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VII. NORODOM SIHANOUK ISSUES 18TH MESSAGE TO KHMER NATION

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Samdech Norodom Sihanouk, Head of State of Cambodia and Chairman of the National United Front of Cambodia, made public here today his 18th message to the Khmer nation. Full text of the message reads as follows:

I present my very respectful homage to Her Majesty the Queen.

I present my profound respects to the Buddhist Clergy.

I present my affectionate salutations to the compatriots.

I know that at present the leading personages, functionaries intellectuals, military men, college students and pupils who are still under the dictatorial yoke of the traitors Lon Nol - Sirik Matak are living in the intense anxiety and almost in panic as they see that the "war" has reached Pochentong and Phnom Penh.

Fleeing from the war and its catastrophic consequences, the Frenchmen and Khmers who recently left Cambodia to settle in France and Hong Kong have, one after another, informed me of the confusion, exasperation and despair of the Khmers in different walks of life who are subjected to the feudal authority of the phoney Lon Nol - Sirik Matak - Cheng Heng "Republic".

Dear compatriots, with regard to this, please allow me to present to you some passages of a letter I have just received. Its writer is a Frenchman who lived in our country for many years. This Frenchman is not a "leftist". On the contrary, he is pro-American and not long ago he still collaborated (word indistinct) the Lon Nolites, writing in European journals articles which foretold that the putsch of March 18, 1970, would allow Lon Nol to make Cambodia more peaceful and prosperous than under Sihanouk. He added that under Sihanouk the Khmers felt humiliated owing to his "feeble" policy toward the VIEOP SE Communists (sic) and that under Lon Nol this humiliation would be completely effaced.

Today this Frenchman is no longer in Cambodia. He left Phnom Penh where insecurity has asserted itself and which, from now on, will never escape the terrible consequences of the war, for which only Lon Nol's policy of (word indistinct) national "salvation", i.e., treason, is responsible.

My compatriots under the authority of Lon Nol, please give your attention to the following admission of a Frenchman who is a friend of the Americans and the Phnom Penh fascists:

"If I may allow myself to speak plainly," he writes in the letter, "the situation in the so-called 'government controlled' zones is as follows: collapsing economy, anxiety apparent in all conversations and the impotence of the army... Most of the army men having little training and commanded badly from the higher level--this has increasingly become an established fact... The war will continue to be more and more sanguinary if you (Samdech) do not make sacrifice once again for your people... If you could come to a neutral country and let it be known that you remain at the service of your compatriots--just that and no more--I can assure you that great hopes will rise again in the entire Khmer country."

The significance of the passages of the letter which I have just told you lies in the admission of the present desperate situation in "the Cambodia of Lon Nol." This desperate situation is fully known by all foreign observers. Only Lon Nol and his propagandists affirm that the situation is "very favorable"! This gross lie evokes contempt abroad.

Dear compatriots,

Who after all has provoked this war in our country which brings indescribable sufferings? Is it Sihanouk? Is it the Lon Nol gang?

The Americans themselves have accused Lon Nol and his "gang" in particular of having provoked the war.

In my previous messages, I have given you numerous proofs. But since the Lon Nolites have continuously asserted that Sihanouk is responsible for your misfortunes, I present you again with the following testimony, more valid and incontestable, by the "concerned Asian scholars" from San Francisco (See their Bulletin -- Vol. 2, No. 4 -- Autumn 1970)

"From 1955 to 1969," the Bulletin said, "Sihanouk molded a neutralist policy for his country which showed remarkable sensitivity to the geopolitical realities of Cambodia's post Geneva position in Indo-China.. As late as February of this year, a visiting 'New York Times' correspondent could write that it was still safe to travel the roads by day and night, even near the Vietnamese border. A rare and happy fortune for an Indo-Chinese country... Most (of the Cambodian generals), like Lon Nol, were careerists and were the group in the country most harmed by the suspension of American aid in 1963... Yet it was just his continued obstinateness against forming any military alliance which could jeopardize

Cambodia's sovereignty that precipitated Sihanouk's fall... The fact that in the sixteen years since Geneva Sihanouk has steered his country clear of the Indo-Chinese vortex of war and subversion suggests he was a patriot. As long as he could keep Cambodia out of the Viet-Nam war, it looked at the end of 1969 as if Cambodia might wholly escape the military disasters of post-Geneva Indo-Chinese conflict. Lon Nol and his colleagues could not accept such a future for their country or their fellow citizens. Typical myopic opportunists of the order of Diem, Thieu, and Ky, they well comprehended the foibles of American militarism and anti-communism which could be put to service in their own drive for personal glory and power."

This judgment respects the criteria of justice and objectivity and forms a contrast with the intellectual dishonesty of Lon Nol's so-called "historians" -- Douc Rasy, Littaye Suon and Leng Sarin -- who do not hesitate to distort history and the realities of our country. These Lon-Nolite intellectuals are greatly despised by the intellectuals of other countries.

The day after the putsch, Lon Nol and his gang solemnly promised our nation that they would give Cambodia and its people more infinite peace, prosperity, independence, ~~liberty~~, happiness and dignity than those in the time of Sihanouk.

Logically, our clergy and others under the rule of Lon Nol, especially in Phnom Penh, should have the courage to demand that this arch-traitor fulfill his mythical promises, instead of allowing him to shift his responsibility--shift onto Sihanouk who has already been absent from the country for nearly one year, all the responsibility for the non-fulfillment of the above promises.

According to the Lon-Nolites, they have the support of seven (which became eight some weeks after the putsch) million Khmers and not a single one of them thinks of Sihanouk who "has been completely forgotten." If this is really so, why do the same Lon-Nolites make speeches, write articles and revile ceaselessly on their radio, in their press and on all other occasions against Sihanouk? Why are they so dead set against him? Why do they make every effort to discredit him with the most odious calumnies and unjust accusations? If the Khmer people no longer think of him and if not a single one of them takes any interest in him, why are they (the Lon-Nolites--Editor's note) so afraid of Sihanouk's messages to the Khmer nation and why do they sentence Khmer citizens, men and women, who listen to radio Peking, to five and even 20 years' imprisonment?

The Lon Nol gang imagines naively that with Sihanouk expelled from the country, it can sell with impunity the country to U.S. imperialism and fill their pockets with Nixon's dollars without trouble.

Today, the low-down Lon-Nolites have doubtlessly become multi-millionaires in terms of dollars while the Khmer nation, on the contrary, has been plunged into the greatest catastrophe, the greatest misery, the most terrible sufferings and the most sanguinary adventure known in its history of nearly two thousand years.

Therefore, reality has shown them that to sell the country is not something as "simple" as they have imagined.

Some persons, who are their friends, wish that Sihanouk could still save these Lon-Nolites from "shipwreck" and death. But what can I do for these traitors whose "tribunal" condemned me "to death" while depriving me of my Khmer nationality? How can Sihanouk "sacrifice himself once again" now that the Phnom Penh traitors deny to the N.U.F.C. the right to participate in the search for a peaceful solution in Cambodia?

The Lon-Nolites "are reaping" today what they have "sown."

Our national religion, Buddhism, teaches us that one should "cultivate" a sense of gratitude towards all those who have done some good to us that ingratitude is one of the greatest faults that one should avoid to commit.

The Lon-Nolites owe all to the Monarchy--honor, fortune, authority, power, advantages and privileges of all kinds. But when they have climbed to the peak of power and strength, they find nothing better than strangling the throne.

If their "republic" were free, democratic, pro-popular, patriotic and anti-imperialist, nothing could be said against it. But the "republic" in Phnom Penh is a sham "republic", an anti-constitutional, anti-national, anti-people and pro-imperialist "republic."

Therefore, it is not astonishing that it is much cursed. As the Buddhist "Karma" Law puts it, evil inevitably incurs misfortune.

Misfortune was already augured by a very bad omen on the morning of October 9, 1970, the day of the "proclamation of the republic" of Lon Nol-Sin Satak.

On that day, the attention of foreign diplomats in Peking was drawn to the following news reported by French, British and American news agencies. For example, the report of U.P.I. said: "After the formal declaration of the republic, 101 cannon rounds were to be fired in honor of the occasion. But after the 13th round, a misfire occurred, wounding at least three Cambodian artillerymen. The long-awaited salvo was not completed." According to a popular belief rather wide-spread in our country as in many other countries, Fridays 13 (as received--Ed) are generally the augur of big disasters.

Lon Nol and Sirik Matak chose "Friday" to "inaugurate" their "republic" and their artillerymen stopped at the 13th round to "mark" this "Friday." Therefore, the "republic" of these traitors may well be called "the Republic of Friday-13 rounds." This explains the "black" series of uninterrupted and ever-increasing defeats and misfortunes of the Lon-Nolites.

The most important journal of our great friend Algeria, a glorious country which liberated itself from colonialism through a heroic armed struggle, also spoke of the "very bad omen" for the sham "republic" of Lon Nol and Sirik Matak on October 12, 1970.

"El Moudjahid" wrote: "A salvo of 101 cannon rounds which should be fired from a gun-boat of the Tonle Sap River in honor of the proclamation of the 'republic in Cambodia stopped after 13 rounds. A live shell which exploded accidentally injured five persons. What a terrible bad omen for the 'republic of Lon Nol!"

On October 9, the Lon-Nolites chanted: "Sons and daughters of the motherland, march forward. The glorious day has come."

As regards "glorious," the Cambodia of Lon Nol knows nothing but utter humiliations: it is "up to the neck" in enslavement to U.S. imperialism and the Saigonese of the Thieu-Ky gang, while Lon Nol's army has witnessed over one hundred of its battalions disbanded under the blows of the people's National Liberation Armed Forces and its soldiers killed in the thousands.

Most certainly, the despicable leaders of Phnom Penh, this handful of most-corrupt elements, whose impudent and unrestrained corruption has done much harm to Sangkum (?Reastr Niyum) and the Monarchy, and who have shamelessly attributed to me all their "sins of Israel", are still safe and sound, indulging themselves in "the delicacies of Capua." But some day it will be their "turn" to repay the debts they owe to our people.

They take Hitler's nazis and Mussolini's fascists as their "gurus" and "models." In 1940 and 1941, Hitler and Mussolini thought that they could win the war and that their respective empires would last "a thousand years." They were swept away in a few years. The most corrupt reactionaries of Phnom Penh, Lon Nol - Sirik Matak - Cheng Heng - Trinh Hoanh - In Tam, are doomed to the same ignominious end as Hitler and Mussolini. Like their "gurus", these enemies of the people cannot live out two or three or at most four years of war.

Our clergymen and compatriots in Phnom Penh should be convinced that the all-evil "republic" of Lon Nol will bring them nothing but misery, destruction and death.

Our Buddhist monks, functionaries, militarymen, high personages, intellectuals, students and youth in Phnom Penh, who desire a rapid restoration of peace in independence and neutrality to our country, should dare to demand that Lon Nol and his gang quit the state power which they have usurped sheerly by criminal means. Let these arch-traitors and arch criminals get out of Cambodia quickly to go to live at the places of their imperialist masters or elsewhere. It is possible for those personages who did not take part in the March 18, 1970 putsch and are faithful to the ideals of independence and neutrality to come into contact with our N.U.F.C. and R.G.N.U.C. for fraternal cooperation so that the ship "Kampuchea" may sail to the yonder shore of peace, national independence and neutrality in territorial integrity, "as in the time of Sihanouk."

This is, for our Buddhist clergymen and our nation, the only way to the highest aim they want to attain.

But if our monks, functionaries, militarymen, high personages, intellectuals and youth now living under the rule of the Lon-Nolite fascists dare not or cannot demand their dismissal, they can foresee that the war will yet last for years at full length during which this atrocious war will be intensified in all its horrors. All this is the fault of U.S. imperialism, which has no right whatsoever to neocolonize our Indo-Chinese countries and oppress our Khmer, Vietnamese and Lao peoples.

The Indo-Chinese war, and consequently the war in our country Cambodia, will come to an end when the U.S. imperialists withdraw all non-Indo-Chinese armed forces from Indo-China and when the Phnom Penh, Saigon and Vientiane traitors are stopped from doing evil by the Khmer, Vietnamese, and Lao people's patriotic forces.

Let my compatriots, especially those in Phnom Penh, be certain that the armed forces of our three peoples, Khmer, Vietnamese, and Lao, have now and always, the courage, tenacity, manpower, armaments, equipment and means required to completely defeat the aggressor army of U.S. imperialism and completely wipe out the regimes of Thieu and Ky, Lon Nol and Sirik Matak, and other traitors. Even if they have to endure sufferings for several more years, our three Indo-Chinese peoples will carry on a resolute struggle until the imperialist enemy, their "allies", their valets and sub-valets are completely defeated.

Long live the Khmer people!

Long live the friendship, militant solidarity and fraternal unity of the Khmer, Vietnamese and Lao people!