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IV. SIHANOUK'S SECRETARIAT DENIES
HIS TROOPS ARE "VIET CONG"

[Editor's Note: Underlined as in the communique]

[Peking NCNA International Service in English, 1603 GMT,
24 September 1970]

The Private Secretariat of the Head of State of Cambodia in a communique issued on September 15, sternly denounced the reactionary Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique for its shameful lies about the so-called "rallying of seven million Khmers" and for branding members of the Cambodian National Liberation Army as "Viet Cong". The communique reads in full as follows:

The Lon Nol-Sirik Matak regime which usurped constitutional power in Phnom Penh, has never ceased yelling to the world that there are no Khmer citizens in Cambodia fighting against it and its master U.S. imperialism and against the expeditionary forces of the Saigon generals, Thieu and Ky.

This traitorous regime shamelessly brands the resisting Khmers, members of the N. U. F. K. and its People's National Liberation Army, as "Viet Cong and North Vietnamese invaders" and even as "Pathet Lao"

But, "Western" reporters, Americans and Frenchmen, who are not suspected as "pro-Communists" and have recently been in the liberated zones (under the N. U. F. K.) provide the whole world with objective and very honest reports. According to these reports, the Khmer people's resistance to the Lon Nol regime and U.S. imperialism actually exists in Cambodia and the N. U. F. K. actually has a People's National Liberation Army and a people's administration in Cambodia, and Samdech Norodom Sihanouk still enjoys active support even in the interior of Cambodia from numerous supporters who have gone so far as to take up arms to defend the honour of "their Prince" flouted by the Phnom Penh traitors.

In this aspect, the reports written by the American Richard Dudman (of Saint-Louis Post Dispatch) and the Frenchman Xavier Baron (of AFP) are most eloquent and edifying.

We have already reprinted these reports in previous communiques.

Today we have the honour of citing other reports which are no less important and which unmask indirectly and forcefully the shameful lies of Lon Nol, Cheng Heng and their like about the so-called "rallying of seven million Khmers" round their anti-national, detestable and unjustifiable cause.

The new reports in question are provided by a Frenchman Mr. Alain Clement of the O. R. T. F. and by a French young lady Miss Lydie Nicaise of "France-Soir". Here they are.

Alain Clement (in his statement published in the French press on August 24, 1970) said: "We were indeed prisoners of the Cambodian guerrillas of Prince Sihanouk and not of the North Vietnamese or the South Vietnamese. They have treated us very well from beginning to end. Their attitude has been very friendly...

"..... Although he (Xavier Baron) suffers from a heart disease, his health remains good, because the Cambodian guerrillas provided him with the medicines he needed .

"..... They treated me like a brother... I did not have the impression of being a prisoner at all, but rather that of being an international journalist carrying on his work....

"My guards have always been friendly to me. I didn't talk much with them, because they only spoke Cambodia."

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Lydie Nicaise (in France-Soir issued at the end of August and the beginning of September 1970) wrote:

".... Their looks leave me no doubt whatsoever. The badges of the guerrillas of Sihanouk....

".... The cycle driver speaks in Cambodian. He asks them to let us pass....

".... A very young woman serves us a plate of rice with some vegetables. I learned later that she is a Cambodian and that her husband was killed, three weeks ago, in the same bombing which has injured the Dutch student Johannes Duynisveld in the thigh. She then joined the liberation forces and lives the life of a soldier....

".... A little later, a Thmer Krom (from South Cambodia) arrived. He was formerly a soldier in the French Army and speaks French and Vietnamese very well. He lets us know that we might be released soon....

".... These youngsters, most of whom are between 20 and 26 years old, are mostly Cambodians; some of them are Vietnamese....

"In order to understand better the presence of Vietnamese in the Cambodian liberation forces, (the N.U.F.K. of Sihanouk), it is sufficient to know that 600,000 Vietnamese have taken refuge in Cambodia for several generations. Some of them have never been in Viet-Nam. Besides, the massacres unleashed in May against the Vietnamese population made them join in the Sihanouk camp...."

".... Among the guerrillas who never quitted us, there is the "pedalo"; 26 years old, former cycle driver... then comes the "pedagogue", we called him so because of his constant desire to teach us the Cambodian language, a former peasant, 20 years old. The "mecano", as his name indicates, was a mechanic before the war. He is a typical Khmer, a living image of the frescos of Angkor. He is 20 years old....

".... In the afternoon, some Thai and American planes flew over the house for a long time, and machine-gunned the neighbourhood....

".... I just received information which proves that American and South Vietnamese planes have machine-gunned the Angkor Park.

"The temples are not menaced by the guerrillas of Sihanouk as it is claimed in Phnom Penh, but by the opposite forces...."

".... A representative of the N.U.F.K. (the pro-Sihanouk Cambodian liberation front) came to see Alain Clement....

".... A new fighter arrived. He is a Cambodian high school student of 16 years old studying in the high school of Siemreap. It is his parents who advised him to join the guerrillas.

".... In the evening, the peasants and soldiers again gathered round the transistor to listen to Radio Peking. During three quarters of an hour, Sihanouk called on them to wage struggle. All listened piously to their leader and the women had to stop thrashing the rice in order not to make any noise.

".... That night a peasant woman brought them a big basin of rice cake made with palm sugar....

".... Four deserters came from Siemreap. They were questioned for a long time.

--- Why have you left the army of Lon Nol? We asked them.

--- Because he will lose the war.

".... The N.U.F.K. representative who came to see Alain several days ago passed through here. His attitude to us is very friendly.

".... The ranks of guerrillas grow. Three new fighters arrived yesterday and half a score came today.

".... They have taken the stand more for reasons of affection than of ideology. The majority fight for Sihanouk.

".... In front of us are four men. They are the representatives of the National United Front of Yampuchea, the pro-Sihanouk N.U.F.K. for the province of Siemreap.

".... The guerrillas organize themselves gradually.... It is an army of the people. I have never seen an officer wearing an insignia of the lowest rank. (As received--Ed) The relations between soldiers and officers are based on the principle of equality.

".... They told us of their will to fight to the end. After having secured most of the countryside, they will take the urban centres and create political instability in Phnom Penh. The people offer them help.

"It is the people who feed us, protect us, and shield us when we move from one place to another. The peasants safeguard the security of the region. They come very quickly to inform us about the enemy positions.

".... There is a constant desire to integrate the military men with the people. The essential principle is to make the soldier live like the poor peasant. I often notice this. In addition to fighting, the soldiers help the people to transplant rice or do other work. The family idea is prevailing everywhere. The respect for the old is as sacred as the respect for the monks. To win their favour is a constant concern of the Sihanoukites One should say that the influence of the Buddhist monks among the people remains to be considerable.

".... We have further discussion with our hosts who explained to us this time how in the four provinces entirely controlled by their troops, a complete administrative system was established.

"No matter it is a province, a district, a village or a hamlet, an administrative committee has been elected everywhere. The candidates are chosen and nominated by the population. The vote is held in public, through the show of hand and decided by an absolute majority.

"Of course, we talk about the fighting, notably the American and South Vietnamese bombardment of French rubber plantation.

"They said: The Front advocates cooperation with foreign friends. We wish that the French would come back to the plantations. We are ready to ensure their security."

"We leave tomorrow... All our belongings are officially returned to us before the camera of our colleagues of the N. U. F. K....

".... Sitting on the luggage-rack of a bicycle of a guerrilla fighter, we advance in the direction of Angkor-Vat.

".... 2,000 peasants, taking refuge from nearby villages, make the temple come to life again more than 800 years after its construction by Suryavarman II. As to military occupation, there is no such thing."

In view of these reports, any commentary would be unnecessary.

Please allow us to say only one thing that it is futile for Lon Nol, Sirik Matak and their like to regard their desire as realities.

Their desire is to have the Khmer people support them and help them keep Cambodia under the yoke of their rotten dictatorial regime and of neo-colonialism of their master, the Americans. Their other desire is to dispose our youth at their will to serve as "cannon-fodder" for U.S. imperialism without whom they have nothing.

But neither the people nor the patriotic Khmer youth will fall into their arch-criminal trap.

The reality is that the people and the patriotic Khmer youth have already taken in their own hands the destiny of the nation and the country, two thirds of which are already liberated.

The huge military, financial, material and economic aid from Nixon to the Lon Nol regime can perhaps prolong the war in Cambodia, but cannot in the long run prevent the N. U. F. K. and its people's army from completely liberating the motherland and ridding the national soil forever of the American imperialists and their vile Phnom Penh, Saigon and Bangkok lackeys.