I have the honor to give below my answers to the questions you kindly asked me.

In a magnificent response to my solemn appeal of 23 March 1970, our people have valiantly taken in hand the fatherland's destiny. Lon Nol, Sirik Matak, and their gang believed, on the one hand, that Sihanouk would quietly spend the rest of his days on the Cote d'Azur like Vietnamese ex-emperor Bao Dai, and, on the other hand, that the Khmer people would soon resignedly let Cambodia fall under U.S. imperialist and neocolonialist enslavement and be used by it as a new base for its aggression against neighboring peoples and for the consolidation of the Yankee empire in Southeast Asia. Nixon and the CIA, who commanded from afar the 18 March 1970 putsch, have received nothing in return for their pains.

The united front of the three Indochinese peoples was formed on 25 April 1970, and immediately afterwards the common Asian front of anti-U.S. imperialist struggle was constituted, in which the People's Republic of China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea joined the Khmer, Lao, and Vietnamese peoples. With China as their vast, reliable, and extremely powerful rear, the three Indochinese peoples have inflicted upon the enemy--the U.S. imperialists, their lackeys, and sublackeys--resounding and continuous defeats on the three battlegrounds of Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos. These defeats show the world that Nixon and the United States of America--though claiming to be the greatest military and economic power in the world--are doomed to inevitable and total defeat in Indochina.

In Cambodia, in (?!1) months of struggle, our glorious people and their heroic national liberation armed forces have succeeded in liberating seven-tenths of the national territory with a population of more than 4 million, establishing people's power therein by applying the NUFK political program to the great benefit of the people in the liberated areas, and also isolating and tracking down the treacherous, piratic Lon Nol puppet clique and its U.S. bosses in Phnom Penh--their last lair.

Prior to 18 March 1970, Khmer patriots living in national unity applied a very correct policy of independence, neutrality, and progress by relying on our own strength and national resources. Since 18 March, the Lon Nol traitors have set forth a completely different policy which, they affirmed, would make Cambodia more peaceful, independent, richer, happier, and more developed than under Sihanouk. The result of this radical change of policy fostered by Lon Nol, Sirik Matak, Son Ngoc Thanh, In Tam, Cheng Heng, and consorts is conclusive in the sense that within 12 months the nation's achievements, acquired in 17 years of independence, have been destroyed by 70 percent, while no new achievements have been scored by the Lon Nol clique.

In the past, Cambodia exported rubber, tires, timber, plywood, rice, corn, other cereals, fish, and other agricultural and industrial products. Today the part of Cambodian which is not yet liberated must import everything. According to the latest dispatches of U.S. press agencies, the riel has lost 70 percent of its February 1970 value, the price of rice and other daily consumer goods having increased by 200 to 300 percent, as admitted by Western observers in Phnom Penh. All this has happened despite the injection of 255 million U.S. dollars into the treasury of the antipopular, antinational, and anticonstitutional republic of Lon Nol.

This republic claims to have one of the most (?powerful) armies in the world from the viewpoint of numerical strength. However, in each confrontation this army has been crushed and disintegrated by the regular army, regional forces, and militia units of the patriotic Khmer people. Due to the so-called national salvation policy of the Lon Nol clique, the part of Cambodia which has not yet been liberated has been turned into the most devastated, poorest, most backward, most unhappy, and the most scorned new-type colony of the United States. This misfortune and humiliation, which are unprecedented in Kampuchea's history of nearly 2,000 years and for which the bestial Lon Nol gang must assume full responsibility, have opened the eyes of part of the youth, national elite, and militarymen who at first allowed themselves to be fooled by the propaganda of the 18 March 1970 putsch plotters.

Of these compatriots deceived by the Lon Nol clique, many are now rising to struggle actively in various ways against the odious regime and intolerable dictatorship of the traitors. A number of them pursue this struggle by joining NUFK in the liberated areas while others struggle very courageously even in Phnom Penh, or other cities or places still occupied by the enemy. Others are waiting for the first opportunity to join NUFK and RGNUC in the liberated areas.

In the liberated areas, NUFK and RGNUC under the leadership of Mr Khieu Samphan have worked magnificently for the fatherland and people with the full, enthusiastic, and unanimous support of the people. Despite the war genuine democracy, social justice, and astounding economic, cultural, and social progress have been realized. The members of NUFK and RGNUC responsible for external affairs have made similar efforts in the political field and on the international diplomatic stage to serve our fatherland and people and to insure the success of their just cause among the world's people.

These people, including the U.S. people, support us with determination and enthusiasm. About 30 sovereign countries--socialist, neutralist, progressive, and anti-imperialist--as well as national liberation movements and international organizations, have officially recognized RGNUC. NUFK is now officially recognized and supported by all socialist, nonaligned, and anti-imperialist countries and leftist anti-imperialist parties in capitalist countries. The prestige of NUFK and RGNUC--that is, of the Khmer people and independent and nonaligned Cambodia struggling against U.S. imperialism--is increasing continuously on the international stage, while the prestige of the so-called republic of Lon Nol is nonexistent. This fake republic has no future because it must inevitably die out, along with U.S. imperialism, in Indochina.

The aggression launched by Nixon's armed forces against our country in May 1970, and against Laos early in this year is nothing but a shameful admission of the bitter, irreversible failure of Nixon's sinister Vietnamization program.

Our liberation war may last a few more years in view of the unequalled perfidy and the material and financial resources of the U.S. enemy. But no one in the world, no one in Cambodia, and nobody in the United States doubts our victory--that of the three Indochinese peoples, Khmer Vietnamese, and Lao--who will not fail to completely chase the U.S. imperialists and their vile mercenaries from our three countries so that they may never return.

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I take this opportunity to convey my deep, very affectionate, admiring, and grateful thoughts to our glorious and heroic popular combatants, to their admirable leaders, and especially to Their Excellencies Khieu Samphan, Hu Nim, and Hou Yuon; to other gentlemen and ladies members of RGNUC; to military and civilian cadres of NUFK; to all religious and lay members of NUFK; and to our compatriots who are members of the resistance or loyalists living in areas still to be liberated.

Long live Cambodia. Long live the Khmer people. Long live NUFK.