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A Critic of Cambodia's Regime Elected Head of Charter Body

PNOMPENH, Cambodia, Nov. 8 (AP)—Cambodia's new Constituent Assembly met for the first time today and elected a leading critic of the Government as its president.

In Tam, chosen by a 51-39 vote, was president of the old National Assembly. It and the former upper house of parliament make up the Constituent Assembly.

Premier Lon Nol made the legislative change last month and empowered the Assembly to write a constitution because the Government was embarrassed by criticism from a number of the legislators, including Mr. In Tam. The Premier dismissed Mr. In Tam as First Vice Premier in September.

Sirik Matak Aide Defeated

Today, Mr. In Tam defeated the Government's unofficial candidate, Op Kim An, to head the new organization. The latter formerly was Interior Minister and is a close associate of the acting Premier, Sisowath Sirik Matak, who governed while Premier Lon Nol was recuperating from a stroke.

The Assembly session was opened by the Chief of State, Cheng Heng, who said the body would soon receive a draft constitution that is being written by a special committee.

The Government will revise the draft before submitting it to the Assembly. Information Minister Long Boret has said that the Assembly will have the last word on the charter's provisions before it is submitted to the voters in a referendum.

A nearer constitution draft-



Inger McCabe

In Tam

ed by members of the National Assembly was dropped because the Government objected to the strong parliamentary regime the legislators wanted to create.

Since the Assembly's mandate expired on Oct. 18, Premier Lon Nol has ruled Cambodia by decree.