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TEXT OF PUNK MINISTER'S STATEMENT ON SIHANOUK TRIAL

Peking NCNA International Service in English 2335 GMT 23 Jul 70 B

[Text] Hanoi, July 23 (HSINHUA)--Khieu Samphan, minister of national defence, Hou Yuon, minister of interior, communal reforms and cooperatives, and Hu Nim, minister of information and propaganda, of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia, recently issued a statement strongly condemning the reactionary Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique for staging the so-called "trial in absentia" of Head of State Samdech Norodom Sihanouk, according to the VIET NAM NEWS AGENCY quoting the Information Bureau of the National United Front of Kampuchea.

The statement said that when the people have not yet settled accounts with the reactionary Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique for its traitorous criminal act of March 18 which is detrimental to the people, this clique committed on July 5 a new crime and went further down the traitorous road detrimental to the people. The clique staged a so-called "trial in absentia" of Samdech Norodom Sihanouk, head of state of Cambodia and chairman of the National United Front of Kampuchea, and "sentenced" him "to death."

This is an extremely insolent, odious and villainous act of the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique. By this farce of "trial in absentia" of Head of State Samdech Norodom Sihanouk, this clique hoped to threaten the patriotism of the Cambodian people and shake their fighting determination as well as to cover the traitorous features and bloody crimes of the Cambodian reactionaries.

The statement pointed out that since Cambodia won independence, peace and neutrality, the pro-American ultra-rightist clique headed by the fascist Lon Nol has always tried to push neutral Cambodia on to the side of the United States by all possible means.

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Militarily, they on the one hand frenziedly suppressed the patriotic struggle and movement in defence of Cambodia's genuine independence and neutrality and on the other did their utmost to collude with U.S. imperialism and serve its effort to stamp out the movements of fraternal countries for justice, independence and freedom. Politically, they formed cliques and set up their own factions at home and made every effort for their clique to usurp step by step the important departments of state organs. Externally, they colluded with, egged on, sheltered and backed up U.S. agents and professional subversive elements who had wormed their way into Cambodia. The reactionary Dap Chhoun and U.S. lackey Son Ngoc Thanh earned the vigorous support of the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique. Economically, they always racked their brains to oppose and undermine Cambodia's independent economic line. They held that Cambodian economy should be dependent to the United States and submit to the dictates of U.S. dollar. They lauded U.S. "aids" as the saviour of Cambodian economy. When the livelihood of the labouring people of all walks of life was daily worsening, they vied with one another to amass wealth at the cost of the blood, sweat and tears of the people.

The statement added that far from settling accounts for the treacherous crimes perpetrated by the reactionary Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique in the past, they have committed numerous crimes since March 18, 1970. Before March 18, 1970, the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique secretly colluded with the United States and camouflaged their collusion in various ways. Now they openly introduced the U.S. aggressor troops and the troops of U.S. lackey traitors Nguyen Van Thieu and Nguyen Cao Ky to invade our country so as to save themselves from ignominious doom. The reactionary "free Khmer" troops have now become the backbone and supporters of the Phnom Penh reactionary clique. The Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique praised and encouraged their soldiers to kill our people, loot their property, burn down their houses and destroy temples. American bombs have destroyed many of our villages, temples and scenic spots and ravaged our land. Many of our innocent people and genuine patriots have been massacred by the U.S. and Nguyen Van Thieu-Nguyen Cao Ky aggressor troops and the reactionary troops of the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique. We cannot enumerate the crimes they have committed and are now committing on our beloved land.

The statement said: The Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique cannot reverse truth and falsehood and change patriots into traitors. They and they alone are traitors to the country who must face trial by our people and history.

The statement said: We solemnly refute the Lon Nol clique's unlawful verdict against Samdech the Head of State and sternly warn them against their crimes committed against our people.

The statement concluded by calling on all the armed forces and people of Cambodia to close their ranks around the National United Front of Kampuchea with Head of State Samdech Norodom Sihanouk as the chairman, hold still higher the glorious militant banner of the National United Front, advance resolutely to overthrow the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak puppet regime and build an independent, peaceful, neutral, democratic and prosperous Cambodia.