

Sihanouk Says North Korea Offered to Send Troops

(OF TORONTO STAR)

By NORMAN WEBSTER

PEKING, July 9 — Prince Norodom Sihanouk said today that he felt tempted to call in North Korean troops to help liberate his country. He said premier Kim Il Sung urged him recently to accept volunteers.

In an interview here, Prince Sihanouk said a majority of the members of his "government in exile" felt the job could still be done by Cambodian resistance fighters from North Vietnam, the Vietcong and the Pathet Lao.

But, he warned, should Thai and other outside troops intervene and the battle go badly for his side, it was possible that this attitude would change. He portrayed the North Koreans as eager for battle.

"Kim Il Sung said he was very eager," Prince Sihanouk reported. He said it would be good training for his army.

The Prince said he did not think China would wish to send volunteers to Cambodia.

Now Allied With Reds

Prince Sihanouk has made the Chinese capital his headquarters since arriving here March 19, the day after a coup d'état by Lon Nol removed him from power in Phnompenh. Since then he has allied himself with Indochinese Communist forces to regain power in Cambodia.

He said that he would not mind fighting on equal terms with his adversaries. But he said President Nixon was sending tanks, helicopters and planes to aid Premier Lon Nol and urging other countries to enter the war.

"This is not fair play," the prince said. "Why, then should we not have the right to ask those who want to help us?"

Speaking in his guest house in the western part of Peking, he said military matériel sup-

plied by the Chinese and North Koreans has already begun arriving in Cambodia. The matériel ranges from rifles to anti-aircraft guns, he said.

The Prince said failure of the Soviet Union to recognize his new government was disappointing. He hopes, however, to persuade the Russians to come around, he added.

Cutting off the northeastern half of Cambodia with a line drawn on a map, he said this was already firmly controlled by forces loyal to him.

He said his guerrillas were being trained by the Vietnamese Communists in Cambodia.

"General Giap is my chief instructor," Prince Sihanouk said, referring to Vo Nguyen Giap, North Vietnam's Defense Minister.

The Prince said a French magazine estimated of 63,000 rebels in Cambodia was close to the actual figure. He described the North Vietnamese and Vietcong troops are a large component, but not a majority of the 63,000.

Refers to Newspapers

The interview—with animacassars on the sofa and tea mugs on the table—lasted two and a quarter hours. Several times Prince Sihanouk bounced up—a short, dapper man in a grey suit—to hurry to an adjoining room and bring back newspapers and magazines with articles that supported his contentions.

The Prince's wife, his aunt and three sons are with him here. Two of the boys have come for the summer from their studies in Moscow and Prague. The family will soon be going to the beach resort of Peitaiho, east of Peking.

Prince Sihanouk compared the struggle in Cambodia to a prizefight. The bell has barely

rung for the third round, he said, and it is only after the 10th that everything will be settled.

He said each member of the Indochinese alliance was pledged to aid the cause of the other "right to the end of the fight." If Cambodia is liberated first, it will continue the battle against Saigon, he said, even to sending Cambodian troops to fight in South Vietnam.

United States bombing and what he described as the "atrocious conduct" of Saigon's troops are pushing the peasant population of Cambodia increasingly to his active support, the Prince said. He quoted at length from Western reporters' dispatches about rape, robbery and destruction by Saigon troops.

"The Vietnamese Reds help us and the Vietnamese Blues help us, too, in their way," he

said in a joking reference to Saigon's forces.

In contrast, the North Vietnamese and Vietcong have been models of good behavior, he said.

"If the Cambodians were hostile to the North Vietnamese and Vietcong, they could not operate in Cambodia," the Prince added.

He said his guerrillas had occupied the ancient temples at Angkor on their own initiative, not at his orders. They withdrew because world public opinion frowned on the action, he added.