

North Vietnamese Reported Recruiting Guerrillas in Cambodia

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SAIGON, South Vietnam,

May 28—North Vietnamese troops are reportedly conducting an intensive recruiting and proselytizing campaign among the rural population of Cambodia in what official sources here see as an attempt to create a broadly based Communist guerrilla organization similar to the Vietcong in South Vietnam.

The campaign is viewed here as a major shift from the North Vietnamese policy during the last five years of remaining relatively isolated in their border sanctuaries and away from rural Cambodians. The change, which as accured since the overthrow of Prince Norodom Sihanouk, is reportedly being carried out by North Vietnamese troops in the name of the Prince's new government in exile, called the Royal Government of National Union and his Cambodian Liberation Army.

Traditional rural support for the former Cambodian Chief of State is still believed to be strong, and some sources and independent observers believe that a local guerrilla and political apparatus can be formed far more quickly in Cambodia than it took in South Vietnam. Since South Vietnamese and American troops first crossed

the border in force a month ago, the North Vietnamese are reported to have greatly expanded their control of the Cambodian countryside.

Except for areas temporarily occupied by American and South Vietnamese troops, most of northeastern Cambodia east of the Mekong River appears now to be firmly under North Vietnamese control. Communist troops have seized the Mekong River corridor—from the Laotian border south to the Kampong Cham area, sources report.

In some five tons of North Vietnamese and Vietcong documents uncovered in the allied search of Cambodian base areas thus far, official sources—who decline to be identified—said they had found numerous instructional guides and notes of recent lectures on the establishment of liberation committees, village councils and guerrilla groups.

Khmer Rouge the Core

The sources said that the prisoners and defectors had told them the campaign involved the breaking down of some North Vietnamese fighting units into teams assigned to recruiting Cambodian villagers, forming Communist governing groups and training guerrillas.

The North Vietnamese are reported to be building the organization around Cambodian Communists of the Khmer Rouge, which the sources said they estimated to number 3,000.

The sources said the documents on the upgrading of the Cambodian guerrilla forces were dated before the invasion of the allied forces, an indication that the change in government rather than the allied incursions had provoked the campaign.

Similarly, the sources' analysis of events in Cambodia since early March seems intended to justify the allied thrusts into Cambodia, which the South Vietnamese began on April 29. Thus the allied sources maintain that allied actions in Cambodia after Prince Sihanouk's overthrow resulted from enemy actions. The officials' version does not deal with suggestions heard elsewhere that the reverse has also been true on occasion.

Enemy Activity Analyzed

Sources here discussed their version of the phases of enemy activity in Cambodia since anti-Communist demonstration began in early March. In late March, after units of the Cambodian army began putting pressure on the Communists in some areas, pro-Sihanouk demonstrations and

some rioting was organized among rubber plantation workers and in some towns.

On April 1, according to this analysis, the Communists began moving out of their sanctuaries and clearing a corridor about 10 miles wide from the South Vietnamese border westward into Cambodia and running from north of Snoul to the Gulf of Siam.

On or about April 14, North Vietnamese and Vietcong forces began moving westward beyond the corridor toward the interior of the country, cutting major highways and seizing Cambodian Army garrisons and towns.

Pro-Sihanouk Meeting Reported

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HONG KONG, May 28—Further evidence that part of Prince Sihanouk's government in exile is operating within Cambodia was provided today

by reports of a meeting of members and supporters of the regime in a "liberated area" of the country.

The reports reached here in a broadcast over the Hanoi radio. They referred to a congress held May 7 and 8 by the Cambodian Peoples Movement of United Resistance, which the broadcast said was a subordinate organization under Prince Sihanouk's National United Front of Kampuchea (an ancient name for Cambodia).

Among those named as present at the congress were Khieu Samphan, minister of defense in the Sihanouk government; Hu Nim, minister of information, and Hou Yuon, minister of interior.

The reports did not indicate the location of the "liberated area" in which the meeting was held.