

# Strong Attack on Sihanouk Continued by New Leaders

## 21 MAR 70 Countercoup Warning Issued

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BANGKOK, Thailand, March 20 — The Cambodian radio, monitored here today, repeatedly broadcast an order of the day to the armed forces warning of the possibility of a countercoup by Prince Norodom Sihanouk, who was deposed as Chief of State on Wednesday.

The order was viewed by analysts of Cambodian affairs as a first sign that, despite the apparently complete success of the coup d'état mounted by the Premier, Lieut. Gen. Lon Nol, and the First Deputy Premier, Sisowath Sirik Matak, the new rulers of Cambodia feared the potential threat of Prince Sihanouk's return.

[In Peking, Prince Sihanouk said in a statement that his overthrow was "absolutely illegal," and he blamed the United States Central Intelligence Agency for the "turbulence" in Cambodia. Page 9.]

The question whether the deposed leader will attempt to return to Pnompenh, even as a private citizen, is considered a key to the political stability of Cambodia.

The Prince is extremely popular and it is believed that if he returned he could rally considerable opposition to the new leaders.

Prince Sihanouk is being re-

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# Cambodians Warned of a Countercoup

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ceived in Communist China with the full honors due to a chief of state. Officially, he is on his way back to Pnompenh after a two-month stay in France and a stopover in Moscow.

The order to the armed forces, after recalling the unanimous decision of Parliament to divest the prince of all his powers, declared:

"It is the duty of our army to crush by means of arms all actions that Prince Norodom Sihanouk may be planning in an attempt to misuse the legal standing that he lost on March 18, 1970, in consequence of the vote of the two Houses."

The order also warned officers and soldiers that failure to obey would be treasonous. It was issued in the name of the high command. General Lon Nol is also chief of the General Staff, and is believed to be in full control of the army.

### Stripped of Military Role

The order also specified that by virtue of his ouster as Chief of State, Prince Sihanouk had also ceased to be commander in chief of the armed forces. It declared that his provisional successor, Cheng Heng, President of the National Assembly, had also succeeded to the Prince's military functions.

There has been no indication as yet how temporary Cheng Heng's tenure will be. The po-

sition appears to be titular now, whereas it was the principal center of power under Prince Sihanouk. The joint resolution naming Cheng Heng said he would serve until the normal election of a new Chief of State.

Cambodia has never elected a Chief of State. The post was created by Prince Sihanouk for himself in 1960 after he had abdicated the throne in 1955 and served in the interim as Head of the Royal Government.

### To Take Oath Tomorrow

It was announced today that Cheng Heng would take his oath of office tomorrow.

Analysts noted that none of the statements broadcast by Pnompenh and monitored here so far have indicated a definite change in policy toward North Vietnam and the Vietcong, whose troops occupy much of the border area of Cambodia.

Experts noted that the broadcasts today just as they frequently had under Prince Sihanouk, gave the text of protest notes to the United States Embassy in Pnompenh gave over American incursions into Cambodia.

Cable and telephone traffic with some countries was resumed today, but the international airports at Pnompenh and Sienreap remained closed. Airlines here and elsewhere in Asia said they had received no word on when they could resume their scheduled flights.

A special meeting of the National Assembly was summoned for tonight, with no indication of its purpose. An important role has been assigned to the Assembly in the political upheaval of recent days. Parliament had been considered little more than a sounding board and rubber stamp under Prince Sihanouk.