

# Sihanouk Says Nixon Lied on Bombing

By JOHN BURNS

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PEKING, Aug. 21 — Prince Norodom Sihanouk, describing President Nixon as a liar, denied tonight that while Cambodia's Chief of State he had ever acquiesced in the secret bombing of Cambodia as condoned by the President in a New Orleans speech yesterday.

The Prince said that it was possible that at the time members of the government who, he said, conspired in his subsequent ouster in March, 1970, including Marshal Lon Nol, had a secret agreement with Mr. Nixon. But he himself was "too much of a patriot" to allow foreigners to bomb his country, he said.

In a wide-ranging interview with correspondents here, Prince Sihanouk also said that ammunition shortages and fear of renewed American intervention had persuaded the Communists in Cambodia to put off any attempt to take Phnom Penh until the beginning of the dry season in December at the earliest.

The prince said he had repeatedly protested the bombing, in formal messages to the United States Embassy in Phnom Penh and in a published white paper that included a list of the targets under attack and photographs of the damage.

## Critical of President

"You know Nixon has lied many times," the Prince declared. "He has lied about Watergate and now he is lying about the bombing."

Prince Sihanouk's rebuttal came less than 24 hours after President Nixon in a speech to the Veterans of Foreign Wars,

defended the bombing as a way to save American lives and said that the secrecy was necessary. If the air strikes had been announced, Mr. Nixon said, the Cambodian government would have had to protest and the bombing would have had to stop.

The Prince, who heads an exile government in Peking conceded that he had invited President Nixon to visit Cambodia while the bombing was going on, as Mr. Nixon had said, but denied that this had constituted tacit acceptance of the attacks, as the President had maintained.

It is true that I invited him to make a state visit, to improve the strained relations between Cambodia and the United States," he said. "But we all the time objected to the bombing."

## Discrediting the Government

Renewing his old charge of a United States role in his overthrow in 1970, the Prince asserted that Mr. Nixon would not have needed to engineer his ouster if the Prince had been content to allow the bombing to continue.

Prince Sihanouk asserted that it was precisely because he had opposed any form of American intervention in Cambodia that Mr. Nixon had ordered the bombing, so as to discredit the Sihanouk Government in the eyes of the Cambodian public.

He said this policy had probably been arrived at in a secret pact between Mr. Nixon and Lon Nol, who saw public discontent at the bombing as a means of hastening Prince Sihanouk's overthrow and his own installation as head of a new regime.

"So you can see who lies

and who is the victim of the liar," the Prince declared.

Speaking of the current situation in Cambodia, the Prince, who is titular leader of the Communist insurgents, said that those forces would limit their pressure on Phnom Penh to rocketing and shelling and might mount an occasional terrorist attack, but that they would otherwise concentrate on assaulting important provincial capitals, among them Kompong Cham.

In other remarks, the Prince repeated his refusal to negotiate a compromise solution to the war, saying that it was only a matter of time before all Cambodia fell into the Communists' hands.

It is futile for Americans and others to appeal for a negotiated settlement that would place him at the head of a coalition government, because such a solution is advanced only as a means of perpetuating America's neocolonialism, he said.

Besides, he went on, he is powerless to prevent a Communist triumph, even if he wanted to, which he does not.

The Communists would provide Cambodia with an independent, neutralist government free from corruption, something even he has been unable to accomplish in his years in power, the Prince said.

Mr. Nixon has only himself to blame for the Communists' success, Prince Sihanouk said. "Ho Chi Minh and Mao Tse-tung are just children compared to Nixon, if you're talking about the Communization of Southeast Asia," he said. "In that respect Mao and Ho have not contributed one-tenth of what Richard Nixon has."

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