

# Lon Nol Seen Bowing to U.S. Pressure to Go

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PHNOM PENH, July 17 — After resisting the idea for some time, Cambodian President Lon Nol has finally accepted an invitation to visit the United States, according to sources close to Cambodia's ruling High National Council.

Getting Lon Nol away from Phnom Penh is, in the U.S. view, a step toward getting negotiations with the Communist Khmer Rouge insurgents under way.

Lon Nol has repeatedly declined the offer, but reportedly was persuaded to accept it last week during two visits by Gen. Frederick C. Weyand, vice chief of staff of the U.S. Army.

In the past 10 days, there have been signs of a movement toward negotiations, with both sides issuing statements that suggest willingness to compromise on conditions for peace talks. The removal of Lon Nol and the men around him has been one of the insurgents' prime conditions for negotiations.

Sources close to Lon Nol had been predicting for some time that he would go to the United States. This is the first time, however, that Mr. Nixon has sent a personal invitation, which, it is presumed, implies a strong suggestion that Lon Nol leave Cambodia.

[Administration sources said in Washington that so far they have received no information from the U.S. embassy in Phnom Penh that Lon Nol has decided to come to the United States.]

Should Lon Nol leave, the government will officially remain as presently constituted, with the three other members of the high council taking on added responsibility for the war effort. But the removal of the president from direct participation is expected to please American officials and other Cambodian leaders.

Lon Nol has been ailing since a stroke in February 1971, which left him partially paralyzed and has plagued him with kidney trouble. For most of the succeeding two years, during the country's steady decline into its present military crisis, he ruled with the assistance of his brother, Lon Non, who left Cambodia last spring when the president was forced to share his power

with the other members of the high council.

Sources close to Prime Minister In Tam say he has been threatening to resign if Lon Nol did not act on Mr. Nixon's invitation.

With less than a month to go before the congressionally imposed deadline for halting U.S. bombing in support of the Cambodian army, the pressure for negotiations with insurgents is growing. The removal of Lon Nol, a principal political target of the rebels, could be an important development.

The forthcoming trip to Peking by presidential adviser Henry A. Kissinger may also be spurring American pressure on Lon Nol to leave. Informed sources said Gen. Weyand hinted that Kissinger might negotiate without the participation of the Phnom Penh government if Lon Nol refused to leave.

Last spring the United States urged Lon Nol to side track his controversial brother, Brig. Gen. Lon Non. Lon Nol also agreed to the formation of the four-man high National Council in which he was joined by Premier In Tam, former premier Sirik Matak and former head of state, Cheng Heng.

The council proved disappointing in revitalizing the nation, and in recent weeks the United States and Cambodia have indicated a willingness to negotiate with any recognized spokesman for the pro-Communist insurgents, including deposed Prince Norodom Sihanouk.

Sihanouk has said that his past offers to negotiate with Kissinger were spurned four times by the United States, that any negotiations should be carried on between the Khmer Rouge insurgents and the United States.

Sihanouk has repeatedly charged that there is a "plot" to eliminate both him and Lon Nol as the price of any negotiation.

In a declaration issued yesterday, Sihanouk said any settlement must eliminate "supertraitors such as Lon Nol, Sirik Matak, In Tam, Cheng Heng, Lon Non, Son Ngoc, Thanh and Sosthene Fernandez..." The latter two are also prominent Cambodian leaders allied with the current Phnom Penh government.