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THE CAMBODIAN COUP D'ETAT: A NEW ACT OF AGGRESSION BY THE U.S. IMPERIALISTS

[Article by Binh Luan; Hanoi, Hoc Tap, Vietnamese, No 3, March 1970, pp 84-87]

Under CIA direction, on 18 March 1970 the pro-U.S. rightist clique in the Cambodian ruling circles staged a coup d'etat, announced the "dismissal" of Cambodian Chief of State Norodom Sihanouk, took over the entire state power in Cambodia, and abandoned the policy of independence, peace, and neutrality as laid down by Chief of State Norodom Sihanouk, thus driving Cambodia into U.S. hands.

Despite the fact that the U.S. imperialists pretended not to be involved in the Cambodian coup, everyone knows that the U.S. imperialists were its organizers. The French bourgeois paper Paris Jour pointed out that "this is a pro-U.S. coup which was engineered in accordance with the CIA plan." With the 18 March Cambodian coup, the U.S. imperialists committed a new crime, following the series of crimes they have committed against the independence of other peoples the world over.

The 18 March coup was an act of brazen aggression against Cambodia by the U.S. imperialists.

During the past 15 years, the U.S. imperialists have continually engaged in interventionist and aggressive activities against Cambodia. Immediately after the signing of the 1954 Geneva Accords on Indochina, the U.S. imperialists set up the aggressive SEATO and deliberately put Cambodia, as well as Laos and South Vietnam, under its protection. The U.S. imperialists and their lackeys have continually resorted to provocations, pressure, and attacks from without together with sabotage, assassinations, and subversive activities within the country to force Cambodia to join the U.S. camp. The U.S. imperialists have supported and commanded the Khmer Serei to destroy the security of Cambodia. They have encouraged their lackeys in Saigon and Bangkok to violate the Cambodian borders. They have used planes to drop bombs, to strafe, and to spray poisonous chemicals on Cambodian villages and plantations. But the unsubmissive Cambodian people have resolutely struggled against the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys

to safeguard their national independence. Under Chief of State Norodom Sihanouk's leadership, the Cambodian Kingdom has steadfastly pursued its foreign policy of positive neutrality and nonalignment, thus enabling Cambodia to live in independence and peace for 15 years.

The fact that Cambodia has followed the path of independence, peace, and neutrality against the U.S. imperialists' will has enraged the United States. Thus, the U.S. imperialists have resorted to every means to force Cambodia to abandon its path of independence, peace, and neutrality, to destroy Cambodian independence, to woo Cambodia into the U.S. camp. In this way they have tried to turn Cambodia into a neocolony and U.S. military base and to use Cambodia as a springboard for pursuing and prolonging its aggressive war in Vietnam and Laos.

The great victories of the anti-U.S., national salvation resistance of the Vietnamese people -- especially the great victories in South Vietnam -- along with the victories of the liberation war of the Laotian people -- especially the recent great victory in the Plaine des Jarres-Xieng Khouang area -- have driven the U.S. imperialists into a critical, stalemated situation. But refusing to admit defeat, the U.S. imperialists have recklessly engineered the Cambodian coup, hoping to extricate themselves from their stalemate in Vietnam and Laos. The U.S.-engineered coup in Cambodia lies within the framework of the U.S. imperialists' aggressive plan against Indochina. It is aimed at serving their "Vietnamization" scheme which is encountering serious difficulties in South Vietnam. It is part of the U.S. imperialists' overall aggressive scheme against Asia, of their scheme "to use Asians to fight Asians," and of Nixon's so-called Asian doctrine. By striving to exert pressure and by pouring out U.S. dollars for bribes, the U.S. imperialists have succeeded in attracting to their side the rightist faction among the Cambodian ruling circles in order to oppose the Vietnamese people's anti-U.S., national salvation resistance, the Lao people's liberation war, Cambodia's independence and neutrality, and the Cambodian people. The coupists have eliminated all freedom and democratic rights, implementing a dictatorial, fascist policy and severely repressing the Cambodians.

The 18 March coup d'etat has revealed a split within the Cambodian ruling circles. Fearing the Cambodian people's revolutionary movement and the victories of the Vietnamese and Laotian revolutions and because of the U.S. imperialists' pressure and bribery, the rightist faction -- a part of the Cambodian ruling circle -- headed by Lon Nol and Sirik Matak, has resigned itself to serving as a U.S. imperialist lackey; it betrays Cambodia's national independence, and opposes Cambodians and other Indochinese peoples. To divert public opinion, the instigators of the 18 March coup have conducted an anti-Vietnamese campaign, using brigands to ransack the DRV and RSVN embassies in Cambodia and sowing division and national hatred for the Vietnamese among the Cambodian people in an attempt to conceal their country-selling acts.

The U.S. imperialists and their lackeys have leaped with joy for having succeeded in their coup in a relatively easy manner. But, being shortsighted and stupid, they cannot foresee the untold difficulties the coup will bring upon them.

The 18 March coup erupted when the situation was unfavorable for its engineers and in a country where the people were already trained in the revolutionary struggle against the imperialists and their henchmen. Shoulder to shoulder with the Vietnamese and Laotians, the Cambodians tenaciously and bravely fought against French imperialism to regain independence and freedom. For 15 years, the Cambodians have been living in independence and peace. They understand well that their independence and peace were brought about by the three Indochinese peoples' successful anti-French resistance and cannot be separated from the anti-imperialist struggle of the two brotherly peoples of Vietnam and Laos. They well understand that over the past 15 years, the U.S. imperialists -- their very dangerous enemy -- have plotted to destroy their national independence.

The 18 March coup erupted in a country where the people clearly realize the benefits of the path of independence, peace, and neutrality. Over the past 15 years, by following this path, Cambodia has enjoyed political independence, genuine peace, and aid from socialist countries while its position has risen in the international arena.

The 18 March coup erupted in a country adjacent to two neighboring countries which are fighting and triumphing over the U.S. imperialists, who -- because of their heavy setbacks -- have been gradually forced to retreat by Vietnamizing their aggressive war.

The 18 March coup erupted at a time when, throughout the world, the powerful socialist camp was sympathizing with and supporting Cambodia's independent, peaceful, and neutral policy and assisting the Cambodians in their struggle against the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen to safeguard their national independence.

Erupting under these conditions, the coup could not bring the results which the coupists expected. Conversely, it has brought unforeseen consequences.

The 18 March coup has brought important changes in the Cambodian situation. The revolutionary and counterrevolutionary forces have been reorganized. There have been important changes in the enemy ranks and among the allies of the Cambodian revolutionary people. While the rightist group within the Cambodian ruling circle -- following the example set by the Khmer Serei -- is serving as a lackey of the U.S. imperialists, those within this circle who have maintained an independent, peaceful, and neutralist policy have definitively sided with the people in the struggle against the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen. Cambodia's national united front against U.S. imperialism and its henchmen has been expanded

with the participation of new forces. The patriotic Cambodians are holding aloft their national flag, with a determination to struggle against U.S. imperialism and its henchmen in order to make Cambodia a genuinely independent, peaceful, and neutral country.

The anti-U.S., national salvation struggle of the revolutionary Cambodian people has fundamental and lasting advantages. Present difficulties are only temporary. The revolutionary Cambodian people will surely overcome these difficulties and advance firmly.

The U.S. imperialists are very cruel and cunning. But in Indochina, they are being weakened and defeated. Their subversive activities in Cambodia are being condemned by the world. The U.S. imperialists and their lackeys are being isolated. Clearly seeing the cruel face of the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys, the Cambodian people are uniting in the struggle to oppose them. Their just cause enjoys the sympathy and support of socialist countries, nationalist countries, and all peace-and-justice-loving people.

The Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique has betrayed the Khmer people's supreme interests, sabotaged the age-old friendship and militant solidarity of the Indochinese people, and seriously threatened peace and security in this area. On 23 March 1970, in a solemn statement, Samdech Norodom Sihanouk in his capacity as legal chief of state of the Cambodian Kingdom announced the dissolution of General Lon Nol's government, the National Assembly, and the Council of the Kingdom, accusing them of treason. Samdech Norodom Sihanouk has expressed his firm determination to protect the supreme and enduring interests of the Cambodian fatherland and has called on the Cambodian people to unite within the United National Front of Cambodia, unite with the Vietnamese people, the Laotian people, and other people's anti-imperialist forces in fraternal countries, and resolutely take up weapons and struggle against the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys.

The Vietnamese people have had friendly relations with the fraternal Cambodian people for generations. In the struggle against U.S. imperialism, the peoples of our two countries will further strengthen our solidarity and mutual support. Our people are grateful to the Cambodian people for their active support of our anti-U.S., national salvation struggle. We respect Cambodia's independence, sovereignty, neutrality, and territorial integrity within its present borders. We protect, consolidate, and strengthen the friendship and relations of good neighbors between both countries. We support the Cambodian people's struggle against the U.S. imperialists and the pro-American rightist group that staged the 18 March coup.

In its 25 March statement, our government pointed out: "The DRV Government always supports Chief of State Norodom Sihanouk's policy, a policy of independence, peace, and neutrality for the Kingdom of Cambodia, and solidarity and friendship with the other Indochinese peoples struggling against aggressive U.S. imperialism. It considers this to be a clear-sighted

policy which insures the Khmer people's national interests and contributes positively to safeguarding peace in Indochina and Asia." The DRV Government declares its full support for Chief of State Samdech Norodom Sihanouk's five-point statement of 23 March and firmly supports the struggle waged by the Cambodians, under their Chief of State Norodom Sihanouk's leadership, against the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen and for the defense of their sacred national rights. The militant solidarity among the peoples of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos is an important factor for victory and a guarantee for the genuine independence and freedom of these countries to develop in their own way.

The U.S. imperialists are the enemy of the Indochinese peoples. They are prolonging the war of aggression against Vietnam, escalating the war in Laos, and carrying out subversive activities in Cambodia. Since the struggle of the peoples of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos against the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen is a just undertaking, it will surely succeed. The anti-U.S. struggle of the Indochinese peoples is now in an offensive position and has scored ever greater victories. In this position, the Cambodian people -- who possess a glorious history, a brilliant culture, a tradition of brave fighting, and ample experience in struggle -- will surely overcome all trials and continue to advance along the path of protecting their fatherland. Closely united in the Indochinese peoples' united front against aggressive U.S. imperialism, the peoples of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos are struggling resolutely and will surely win complete victory.

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