

Cambodia Offers Khmer Rouge Amnesty

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PNOMPENH, Cambodia, Nov. 5—President Lon Nol has offered complete amnesty to all members of the Khmer Rouge—the Cambodian rebel forces who have been fighting as allies with the North Vietnamese and Vietcong against the Cambodian Government.

In a declaration over the Government radio station last night, the President promised the rebels—who have grown in number from about 3,000 in 1970 when Marshal Lon Nol seized office to at least 30,000 today—not only a welcome back to the fold but also land and jobs if they wanted to return to civilian life, or a place in the Cambodian Army if they wanted to remain soldiers.

Speaking from the presidential palace, Marshal Lon Nol said: "Every citizen who would like to be a soldier, so that in the future we have a strong army to protect our country against other foreign invasions, will be accepted into the army.

"Those who wish, on the other hand, to give up arms and take to the country life will receive compensation for the weapons, some land and adequate jobs."

First Public Offer

The Lon Nol Government has in recent weeks put out an increasing number of peace feelers to the leaders of the diverse Khmer Rouge bands operating throughout the country, but this is the first public offer of amnesty. Enticements in the offer for ending the insurgency and its presentation by President Lon Nol himself indicate the importance the Government places on neutralizing the rebels.

In his radio speech, delivered in the Khmer language but made available later in French by the Government press agency, Marshal Lon Nol announced the formation of a high-level committee, headed by himself, to handle the problems of national reconciliation and reconstruction after a cease-fire in Indochina. The Government is extremely concerned that if the North Vietnamese and Vietcong withdraw from Cambodia territory—most

diplomatic observers here are doubtful this will happen—the Khmer Rouge will inherit Hanoi's well-developed supply routes and sanctuaries and will continue guerrilla warfare against the Government.

In his speech, Marshal Lon Nol demanded that the North Vietnamese leave and, before they leave, "point out their sanctuaries and arms caches in order to avoid further deaths."

The arms caches, which are believed to be huge, would probably make the Khmer Rouge a force as well armed as the Cambodian Army, if not better armed.

Supply Step-up Reported

The United States, which has since 1970 been supplying the Cambodian Government with about \$200-million a year in military aid, has reportedly stepped up its military shipments to Pnompenn in the last couple of weeks in an effort to stockpile as many arms and as much equipment as possible before a cease-fire goes into effect—although the American Embassy here has so far declined to confirm the step-up.

The wording of the proposed cease-fire accord between Washington and Hanoi seems to bar any American military aid to Cambodia after a cease-fire—though Western diplomats here think that Washington might try to pass arms in through a third country, such as Thailand.

Point 7—the only article in the nine-point proposed accord that deals with Cambodia and Laos, the rest of it being devoted to Vietnam—says that all foreign troops must be withdrawn from Cambodia and Laos and that "foreign countries shall refrain from reintroducing into these two countries troops, military advisers and military personnel, armaments, munitions and war material."

Officially, the Cambodian Government has been expressing optimism that the North Vietnamese troops will leave Cambodia quickly after a cease-fire is declared and that the problem of wooing the Khmer Rouge will be accomplished without difficulty by Cambodians on the basis of national loyalty and patriotism.

But the Government has announced no significant progress in its recent contacts with the Khmer Rouge, and reports from other sources indicate little success so far.

Some of the Khmer Rouge units are fighting under the banner of Prince Norodom Sihanouk, who was deposed by Marshal Lon Nol and his associates on March 18, 1970, and who now heads a Government in exile based in Peking. Prince Sihanouk has been talking optimistically to recent visitors about returning very soon to Cambodia as ruler once again. Marshal Lon Nol, in his broadcast last night, sought to squelch any Cambodian sympathies for Prince Sihanouk.

He told his people that the overthrow of the Prince and the establishment of a republic in Cambodia in 1970 was of the same historical cloth as the French and Russian Revolutions. "There is thus no question," he said, "of going backward and marching against the current of history. Any reactionary attempt will be punished according to law."

'No Longer a Prince'

Marshal Lon Nol said that the Khmer people did not want the princes and their monarchy back and added, referring to Prince Sihanouk: "Since he has betrayed his people, he is no longer chief of state, he is no longer a prince. He has become only citizen Sihanouk and must answer for his mistakes and his crimes before our tribunals, exactly like all other citizens."

In June of 1970, just three months after his overthrow, Prince Sihanouk was tried in absentia by a military court here and sentenced to death for treason.

Marshal Lon Nol said that there was no reason why the Khmer Rouge should go on fighting "since their goal has been attained with the ouster of Prince Sihanouk and the creation of the republic."

The Marshal called on the rebels to "rejoin the national community in complete tranquility in order to work together with all other citizens within the framework of our institutions and our laws, with view to strengthening our beloved native land."