

WINDPOST AUG 22 1973

Sihanouk Says He Protested U.S. Bombing

Claims Nixon Lied in Speech

By John Burns
Toronto Globe and Mail

PEKING, Aug. 21—Prince Norodom Sihanouk, describing President Nixon as a liar, denied tonight that his government had ever acquiesced in the secret bombing of Cambodia begun in 1969 as alleged by the President in a New Orleans speech yesterday.

The prince said it was possible that members of the government who conspired in his subsequent ouster in 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.

In a wide-ranging interview with correspondents here the prince also said that ammunition shortages and fear of renewed American intervention have persuaded his forces to put off any attempt to take Phnom Penh until the beginning of the dry season in December.

On the bombing, the prince said that he had made repeated protests at the time in formal messages to the U.S. embassy in Phnom Penh and in a published white paper that included a list of the targets under attack and photographs of the damage.

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

The prince's rebuttal came less than 24 hours after the President, in a speech to the Veterans of Foreign Wars, defended the bombing and said the secrecy was necessary to obtain the acquiescence of the Cambodian government, then headed by Sihanouk.

The prince conceded that he had invited the President to visit Cambodia while the bombing was going on, but denied that this constituted tacit acceptance of the attacks as the

President alleged.

"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."

Renewing his old charge
See SIHANOUK, A9, Col. 8

SIHANOUK, From A1

that the United States conspired at his overthrow in March 1970, the prince asserted that Mr. Nixon would not have needed to engineer his ouster if Sihanouk had been content to allow the bombing to continue.

In fact, it was precisely because he opposed any form of U.S. intervention in Cambodia that the President ordered the bombing, so as to discredit the Sihanouk government in the eyes of the Cambodian public, the prince said.

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

"So you can see who lies and who is the victim of the liar," the prince declared.

Turning to the current situation in Cambodia, the prince, titular leader of the Communist-led insurgents, conceded that his forces lack the ammunition necessary for an all-out assault on Phnom Penh.

An attempt to take the city at this point might prove unwise in any event as it would invite a renewal of direct U.S. intervention, possibly including bombing, he said.

Accordingly the insurgents would limit their pressure on the capital to rocketing and shelling and might mount the occasional terrorist attack, but would otherwise concentrate their forces in assaults on important provincial capitals like Kompong Cham, he said.

The plan was to capture enough ammunition in the provincial attacks to make an all-out assault on Phnom Penh possible at a later date, probably in the dry season that be-

gins in December and lasts until April or May, he said.

"We rely on Nixon for our weapons and ammunition," he added. "The more weapons and ammunition Nixon gives to Lon Nol, the more Lon Nol, not voluntarily, gives to us."

The prince, who appealed to his allies last month to relieve the ammunition shortage, said that North Vietnam had refused because Hanoi leaders were loath to break the Paris peace agreement, which binds all signatories not to introduce armaments into Cambodia.

China had said it would like to help but could not do so as Chinese supplies would have to move overland through North Vietnam, impossible so long as the North Vietnamese stuck to the Paris agreement, the prince said.

Instead, the Chinese had agreed to compensate the Communists in South Vietnam for the arms and ammunition they were supplying Cambodian insurgents operating along the long border between the two countries, the prince said.

He did not say whether the arms suppliers in South Vietnam were North Vietnamese, regulars or Vietcong, nor did he specify how large the supplies were or how long the transfers had been going on. But his remarks on the subject indicated that he expected the deliveries to continue.

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

It was 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 was only advanced as a means of perpetuating the neo-colonial status on the country, he said.

Besides, he said, he was powerless to prevent a Communist triumph, even if he wanted to, which he did not.

The communists, he said, would provide Cambodia with an independent, neutralist government free from corruption, something he had been unable to accomplish in his years in power.

The prince said Mr. Nixon had only himself to blame for the Communists' success. "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."