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CAMBODIAN COUNTER PROTEST OVER REFERENCE TO KENNEDY DEATH

12 Dec 63 1825
Priority

Following is the text of a Royal Government communique published today:

"On 11 December 1963, the United States Government, through its Ambassador in Phnom Penh, protested to the Royal Government regarding the Information Department communique which is reported to have expressed Cambodia's pleasure at the deaths of NGO DINH DIEM, NGO DINH NHU, SARIT THANARAT, and President KENNEDY. The Royal Government, after having consulted the Cambodian and French texts broadcast by RADIODIFFUSION NATIONALE or published by the Information Ministry, clarifies for international opinion that no allusion was made to the tragic death of President KENNEDY on the occasion of the comments on the death of SARIT THANARAT. On the contrary, it must be remembered that Cambodia observed three days of national mourning out of respect for the deceased President and that His Highness the Premier represented the Chief of State at the funeral in Washington. It is, therefore, absurd to claim that Cambodia has not paid due homage to the memory of the noble President of the United States.

It must be admitted that the feelings experienced by the Cambodian people upon hearing of the deaths of NGO DINH DIEM and SARIT THANARAT may be different. In fact, although President KENNEDY was unanimously respected by all Cambodians in spite of the injustice of American policy toward Cambodia, the South Vietnamese and Thai dictators, who were the implacable enemies of our independence, could arouse nothing but general hostility from our countrymen. There is a nuance which American diplomats and observers seem not to understand in the sentiments expressed in the past few

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days by the Cambodian people. Our joy and pleasure are caused, not by the deaths of NGO DINH DIEM and SARIT THANARAT, but by our liberation from the threats and humiliations which they symbolized in their lifetimes [1 wd G] peaceful Cambodia was obliged to suffer for long years. The hypocrisy of certain great Western powers is totally foreign to us. NGO DINH DIEM and SARIT THANARAT never respected the most elementary rules of international life [10G]. Consequently, we are in no way constrained to display an attitude which does not correspond with our feelings. [XM/G] the meaning of the demonstration of popular relief which offend the United States so greatly. This said, Cambodia has no lessons in propriety to learn from countries said to be developed, where racism breaks out from time to time in demonstrations of violence which Cambodia has never known and will never know".

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a. Reissued, based on full translation.

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