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IV. 9 Oct 70

CAMBODIA

CAMB. FILE SUBJ.
DATE SUB-CAT. H 1
OCT 70

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY CHAIRMAN PROCLAIMS KHMER REPUBLIC

Phnom Penh Domestic Service in Cambodian 2350 GMT 8 Oct 70 D

[Proclamation of the Khmer Republic by National Assembly Chairman In Tam--live]

[Text] I hereby proclaim the Khmer Republic. Since antiquity, the Khmer nation has been one which has always been fond of peace. It founded a human community on the Sovanna Phum [golden territory] and lived under the administration of a handful of persons invested with royal and personal power [words indistinct]. This power was handed down from one person to another for many centuries until the reign of Prince Sihanouk. After ascending the throne, this king cared only for the crown to the detriment of the territory. In order to occupy the throne for a long time, he divided the people and officials by inciting mutual slander. After ascending the throne, he received a special title [words indistinct] since his birth. He used wordy statements to address his partisans, on the one hand, and the people, on the other, and used discrimination in order to make himself a beloved god to his people.

Since olden times, the Khmer people have been oppressed by the reactionary power of kings who invented the tradition that the people should respect the so-called 10 commandments of the king, which take the form of a scanty constitution composed of only 10 articles based on humanity and justice consistent with Buddhist principles. These 10 commandments are: 1--[Words indistinct] to solve the problem of a living standard for the people; 2--apply justice in the national society on the basis of legality, liberty, [words indistinct], and the people's happiness; 3--[passage indistinct] in Pali; 4--the duty to exercise honesty and justice; 5--the duty to display kindness and charity by word and deed; 6--the duty always to apply the 5 and 8 principles of Buddha; 7--abstention from harming others; 8--abstention from losing one's temper and interfering in the affairs of others or taking revenge on them; 9--the duty to display patience; and 10--abstention from disregarding and violating the law.

However, the history of the Khmer nation has shown us that if the kings had truly respected these 10 commandments [words indistinct] and had they felt ashamed of committing unscrupulous acts and refrained from these acts, it would have been possible to obey these commandments. But the kings did not respect these commandments because they did not [words indistinct] themselves. Therefore, the people were indignant and miserable because they were enslaved by the kings. Since they were unable to rid themselves of this slavery, they coined such words as "sort of foolish king" to mock persons who committed unscrupulous acts. Khmer history has also shown us that now and then the people took up arms to protest the kings' dictatorship, but each time they were ruthlessly repressed [words indistinct]. Like other people in the world, the Khmer people should have been able to enjoy freedom, equality, [words indistinct] and happiness. To escape the kings' rule, the Khmer people frequently resorted to peaceful means to insure law enforcement and to maintain their identity as peace-loving people. After World War II, the people of the world unanimously proclaimed human rights [words indistinct]. Human rights require that the people's will be considered the basis of state power [words indistinct] and have full freedom in elections.

In conformity with the above principles, a group of Khmer patriots ventured to draft a constitution which would limit the king's power and transfer some of his power to the people. This constitution was enacted in 1947, but its application was difficult until recently. The difficulty arose from the fact that Sihanouk, the last king of Cambodia, disregarded the 10 commandments. King Sihanouk was a great demagogue. He used tricks to keep himself in power. Whenever he gave the people something with his left hand, he withdrew it with his right hand, thus trampling on the constitution.

Anyone who dared to defend the constitution faced death, as was the case of National Assembly Chairman Ieu Koeus. Though a constitutional body with the duty of defending the constitution the National Assembly also fell victim of enslavement by the last king. Since the enactment of the constitution 23 years ago, 6 legislatures of the National Assembly succeeded one another. The first 3 legislatures were dissolved before expiration of their mandates.

Thus, the first legislature which was instituted on 21 January 1948 was dissolved on 17 September 1949, and National Assembly Chairman Ieu Koeus was subsequently assassinated. The second legislature which was inaugurated on 28 October 1951 was dissolved on 13 June 1953. The third legislature which opened on 1 September 1955 was dissolved on 8 June 1958. Only the fourth and fifth legislatures could fulfill their mandate since their members were chosen by King Sihanouk, who designated deputies for every constituency where there was no contest. The sixth legislature, that is, the present National Assembly, comprises 82 deputies who were honestly elected from among 915 candidates by the people's free will.

The sixth legislature of the National Assembly has done its best to serve the people loyally. It has overcome all obstacles to defend the people's rights and freedom. This led King Sihanouk to use all manner of threats and oppression. Sihanouk secretly eliminated 3 deputies. Several others were imprisoned. All deputies were forbidden by Sihanouk to participate in the independence festival and the National Congress meetings. Worse still, he recently used his dictatorial power to sell the territory to the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese to enable them to establish military bases, contrary to the neutral policy chosen by the Khmer people. The last crime of Sihanouk [words indistinct]. When the people voiced indignation at enslavement by foreign troops, Prince Sihanouk regarded his people throughout the country traitors, while he himself became an accomplice of (?tigers) [words indistinct]. This last crime of Sihanouk prompted the two houses of parliament to divest him of his functions as Chief of State, before this very tribune, as of 18 March 1970.

Khmer history prior to World War II when the Khmer people lived under the king's 10 commandments and after World War II when the Khmer people lived under the constitution shows that the kings clung to their personal dictatorial power and that, to maintain this power, they even chose to suppress their people or to lose part of the territory.

In view of the above-mentioned misdeeds by the monarchy, in conformity with the United Nations Charter concerning the right of every nation to [words indistinct] with freedom, out of respect for the people's will as voiced during the demonstrations on 11 April 1970 and subsequently, by virtue of law No 442 of 8 October 1970, and for the sake of freedom, equality, [words indistinct], progress, and happiness of the Khmer nation, I, In Tam, chairman of the National Assembly, in the name of the Khmer nation solemnly proclaim that, as of 9 October 1970 at 0700, Cambodia is a republic, one and indivisible, with the official name of "Khmer Republic." (applause)