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Cambodian Reds, in Paris, Pledge Neutrality Policy

By FLORA LEWIS

Special to The New York Times

PARIS, April 17—The representatives here of the Cambodian Communists, in a triumphant news conference, said today that their new government would follow a policy of neutrality and nonalignment.

"This is not a tactical or temporary policy," the spokesman said. "it is a fundamental and strategic position."

Chau Seng, special representative of Prince Norodom Sihanouk and Politburo member of the Cambodian National United Front, and Ok Sakun, the regular ambassador, gave the news conference to proclaim their success.

Two bouquets of red roses in glass vases adorned the dais in a rented room and the men's eyes glittered with excitement as they reported details on the fall of Phnom Penh.

But the fatigue and sorrow of the long struggle clearly marked them, and the tone of Mr. Chau Seng's statement and impromptu comments was sober and often conciliatory.

Internally, he said, Cambodia will have "a new society, certainly different from the one that preceded the fascist coup d'etat of March 18, 1970," when



Associated Press

Chau Seng at the Paris news session yesterday.

Marshall Lon Nol declared the deposition of Prince Sihanouk and installed a republic.

"This is irreversible, like it or not," Mr. Chau Seng added.

He declared that Prince Sihanouk remained chief of state and would return to Phnom Penh when circumstances permitted. Mr. Chau Seng praised the "dynamism and competence" of the Prince.

"Things have evolved, every-

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thing evolves," he said, alluding to the long period before 1970 when Prince Sihanouk and the communists were enemies. Mr. Chau Seng recalled that he was the Prince's cabinet chief when Marshal Lon Nol was Minister of Defense and charged that the marshal had fabricated reports about the Communists so that Prince Sihanouk would turn against them.

Not even Khieu Samphan, commander of the victorious forces and a Deputy Premier, is in Phnom Penh yet, Mr. Chau Seng said, "but he is very near."

"The first task is to establish order," he continued. "That is a military problem. The Phnom Penh radio is in our hands and we have asked all the civil servants to return to work so that life can be normalized."

Asked what aid was needed most, he said medicine, medical supplies and ambulances.

"Cambodia will accept all aid from all countries provided there are no conditions," he said, "that is, in absolute respect of our independence and sovereignty."

He said the people of Phnom Penh had greeted the insurgents with "joy and enthusiasm."

"They are putting up white flags and FUNK flags everywhere," he said. "You can see there is no bloodbath." FUNK stands for the French words for Cambodian National United Front, the name of the insurgents' political organization.

This seemed to be confirmed by Le Monde's correspondent, Patrice de Beer, who stayed in Phnom Penh and managed to get a brief dispatch to his paper this morning. He said:

"The popular enthusiasm is evident. Groups form around the insurgents, who often carry American weapons. They are young, happy, surprised by their easy success. The republican soldiers quickly put up white flags. Processions form in the street and the refugees are starting to go home."

Asked whether an amnesty would be proclaimed, Mr. Chau Seng said: "That is already done. There are white flags."

But there was some ambiguity in his remarks, since at one point he said that people who had "committed crimes" would be tried. At another point, he said it would be impossible to keep people who had served in the Lon Nol Government's embassies and they would be treated as ordinary citizens.

So far as he knew, Mr. Chau Seng said, the "seven traitors" who Prince Sihanouk said "deserve hanging" had all fled the country. They include Marshal Lon Nol, Premier Long Boret, who was reported still in Phnom Penh last night, and Lieut. Gen. Sisowath Sirik Matak, a former Premier.

There seemed to be relief that the marked men were out of the way and need not be dealt with, rather than any regret that the threat of execution could not be carried out.

Even in speaking of the Americans, Mr. Chau Seng took a cautious rather than a vindictive tone.

When he was asked in what circumstances he foresaw a renewal of relations with the United States, he smiled gently and said:

"We don't forget that American blood was spilled in Cambodia. It will depend on the United States and an end of United States aggression and intervention. We know the end

of the war is not the end or subversion, of tricky maneuvers against us and our people. We will remain vigilant."

At several points and in several ways, he emphasized the nationalist determination of the Cambodian Communists and the differences between Cambodia and Vietnam.

"The French put the three countries of Indochina together, but there is no common civilization," he said, referring to

Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. "Our peoples are very different."

And again, contending that Buddhism would remain the state religion, he said, "Our Buddhism is southern Buddhism, very different from that of Vietnam or China or Japan."

Cambodians belong to the so-called Hinayana division of Buddhism, the smaller and more conservative branch, which is also practiced in Sri Lanka, Burma and Thailand.

"Our Buddhism is social, not to say socialist," Mr. Chau Seng continued. "You have never heard of an isolated Buddhist monastery in Cambodia. In the liberated areas, we had our headquarters in the temples. The monks have always been patriotic."

Denies Vietcong Role

The one point during the hour-long conference when Mr. Chau Seng became emotional, his voice rising to shrillness and his face crinkling with tension, was in answering a question about relations between the Vietcong and the Cambodian insurgents, who are also known as the Khmer Rouge (Red Khmers).

"In 1970, 1971, 1973, you talked about North Vietnamese in the Khmer Rouge forces," he said. "There never were, there are not now, nor will there be any North Vietnamese cadres in our forces. There are other forms of cooperation."

He did not bother to make the distinction between North Vietnamese and South Vietnam's Vietcong, on which the Vietnamese Communists scrupulously insist.

One form of cooperation, it was learned privately from a Cambodian source, was an exchange of 50,000 tons of rice to the Vietnamese in return for arms and munitions.

"Why should they bring rice all the way down from the north when we had it," the source said. "They could bring other supplies to give us. And in this way, we owed them nothing."

Contrast in Manner

Mr. Chau Seng's manner and his reaction to questions contrasted with those of the Vietnamese Communists, who tend to stick rigidly to prepared texts. He displayed a range of emotion, a directness, a spontaneity of response that are rare in Vietnamese contacts with the Western press.

The Cambodian official, who said he would soon fly to Phnom-Penh, was questioned about the fate of foreigners, especially newsmen, who have remained in the Red Cross security zone at the Hotel Le Phnom in the Cambodian capital. Mr. Chau Seng said the new Minister of Information would review their cases. An effort to press for more specific assurances about their safety and their opportunity to work brought nothing more.

But Mr. Chau Seng welcomed a question about the 17 newsmen and photographers who are missing in the Cambodian War.

"Let me say definitively, we released all the journalists we captured," he said. "We have no foreign journalists as prisoners anywhere in the liberated area."

Sihanouk Voices Joy

PEKING, April 17 (Agence France-Presse) — Prince Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia said here today: "when joy and happiness are so deep, one cannot say anything."

He made his comment at his residence after a reception for the ambassadors in Peking of about 70 countries that have recognized the exile Sihanouk government.

The Prince did not say when he would return to Cambodia. He said the condition of his mother, Queen Kossamak, was serious, that she would probably die soon and that he would attend her funeral in Peking before going back to Cambodia.