

## CAMBODIA PLANS A UNITED FRONT

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Rivals Would Join Council  
to Deal With Communists

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia, Feb. 20 (Reuters)—President Lon Nol's Government and its non-Communist opponents moved closer today to a united front for contacts with the Communists.

Information Minister Keam Reth said after a Cabinet meeting that negotiations were under way to set up a council of national reconciliation. Both the ruling Social-Republican party and the opposition Republicans have already agreed to join, he added.

But official sources said that complex bargaining was continuing over the future of Lieut. Gen. Sisawath Sirik Matak, who has been offered the vacant vice presidency by Marshal Lon Nol.

An initial storm of opposition among members of the ruling party appears to have been stilled, but negotiations are continuing over General Sisowath Sirik Matak's demand for firm guarantees for Cabinet and parliamentary support.

According to diplomatic sources, the United States has urged Marshal Lon Nol to broaden his one-party Government to create a united front that would tempt the Communists into negotiations.

The Information Minister said the new council, which was proposed by the ruling party, would be an extragovernmental organization with no more than advisory powers.

Discussions were still under way with the other major party, the Democrats, whose leader, Brig. Gen. In Tam, last week accepted a post as presidential adviser on contacts with the Communists.

The Minister denied that a coalition government would be set up to negotiate with the Communists or a Cabinet reshuffle would take place to give posts to opposition leaders.

Both opposition parties have been unrepresented in the Cabinet and two-chamber Parliament since their boycott of legislative elections last year.

Meanwhile, Marshal Lon Nol went on the national radio today to appeal for calm after rumors of an impending political upheaval in the capital.

"You must not be carried away by anger and ignorance, without taking account of the danger for survival of the Khmer people," he said. "Do not take a passing difficulty as the pretext for troubling the atmosphere in which we are heading toward realization of peace."