

INDOCHINA

SIHANOUK DENIES NIXON STATEMENT ON CAMBODIAN BOMBING

Moscow TASS in English 2100 GMT 22 Aug 73 L

[Text] Ottawa August 22 TASS--Chairman of the National Unity Front of Cambodia and Head of State Prince Norodom Sihanouk has made a statement in Peking. It was made in the spirit of polemics against things that U.S. President Nixon said about the secret American bombings of Cambodia in 1969. In a speech he delivered in New Orleans, Nixon said the Cambodian Government had not objected to the raids. The U.S. President said that, at the height of the bombings, Prince Sihanouk, who was leader of the Cambodian Government, had invited him personally and most warmly to pay an official visit to the Cambodian capital. The airstrikes had been going on for a long time when the invitation was extended, so it is pretty clear what the prince thought of the United States' actions.

As the correspondent of the Canadian GLOBE AND MAIL reported from Peking, Prince Sihanouk denied outright that he had tacitly agreed to the American bombings of Cambodia when he was head of the Cambodian Government. The way he put it, he had many times protested against the bombings in official messages to the U.S. Embassy in Cambodia and in a white book, that included the list of bombed targets and pictures showing the damage done by the bombs. The prince admitted that he had invited President Nixon to visit Cambodia in the period of the bombings, but declared this did not signify his tacit agreement with the raids. He said he had really invited the President to come for an official visit to improve deteriorating relations with the United States, but he had protested against the bombings all the time. Norodom Sihanouk also said he had been against American interference in Cambodia in any form whatsoever.

FURTHER REPORTAGE ON FIGHTING IN CAMBODIA

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[Text] Paris August 22 TASS--The patriotic forces of Cambodia are continuing their active military actions. On the nearest approaches to Phnom Penh, the patriots, according to reports that reached here, attacked with the support of artillery a military base of Phnom Penh troops 16 kilometres north of the capital. Enemy positions 11 kilometres south of Phnom Penh were also attacked.

Heavy fighting started in the suburbs of the towns of Kampong Thom and Kampong Speu. The liberation forces tightly encircled the towns. In spite of continued airlifting of reinforcements to garrisons of these towns, all attempts of the Phnom Penh troops to break out of the encirclement have failed.

Fighting on Highway Number 30, firmly held by the patriots, has been going on for the sixth day. The enemy, which is trying to capture this major highway, is sustaining heavy losses.

According to reports of news agencies, the Phnom Penh administration sent a letter to the U.S. Congress, requesting continued American military and economic aid.

Hanoi August 22 TASS--The Foreign Ministry of the Republic of South Vietnam has issued a statement in which the termination of American bombings is regarded as a major victory of the liberation forces, of the policy of the National United Front of Cambodia.

The statement, meanwhile, points out that the United States continues its indirect involvement in military actions, by supplying weapons, materiel and giving financial assistance to the Phnom Penh administration.

The Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam, the statement stresses, resolutely demands an end to any American support of the Phnom Penh regime, unconditional respect for the national rights of the Cambodian people and non-interference into its internal affairs.

END OF CAMBODIA BOMBING DOES NOT GUARANTEE PEACE

Moscow in Italian to Italy 1730 GMT 20 Aug 73 L

[Igor Penchenko commentary]

[Text] Clear evidence has been furnished time and time again this year that a consistent and tenacious struggle by the peoples against imperialist interference in the internal affairs of other countries brings fresh results. Following the end of armed intervention in Vietnam and in Laos U.S. militarists were also compelled to end the air war in Cambodia. As envisaged by the law approved by the two houses of the U.S. Congress under the pressure of public opinion, the U.S. military command announced this cessation on 15 August.

The collapse of aggression in that Indochinese country is obvious. As London's THE TIMES remarked, if one needed a lesson to show that the U.S. potential could not hope to establish political conditions, the lesson was furnished by Cambodia.

Objectively speaking the end of the U.S. air war against Cambodia creates conditions to completely eliminate the hotbeds of war in Indochina. However, for the time being these are conditions whose implementation is hindered by concrete circumstances and forces. In South Vietnam there is the Saigon regime which does not want to fulfill the commitments in accordance with the Paris Agreement on Ending the War and Establishing Peace in Vietnam. In Cambodia there are forces of internal reaction which hope to curb national liberation protests by invoking foreign aid.

It must be said that these hopes are not groundless. No attempt has been made in Washington to conceal that the government has serious reservations about the decision announced on 15 August.

The United States intends to continue rendering large-scale economic and military aid to the Cambodian regime in Phnom Penh. The Pentagon will maintain its air force establishment in Thailand unchanged. The Pentagon is systematically despatching large-scale consignments of arms and ammunition to Phnom Penh. The U.S. military (?command) has warned that U.S. reconnaissance flights over Cambodian territory with military aircraft escort would continue. In addition, the Saigon authorities are sending thousands of men, under the guise of volunteers of Cambodian origin, to the aid of the regime in Phnom Penh, and these men take part in military operations against the patriotic forces.

The RGNUC has described these actions as an attempt to bring about the Khmerization of the aggressive war against the people of this country. It has appealed to all friendly countries and peoples and to democratic organizations urging them to demand the complete, unconditional and final cessation of U.S. aggression and every U.S. interference in Cambodian internal affairs.