

Sihanouk Again Rejects

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The United States military-diplomatic record in Cambodia appeared headed for more embarrassing disclosures yesterday as ousted Prince Norodom Sihanouk again rejected any talk of "compromise" in the war.

With Red Khmer forces tightening their ring around the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh, Sihanouk, who claims their government leadership, said, "We are fighting not to stay around Phnom Penh but to liberate Phnom Penh." Sihanouk's statement was issued in North Korea, where he is visiting.

The Nixon administration, attempting to keep the Lon Nol government of Cambodia

afloat beyond the Aug. 15 cutoff on all American bombing, was dismayed yesterday by news of a misdirected U.S. air strike there. A State Department spokesman called reports of hundreds of casualties from the unintended U.S. bombing of pro-government personnel "very distressing."

Disclosures that can be more embarrassing for the past history of U.S. operations in Cambodia are reported to be in prospect at hearings this week before the Senate Armed Services Committee.

These disclosures are expected to begin to lift the secrecy on extensive clandestine cross-border operations into Cambodia conducted for several years prior to 1970 by American Special Forces (Green Berets), under direc-

tion of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Together with the recently admitted falsified reporting on U.S. bombing strikes in Cambodia during 1969-70, revelations the secret ground operations raise a new challenge to the public history of U.S. operation there.

The cumulative disclosures reopen the question of whether the United States shares complicity in the March 18, 1970 coup led by Lon Nol, which toppled Sihanouk from power. The Nixon administration repeatedly has denied any advance knowledge of the coup, or any support for it. The U.S. position at the time was that it regretted the coup, because Sihanouk was then becoming more

alarmed about Communist inroads in Cambodia.

Sihanouk, however, has charged that the United States, through the CIA, nevertheless was plotting against him through Marshal Lon Nol, Sirik Matak, and other long-time pro-American Cambodian leaders.

The critical move against him, Sihanouk has claimed, was U.S. maneuvering behind the scenes that caused "CIA-supported," anti-Sihanouk Khmer Serei forces to suddenly seem to switch sides, and join the Cambodian army led by Lon Nol. The Khmer Serei, who previously operated from bases in South Vietnam and Thailand, Sihanouk charged, then were used to help overthrow him when he was "betrayed" by Lon Nol.

Any Cambodia Compromise

U.S. Special Forces teams operated with the Khmer Serei, although there is only fragmentary information on the public record so far about the extent of these operations. Some of these fragments have emerged in American legal proceedings against Special Forces personnel.

William E. Colby, the new CIA director was questioned briefly in private about the coup that overthrew Sihanouk, in Colby's recent confirmation hearings.

Colby is said to have flatly denied to the Senate Armed Services Committee that there was any U.S. involvement in the coup that removed Sihanouk, or in an earlier unsuccessful attempt to oust the Cambodian leader. That ques-

tioning, however, reportedly did not reach back into the detailed record of CIA-Special Forces-Khmer Serei relationships or activities.

For the Nixon administration, this line of inquiry comes at a particularly damaging point, U.S. officials say privately. They claim that probing the past record will aggravate the already very dim prospects for using diplomacy at a critical point in the Cambodian war.

Sihanouk, in his statement issued yesterday in Pyongyang, North Korea, newly rejected any discussions with presidential national security adviser Henry A. Kissinger or anyone acting in behalf of the United States.

"We will not allow ourselves to meet Kissinger or any other

who is a servant of Nixon, the arch criminal responsible for the devastation of our country and the severest sufferings of our people," said Sihanouk.

His statement was issued in rejecting Indonesian Foreign Minister Jadam Malik's expressed readiness last week to use Indonesia's "good office" to help resolve the Cambodian conflict, "if they are requested." Malik made his comments to newsmen after a sudden trip to Indonesia by Cambodian Foreign Minister Long Boret.

Sihanouk, denouncing "wishful thinking of the U.S. imperialists and their stooges, including Adam Malik," said: "Neither Sihanouk, nor the National United Front of Kampuchea nor the Royal Government of National Un-

ion of Cambodia will accept peace negotiations with the traitors of Phnom Penh or anyone."

U.S. officials declined to discuss whether the Nixon administration suggested to Malik that he offer diplomatic assistance in the Cambodian crisis; they indicated the initiative was Malik's.

Kissinger on Saturday met for an hour in New York with Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, known to be a longtime friend of Sihanouk. Administration officials refused yesterday to go beyond the White House statement on Sunday that Kissinger and Lee "spent an hour reviewing the situation in Southeast Asia," while Lee was en route to a commonwealth nations conference in Ottawa.