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CAMBODIA AND LAOS

FIGHT HAND IN HAND WITH

VIET-NAM

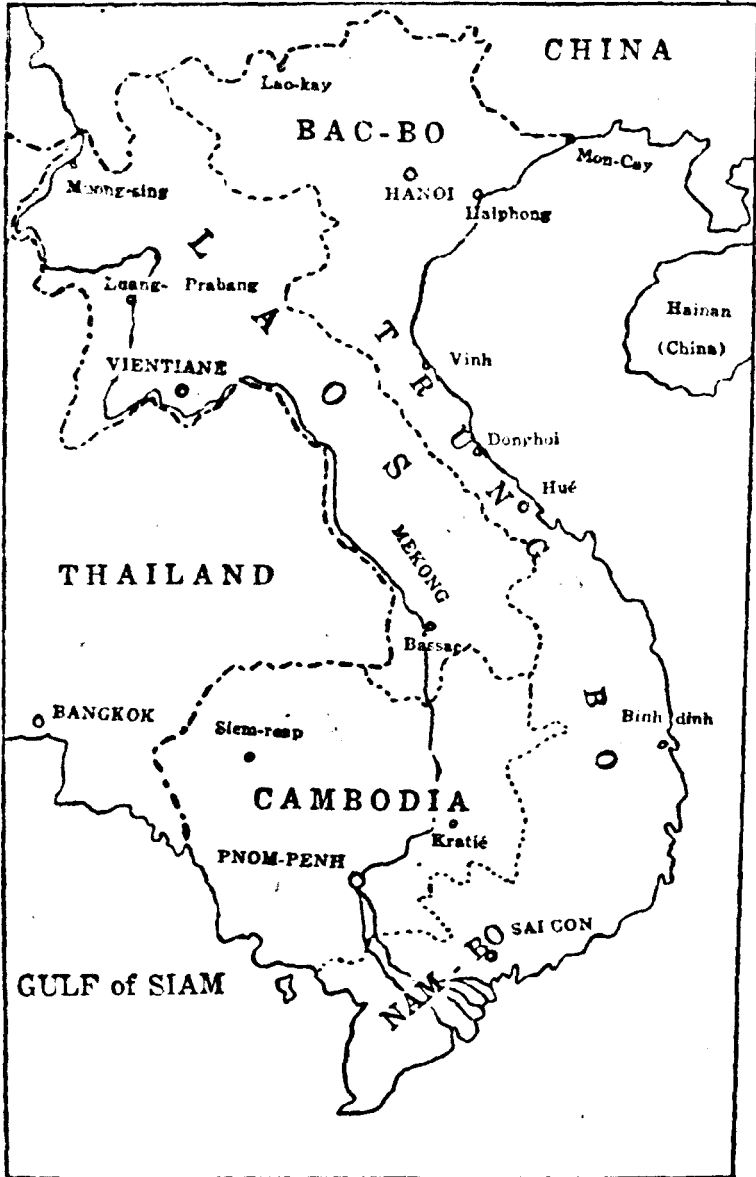
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Map of Viet-Nam, Cambodia and Laos.

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FOREWORD

Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia are three countries forming the Indo-Chinese peninsula. Neither the long Mekong River nor the long mountain range between Viet-Nam in the East and Laos and Cambodia in the West can separate the peoples of these three countries which were invaded by French imperialist troops nearly a century ago. For nearly a century the three peoples of Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia had been living under the iron heels of the French imperialists. Today, the French aggressors are trying to re-impose their heinous rule upon those three peoples. With the active help of the American interventionists, the French imperialists have been slaying great numbers of Vietnamese, Laotians and Cambodians, and razed their homes, their towns and their villages during the last five years.

Faithful to the tradition of all imperialist invaders, the French aggressors have constantly sought to pit the peoples of these three countries one against another. But their decisive plots have utterly failed in face of the single-mindedness of these peoples which, enhanced by their revolutionary movement, has become a frightening force for the imperialists after five years of heroic struggle.

For five years, the Laotian and Cambodian peoples, side by side with the Vietnamese people, have been fighting resolutely for the liberation of their homelands. Liberated areas in North, West and South Laos are expanding and become more consolidated day after day, while in Cambodia — as the puppets themselves have admitted — the situation is aggravating and two-thirds of the territory are unsafe.

Since the beginning of the autumn-offensive of the Viet-Nam People's Army, the People's Liberation Armies of Laos and Cambodia have launched powerful attacks on French key positions, namely Vientiane area (Laos) and Phnom Penh area (Cambodia).

Today, Indo-China has obviously become a single battlefield and the liberation wars of Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia are inseparably linked together. The French imperialists are still using Laotian and Cambodian territories, manpower and material resources to attack Viet-Nam. Furthermore they are planning to retreat through Laos and Cambodia when they will be driven out of Viet-Nam by the Vietnamese people and army and later will use Laos and Cambodia as bases to stage a comeback to Viet-Nam. The French imperialists are also sending troops and war equipment from Viet-Nam into Laos and Cambodia to attack their peoples.

Recently, the American imperialists took steps to intervene more directly in the internal affairs of Laos and Cambodia, just as they are intervening in the Viet-Nam war. They are sending arms, advisers, and goods to the puppet governments of Laos and Cambodia. They are pushing the Thai fascist government to prepare for an intervention in Indo-China which they are planning to turn into their base in Southeast Asia.

The French imperialists and American interventionists are the arch-enemies of the Vietnamese, Laotian and Cambodian peoples. Only when the last French and American imperialists have disappeared from Indo-China, will the peoples of Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia win real independence.

The fighting is becoming more intensified throughout the Indo-Chinese territory. Increasing activities of the Laotian and Cambodian People's Armies are wiping out important numbers of French troops in these countries.

The Cambodian people have already set up a People's Liberation Committee which is also the Cambodian Provisional Government. The Laotian people have recently elected their National Assembly and Resistance Coalition Government. The revolution of the Laotian and Cambodian peoples is going fast ahead, alongside the new phase of intensified

preparations for a general counter-offensive of the Vietnamese people.

To foil the imperialists' designs and in view of greater and fiercer battles on the Indo-Chinese battlefront in the near future, the peoples of Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia have decided to unite even more closely by joining their national united fronts into a solid and monolithlike alliance.

(The Voice of Viet-Nam's Commentary).

CHAPTER I

LAOS AND CAMBODIA UNDER THE FRENCH DOMINATION

“Laos and Cambodia are situated in the centre of the Indo-China peninsula, and are bordered on the North by the Chinese People’s Republic on the East by the Republic of Viet-Nam and on the West by Burma and Thailand. On the South, Cambodia’s shores are washed by the waters of the Gulf of Siam. Laos and Cambodia occupy a large area of (412,000 square kilometres) but their population is incomparably smaller than Viet-Nam (which is made up of three parts Bao-bo (North Viet-Nam), Trung-bo (Centre Viet-Nam) and Nam-bo (South Viet-Nam)). . . .

“The extensive territory of the two countries abounds in natural resources. Through them flows the Mekong, 4,400 kilometres long, one of the largest rivers in Asia and the world. It waters the lowlands of Cambodia and Cochin-China, on whose fertile soil large quantities of rice are grown for export to the world market.

“Laos possesses abundant deposits of tin, copper, gold, platinum, iron and precious stones. The French colonialists were unable to prospect and exploit this mineral wealth to any large extent

because of poor communications. The mining industry began to develop only in the years immediately preceding the second world war. Two enterprising French companies mined and preliminarily processed tin ore in Nam-Pathene, Kham-mon province, exporting about 1,500 tons annually to Europe and America. Small quantities of iron were mined by the local inhabitants for domestic use in a number of the provinces. The mining of precious stones for export was somewhat more developed. Laos possesses extensive forests of valuable timber. It grows rice, maize, coffee, tea and sugar cane, and the conditions are also very favourable for animal husbandry.

“Rubber, in addition to rice, holds an important place in Cambodia. Here too there are extensive tropical forests, and the timber industry is well developed. Tonle Sap, or the Great Lake, yields large quantities of fish for export. Cattle breeding is widely practised in the Cambodian savannas.

“Cambodia has about four million inhabitants, who are principally Cambodians, or Khmers, with a sprinkling of Phnongs and other small nationalities and tribes. Of the roughly two million inhabitants of Laos, 700,000 are Laotians, 300,000 Khas, and about 180,000 Meos, a number of small peoples and tribes making up the rest of the population.

"All these peoples are at different stages of economic and cultural development. Some of the tribes are still at a very primitive level, living principally by hunting and growing meagre crops on land cleared annually by fire. The Cambodians (Khmers) and some of the other peoples were in the remote past powerful and culturally developed nations. Ancient Cambodia was a big and strong feudal state, which was subsequently weakened by foreign incursions and fell into decline in the sixteenth century. Some remarkable relics of the ancient culture of the Khmers still survive, such as the "dead cities" of Angkor Thom, built in the eleventh century and Angkor Vat, built in the twelfth century. The cities were surrounded by moats. Their architecture is imposing and majestic. Towers and shrines are ornamented with bas-reliefs and sculptural figures. These are evidences that Cambodia was one of the seats of the ancient culture of the East, of which its people, now fighting for their liberation, are justly proud.

"Relics of ancient architecture are likewise to be found in Laos, such as the pagodas of Vientiane, the temple of That-Louang, and the palaces and mansions of the royal city of Luang-Prabang.

"Cambodia was seized by France and made a protectorate in 1863. Although nominally it remained a monarchy, power was actually ex-

exercised by the French Resident-General, without whose sanction not a single royal edict had legal validity. Neither the central government of the king nor the local administrations possessed any real power. In 1893 Laos was likewise made a French protectorate. There too, the French Resident-General was the real ruler, while the king in Luang-Prabang and the native princes enjoyed only fictitious authority.

“Ever since the latter part of the last century France had been engaged in a constant struggle with Siam, behind which stood Great Britain, over Cambodia and Laos. Having seized a large part of Laos, the French imperialists established a regime of robbery, violence and brutal oppression there. They deprived the natives of their most fertile land. Both Cambodia and Laos were turned into suppliers of agricultural and raw materials to France; this retarded the development of industry, which to this day is still in an embryonic state. Large tracts of land in Cambodia are held by French monopolies. The Cambodia Company alone owned 22,366 hectares of rubber plantation. In their nearly sixty years of rule in Laos, the French imperialists built only one railway line — six kilometres long — between Khone-Sud and Done-Det. The Trans-Indo-China Railway passes through Cambodia, but to this day the chief communication line between that country and Laos is the River Mekong.

The French administration built roads chiefly for strategical purposes, and also for the transport of produce to the ports. Since in the rainy season roads are often impassable, and Laos and Cambodia are shut in by high mountain ranges, the two countries are every year virtually cut off from the rest of the world for a long period.

“The inhabitants of Cambodia and Laos live in poverty — the result of the long years of French imperialist misrule — and are deprived of all rights. Malaria and epidemic disease are rife in the more densely populated areas along the River Mekong, and mortality is very high. Ninety-five per cent of the population of Laos are illiterate.

“The conquest of Cambodia and Laos was attended by a reign of terror and blood against the people, who put up determined resistance. Later too, when imperialist rule, supported by the native feudal aristocracy and by a small class of bourgeois compradores, became an established fact, the peoples of Cambodia and Laos revolted time and again against their oppressors. The leaders of these revolts, Batakho, the Buddhist monk Acharnemchieu and others, are regarded as national heroes in Cambodia. The first popular rising against the French imperialists in Laos took place in Saravane in 1901, under the leadership of the patriot Phok Ba Duot. Men and women armed with bamboo spears and

knives attacked the French garrisons. Revolts re-
curred in 1918, 1928 and 1937. Revolutionary youth
organisations were formed in Laos in 1935-36."

(Excerpts from V. Vasilyeva's article in
"New Times", Feb. 28, 1951).

CHAPTER II

RESISTANCE OF LAOTIAN AND CAMBODIAN PEOPLES

“During the past 5 years, the peoples of Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia have been carrying out a war of resistance against the French imperialists and American interventionists. As a result of their closer and closer unity in fighting on the common battlefield of Indo-China, they have quickly been growing up in strength during the past five years of resistance and score more and more victories.

A. RESISTANCE OF THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE

“Towards the end of 1945, simultaneously with their second aggression against Viet-Nam, the French imperialists invaded Cambodia and Laos with a hope of re-establishing their colonial rule on the whole territory of Indo-China. But, like the Vietnamese the peoples of Cambodia and Laos rose up and carried out a long-term resistance.

. “1. French invasion.—At the end of September 1945, one week after the outbreak of the war in Nambo (South Viet-Nam), the French imperialists, with the aid of British reactionaries and Indian troops (serving in the British Army), entered Phompenh (Capital of Cambodia) and

gradually occupied other towns. The pro-Japanese SON NGOC THANH Cabinet was dispersed. SON NGOC THANH himself was captured along with a number of his followers. Some Cambodian cadres fled to Nambo, some others to Thailand and the rest either surrendered to the enemy or sought refuge among the population.

“Assisted by the Free Thai Party, the Cambodian cadres who fled to Thailand, created the Military Zone of Battambang (then belonging to Thailand). Those who fled to South Nambo, got the support of the Vietnamese people and founded the Committee of Free Cambodia, calling on the Cambodian people to stand up against French imperialists. But at the beginning of 1946, the French launched a fierce offensive against Nambo and this Committee was dispersed, its cadres were either captured or went abroad. Since then the resistance ranks were divided into two groups: one led by militarymen, intellectuals and businessmen, who only relied upon the force of arms and soon after surrendered to the enemy or became bandits; the other group, composed of patriotic personages and cadres faithful to the resistance and believing in the people's strength, has firmly been carrying out the resistance war up till now.

“2. Rising Tide of Cambodian Revolution.—
At the beginning of 1948, Cambodian cadres and

troops coming back from abroad, carried out military activities in Northwest Cambodia, while those returning from Nambo (South Viet-Nam), organized people's bases in Southeast, Southwest and Northeast Cambodia. Since then, the Cambodian Revolutionary Movement has been gaining momentum.

"a) *Cambodian People's Liberation Army.* During the past 5 years the Cambodian People's Liberation Army, which were at first small local guerrilla units and armed propaganda squads carrying out the task of dispersing puppet administrations and creating people's power, are now able to stand against the enemy in small and bigger-scale attacks. The battles in Siemreap, Sisophon, Kompongthom, Komongspeu, Kompongchnang, etc. caused great losses to the enemy in men as well as in arms and obliged him to withdraw from many isolated posts.

"At present, the activities of the Cambodian People's Liberation Army have considerably increased and, although the French imperialists have sent more re-inforcements, pressganged more draftees and built up a watchtowers system along the main communication lines, the Cambodian People's Liberation Army succeeds to cut off all transport and communication lines between Kampot, Ream and Battambang, and to sabotage the railway line between Phnompenh and Sisophon, and the water

and land supplying lines between Phnompenh and Saigon.

“The Cambodian Militia has also grown up quickly and scored brilliant achievements. For instance, their attacks on the Battambang highways in March 1950 obliged the enemy to supply by planes thousands of French troops when the latter were attacking Cambodian positions in Pailinh, and soundly proved that the Cambodian Militia has been growing up in the fight.

“The liberated area in Cambodia now covers one-third of the whole territory and embraces the bases of Northwest, Southwest, Southeast and Northeast Cambodia.

“b) *Cambodian National United Front*. The National United Front and the People’s Liberation Committee of Cambodia were formed in April 1950, laid down the revolutionary program and policy of Cambodia and issued the Declaration of Independence.

B. RESISTANCE OF THE PEOPLE OF PATHET LAO.

“Simultaneously with the Resistance of the Vietnamese and Cambodian peoples, the strength of the people of Pathet Lao has also grown up in the fight.

"1. French Invasion.—The resistance of the Laotian people started comparatively late. Only in March, 1946 and with the aid of Chinese Kuomintang troops (coming to Laos to "disarm" the Japanese) did the French imperialists invade Laos for the second time. After the most inhuman massacre perpetrated by the French in Thakhek (Central Laos) on March 21st, 1946 (in which thousands of innocent civilians fell under French air bombings and strafings while attempting to cross the Mekong River), the People's Army of Laos withdraw from Laos, leaving behind only small military units around Vientiane and Luang-Prabang.

"In October 1946, the People's Committee of East Laos headed by Mr. THAO-O, reformed the Laotian Army which started military activities on Road No. 7. In January 1947, the Laotian People's Army launched an attack against French-occupied Samneua province (North Laos). The operation was not successful and the Laotian Army had to withdraw from the place leaving behind a number of cadres to create military bases.

"In Western Laos, the Laotian Military Committee was formed and sent troops to carry out military activities in North, Centre and South Laos, with a view to holding back enemy forces, sabotaging communication lines and carrying armed pro-

paganda among the people. At the end of 1947, the political situation in Thailand becoming unfavourable to the Laos revolution, all forces in Western Laos shifted and concentrated in Eastern Laos to create resistance bases in the Eastern part of South Laos

“2 Laotian Revolution also grew up. — From the end of 1946 to the middle of 1948, the resistance movement in Laos widely expanded among the people. After 1948, the Laotian People's Liberation Army's activities in the three zones of Muongsing, Vientiane and Borikhan (East-West Laos corridor) were intensified. At the same time, in East Laos, at the end of 1948 and at the beginning of 1949, the Laotian People's Liberation Army created the military zones of Southeast Laos and Samneua (Northeast Laos) and strengthened the East Laos Zone. Armed propaganda activities were also increased, aiming at setting up political, guerrilla and people's power bases

“At present, the Laotian People's Liberation Army have set up many military strongholds and guerrilla bases throughout the country. The People's Army and guerrillas are active in more than one-third of Laos, and people's power and military bases have been firmly established in one-sixth of the country.

“3 National United Front of Laos (Neo Lao Issarak) The Laos National Assembly convened by the middle of May 1950, formed the Resistance Coalition Government and the National United Front of Laos (NEO LAO ISSARAK), laying down the revolutionary policy of the Laotian people and issuing a historical manifesto on this occasion

C. FRENCH IMPERIALISTS AND AMERICAN INTERVENTIONISTS' MACHINATIONS

“Along with their military offensive, the French colonialists have been using crafty devisive manoeuvres. They set up puppet governments in Laos and Cambodia, and signed agreements with them in July and November 1949 granted them faked independence. They created their henchmen's parties such as the “Democratic Party”, the “Monarchic Party” and the “Patriotic Party” in Laos, the “Free Party”, the “Reformist Party”, the “Union Party” and the “Democratic Party” in Cambodia, with a view to deceiving the population. They also create newspapers to carry out propaganda for their puppets and to slander the Issarak (Free Laos and Cambodia Fronts) and the Viet-Minh League.

“In Cambodia, they sent Cambodian troops to massacre Vietnamese nationals, then allowed reactionary Caodaists' (Vietnamese religious sect)

troops to fight the Cambodians as a revenge in order to sow hatred between the two peoples.

“Despite all these comedies, the French colonialists could not draw the people to their side. Many Cambodian Buddhist priests have said: “So long as the French troops are still stationed on Cambodian soil, Cambodia is not yet independent”. The Laotian peasants also mockingly said: “Laos has been given ‘independence’ twice, yet, the French colonialists are still here”.

(Excerpts from “*Su That*”, Viet-Nam, No. 154).

“As to the Americans, after the French treaties with the puppet governments of Cambodia and Laos, they hastened to “recognize” these two countries and include them in the list of recipients of so-called “military and economic aid”. President Truman even conveyed his personal congratulations to the King of Cambodia on the occasion of the “recognition.”

“The American imperialists are out to turn Laos and Cambodia into a Southeast Asian bastion against the Chinese People’s Republic and the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam. They are more and more grossly interfering in the internal affairs of Laos and Cambodia and bringing pressure to bear on their puppet governments. Washington is sending emissaries to both countries, shipping arms and trying to recruit “volunteers” for the war in

Indo-China. In close conjunction with this, the American imperialists are conducting an insidious policy in neighbouring Thailand which they also want to turn into an operational base against the Asian national liberation movements.

“But the intrigues of the American and French imperialists are encountering firm resistance from the peoples of Cambodia and Laos.”

(Excerpt from V. Vasilyeva's article in
“*New Times*”, Feb. 28, 1951).

“Unity between Peoples and Army. — The peoples of Laos and Cambodia have now realized that the Issarak Armies are fighting against the French colonialists to gain back real independence for the country. Almost all the youth in the countryside have enrolled themselves in the people's militia to secure the defence of their villages. Everywhere, cadres and combatants are loved by the population, for everywhere they have been giving assistance to and closely collaborating with the people, by teaching them, raising their political consciousness, vulgarizing principles of elementary hygiene, helping them to reap and defend crops ensuring their security against robberies etc.. When the army come to the villages, the population show them the way, give them food. On the cadres' appeal, hundreds of civilians destroy bridges and repair roads. At the arrival of the enemy, the population

hide their paddy, remove their fowls into the jungle and thoroughly carry out the scorched earth policy.

“Thanks to the unity between the people and army, guerrilla warfare in Laos and Cambodia has steadily increased beside and inside the enemy lines.

D. UNITY OF VIET-NAM, LAOS AND CAMBODIA: VITAL CONDITION FOR FINAL VICTORY.

“The Viet-Nam war of resistance has a great influence upon that of Laos and Cambodia and vice-versa. The three peoples of Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia more and more realize that if they want to defeat the common enemy, they must be united, otherwise they will be annihilated one after another.

“That verity has been proved by history. Only two years after the French colonialists had conquered the three Eastern provinces of Nambo (1861) and extended their war of aggression to the rest of Viet-Nam, they hurriedly invaded Cambodia (1863) and used it as a springboard to fight against Viet-Nam. Eight years after having completely swallowed Viet-Nam (1884), the French conquered Laos (1892), on the unjustifiable ground that Laos was vassal to Viet-Nam.

“After the August 1945 Revolution, about the same events happened. On September 23rd, 1945, the French colonialists provoked war in Nambo

(South Viet-Nam); at the end of the same month, they invaded Cambodia, and in March 1946, reconquered Laos.

“During the past five years, the French imperialists have been concentrating all their forces to deal with the army and people of Viet-Nam, leaving a gap in the rear of Laos and Cambodia. Thus, the strength of the Laotian and Cambodian peoples have steadily increased. They have become strong enough to hold back and harass enemy forces, and do not allow him freely to plunder, collect taxes, pressgang and mobilize manpower and financial resources in Laos and Cambodia to suppress the resistance of Viet-Nam. Moreover, since last year, after the Chinese People’s Liberation Army had wiped American imperialists and Chiang Kai Shek’s clique out of Chinese land, the American imperialists have shamelessly been interfering in the situation of Indo-China, planning to transform it into an anti-Communist advance post in Southeast Asia, especially to stabilize their military bases in Nambo, Laos and Cambodia. Thus, the unity in fighting between the three peoples of Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia has a greater significance.

“To this historical lesson and experiences of five years of resistance are added other factors: the common frontier and the closer and closer economic

and political relations between the three countries. The American machiavellian manoeuvre has been gradually unmasked, inducing the peoples of Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia to tighten their ranks more than ever and to fight hand in hand till final victory, till all the French or any other imperialist troops have been wiped out of Indo-China.

“Prince SOUPHANOUVONG, Premier of the Resistance Coalition Government of Laos, has stressed the necessity of this unity with the following simple and friendly words: “If you (Vietnamese people) defeat the French colonialists while Laos and Cambodia have not, you score only one-third of the victory. On the contrary, if we (Laotian people) win over the enemy while Viet-Nam and Cambodia have not, we also score only one-third of the victory. So is the case of Cambodia.”

“MR. SIEU HENG, Military Commissioner of the Cambodian People’s Liberation Committee, also firmly stated: “Fighting alone, Cambodia would not have so strong a liberation movement as now. To win final victory and to be independent, the three peoples of Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia must form into a strong alliance and closely combine their fight on the common battlefield of Indo-China.”

“In fact, to combine the fight on the common battlefield of Indo-China is the vital condition for

the peoples of Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia to score complete victory.”

(Excerpts from “*Su That*”, Viet-Nam, No. 154).

“The heroic People’s Army of Viet-Nam has liberated over a half-score of cities in the Northern part of the country, has cleared a considerable part of the area abutting on the Chinese border and is approaching the capital of the Republic, Hanoi, which is still in the hands of the French intervention forces. The great victory of the Chinese people, the military successes of the Vietnamese, and the growing consolidation of the internal and external position of the young Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam are stimulating the fight for liberation of the people’s of Laos and Cambodia.

“While waging an armed struggle for their liberty and independence the Vietnamese, Cambodians and Laotians are taking an active part in the world peace movement. In September 1950 a Preparatory Peace Committee was set up in Cambodia. The Stockholm Appeal signature campaign was conducted both in the liberated areas and in territories occupied by the French. A National Peace Congress held in North Viet-Nam on November 19th, 1950, was attended by delegates not only from Viet-Nam, but also from Laos and Cambodia. It discussed and passed resolutions on the tasks of the peace:

supporters in Indo-China, on the fight against intervention and on the restoration of peace in the country.

“The developments in Laos and Cambodia testify that the American and French imperialists attempts to enslave these countries are doomed to failure.”

(Excerpts from V. Vasilyeva's article in
“New Times”, Feb. 28, 1951).

CHAPTER III

LAOTIAN AND CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENTS AND LEADERS

A. LAOTIAN GOVERNMENT AND LEADERS.

1. Convention of the First National Assembly.

The National Assembly of the "PATHET LAO" (Laotian Nation) met at the middle of August 1950. For the first time in the Laos history, over 100 representatives of various nationalities and sections of the Laotian people of both occupied and liberated areas met to review the patriotic resistance of the Laotian people during the past 5 years and discuss the policy and tasks to be carried out in the future. The National Assembly laid down the main lines of the Laotian people's revolutionary policy, decided to set up a national united front of Laos to be named NFO LAO ISSARAK (Laotian Liberation Front), elected the Central Executive Committee of the front and the Resistance Coalition Government of Laos and adopted the national flag, national hymn and name of the Laotian State.

The general policy of the Laotian Government is:

1. — To unite the whole people within the national united front and around the Resistance Coalition Government of Laos, in order to drive out the French im-

perialists, to wipe out traitors, to achieve genuine independence and unity, and build up welfare and happiness of the Laotian people

2 — To unite with brotherly peoples of Viet Nam and Cambodia in view of driving out their common enemy — the French imperialists

3 — To stand in the world camp of peace and democracy and oppose aggressive plots of the imperialists

2 Resistance Coalition Government

The Resistance Coalition Government of Laos elected by the National Assembly consists of

Prince Souphanouvong Vice President, Premier
and Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Thao Phoumi Vaung Visit Vice-Premier and
Minister for Home Affairs,

Thao Kayson Fasan Minister for Defence,

Thao Nouhak Phoumi Savan Minister For
Finance and Economic Affairs,

Thao Sithoun Kaummadam and Thao Faidang
Ministers without portfolio

3 Manifesto

At the end of its meeting, the National Assembly of Pathet Lao issued the following manifesto to the Laotian people

Fellow countrymen and women,

The French imperialists had been dominating our country for over 60 years. Posing themselves as our pro-

tectors, they exploited and oppressed us with utmost savagery.

For 60 years, we had been deprived of our freedom and independence. In 1941, the French imperialists surrendered to the Japanese invaders and ceded part of our national territory to the Siamese militarists.

In Autumn of 1945, we rose up to drive out the Japanese and set up an independent government. Hiding behind British and Chinese Kuomintang troops, the French imperialists once again robbed us of our land.

However, we have been fighting stubbornly against them these last four years. Failing to re-impose by force their rule over our country, the French aggressors attempted to deceive our people by bestowing a faked independence on their lackeys—Sisavang Vong, Chiao Buon Vu, Kham Mao and others—under whom they set up a puppet government—and by knocking together self-styled “revolutionary parties.”

The policy of the French imperialists is clear: they want to reconquer our land, to re-impose their rule on our people, to rob our properties and to exploit us once again.

They want to use the Laotian people to fight against the Vietnamese and Cambodian peoples.

They want to turn Laos into a base for American imperialists to prepare a third world war against democratic countries.

The National Assembly of Laos, on behalf of over two million Laotian people, declares to our fellow countrymen and women, to the French people and world-wide public opinion that the French armed aggression in Indo-China is an unjust war, that the acts committed

by them are inhuman and directly disturb peace in this part of the world.

On behalf of the Laotian people, we solemnly declare:

1. — All Laotian people, irrespective of sex, age, race and religious belief, must unite closely and fight to a bitter end in order to drive out the French aggressors, exterminate the traitors and restore independence and unity to our homeland.

2. — The people of Pathet Lao strongly protest against and oppose the intervention of any foreign imperialist in internal affairs of the Laotian people.

3. — The Laotian people will unite closely with the peoples of Viet-Nam and Cambodia in order to exterminate their common enemy — the French imperialists.

4. — The Laotian people will unite with the peoples of the world in view of defending lasting peace.

Fellow countrymen!

We have been fighting for four years. The peoples of Viet-Nam and Cambodia are giving us selfless assistance and the peoples of the world are supporting us. The more we fight, the stronger we become day after day.

On the contrary, the more they fight, the weaker the French aggressors become. Their rape and plunder war is bitterly condemned and opposed by the peoples of France and of the whole world.

We will never fall dupe of their intrigues, nor will we compromise with them; instead, we will do all we can to wipe them out.

Under the leadership of the independent government and the national united front of Laos, rise up as one to drive out the French imperialists and to save our race from bondage and misery!

Long live the victory of the Laotian Revolution!
Long live Independent Pathet Lao!
Long live the solidarity between the peoples of Laos,
Viet-Nam and Cambodia!
Long live the world front of Peace and Democracy!

B. CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT AND LEADERS.

1. Declaration of Independence.

On April 17th, 1950, the First National Congress of Free Cambodia was held, in which a People's Liberation Central Committee and a Central Executive Committee of the National United Front were elected.

It was also in the first National Congress that the policy and the following Declaration of Independence of Free Cambodia were drawn up:

All men are born equal in rights. They are endowed by the Creator with certain unalienable rights that none can violate among which are the right to live, the right to be free and to realize happiness.

Since 87 years, however, the French colonialists, under the cloak of diffusing their "civilisation", have invaded our country, massacred our compatriots, oppressed and exploited our people, violated our shrines. Their unjust and inhuman acts are innumerable.

In politics, since the signing of the humiliating treaty of 1863 the French colonialists have arrogated to themselves all the power in internal and external affairs did not spare us even the least democratic liberty.

Not satisfied enough with the most barbarous laws applied to our country, the French colonialists savagely slayed our national heroes, such as Pakumbo, Achar soa and treacherously assassinated our patriots, sparing neither the Venerable Priest Acharhemchieu nor His Royal Highness Prince Youtaivong and lastly Youkoeus.

During the first and second world wars and since the Franco-Vietnamese war, the French colonialists have forcibly enrolled thousands of our young compatriots to serve as their cannon fodder in the battlefields of France and Indo-China.

The whole Khmer Nation is determined to mobilize all moral forces, lives and properties in order to build up the foundations of its independence and its liberty.

The Provisional Central Committee for National Liberation calls upon all compatriots to stand up, men and women, rich and poor, young and old, without distinction of religious belief or political affiliation.

You all, in whom is flowing the Khmer blood, stand up against the French colonialists for the liberty and independence of the Fatherland!

Those who have guns, use your guns;

Those who have swords, use your swords;

Those who have neither guns nor swords, arm yourselves with bamboo sticks.

Everyone must strive to fight the French colonialists with the spirit of Great National Union in order to save the Fatherland.

In the name of Justice and for their own interests, we also appeal to all Chinese and Vietnamese nationals living on the Khmer soil, to join with us in our struggle against the French imperialists. The liberation of our

territory will be also the liberation of their rights and interests

The national and international situations are more than ever favourable to our cause

The barbarous French aggressors shall be defeated!
Victory can only be ours!

April 19th 1950

*The Provisional Central Committee for
National Liberation of Free Cambodia*

2 Prominent Leaders.

Mr SON NGOC MINH, Chairman of the People's Liberation Central Committee of Cambodia, is a Buddhist priest of the Onnalem Pagoda in Phnom Penh, capital city of Cambodia. He is a close comrade-in-arm of late Acharneao, a great Cambodia patriot who died in the Poulo Condore penitentiary island, and who deserved a great love and gratitude from the Cambodian people. Priest SON NGOC MINH took an active part in the demonstration of Cambodian priests in 1942. Beaten and pursued by the French colonialists, he took shelter in Soctrang province (South Viet Nam) where he started the liberation movement among the Cambodian nationals living in Viet Nam. The movement led by him soon became stronger and got a deep influence among the people of Cambodia. In the first National Congress held on 17, 18 and 19 of April 1950, he

was elected Chairman of the People's Liberation Central Committee of Cambodia.

Mr. CHANSAMY, assistant to Priest SON NGOC MINH, was educated in France for over 10 years. When he returned home, he refused to work for the French colonialists, but participated in the patriotic movement. He was the man who strongly protested against the "capitation tax" on Buddhist Priests created by the French. When the Issarak (Free Cambodia) Movement was launched, he immediately enrolled himself in it as an active militant. He was first elected as Vice-Chairman of the Liberation of Southeastern Cambodia, then Vice-Chairman of the Liberation Committee of the same region, and recently Vice-Chairman of the People's Liberation Central Committee of Cambodia.

Mr. CUUSSAMEH, executive member of the same Committee, is an educated man, in charge of the propaganda section of the Issarak Movement since 1945. He was once elected Vice-Chairman of the Liberation Committee of Northwestern Cambodia.

Mr. SIEUHENG is also one of the prominent leaders of Cambodia who has been playing an important role in the Liberation Movement since its beginning.

CHAPTER IV

UNITED FRONT OF VIET NAM, LAOS AND CAMBODIA

1 Conference of Representatives of Three National United Fronts

A three day conference was held in the second half of November 1950 by representatives of the three National United Fronts of Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia to discuss the setting up of a joint united front of Indo-China. Mr TON DUC THANG, representative of the national united front of Viet Nam, delivered the opening speech hailing the presence of delegates of the national united fronts of Laos and Cambodia. Other representatives made reports on the activities of their national united fronts, exchanged experiences between the three countries, discussed the founding of a joint united front of Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia, and elected a Preparatory Committee to set up this front.

a) *Liberation Struggles of Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia, Part of World wide Struggle For Peace and Democracy*

After hearing the reports on the situation in the world and in Indo China, the Conference pointed out that although the international imperialist camp

is being torn by the worsening economic crisis and all kinds of contradictions, yet imperialist countries are united in their opposition to the democratic bloc in their attempts to stem the liberation movement of colonial and semi-colonial peoples and in their preparations for a third world war.

On the other hand, the victory of the Soviet Union over German and Japanese fascists has contributed to the success of the revolutions of many peoples and of their building up of a new democratic regime. The conference further remarked that since the founding of the People's Republic of China, the three Indo-Chinese states of Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia have been connected with the powerful bloc of democratic countries and have new conditions for the development of their liberation struggles. The conference also remarked that never before has the revolution of oppressed peoples risen so high, especially the liberation war of the Korean and Indo-Chinese peoples and guerrilla wars in Malaya, Philippines etc. which have shaken the whole colonial system of the imperialists and are dangerously menacing the capitalist regime.

b). *Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia Must Unite Into a Single Bloc.*

Speaking at the Conference, the delegate of the national united front of Laos said:

“The setting up of the joint united front of Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia will certainly enhance the friendship between our three peoples. As Mr. TON DUC THANG has said, this joint front is a common organization for leading the struggle of our three peoples against their common enemies. By convening this Conference, we have already won a great victory over our enemy.”

The representative of the national united front of Cambodia said:

“In view of their geographic and historic conditions, Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia cannot be divided. They must unite into a single bloc to oppose the French imperialist aggression. Thanks to the support of the Vietnamese people, the Cambodian people have achieved many victories. The liberated area in Cambodia continues to be expanded day after day.”

Speaking at the closing session of the Conference, Mr. HOANG QUOC VIET, Secretary-General of the Steering Committee of the Vietminh Front, on behalf of the Presidium, said:

“Although our Conference was short, we have heard all the will and desiderata of the three peoples of Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia. We have condensed them into a leading principle and will transform them into a powerful weapon to wipe out the French imperialists from the whole of the Indo-Chinese peninsula and to oppose the American interventionists efficaciously. The alliance between Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia is not only a prerequisite to the complete victory of our three peoples, but also a solid basis for the building up of a democratic, prosperous and happy Indo-Chinese Federation. Based on

the mutual respect of equality, this alliance bloc is sure to achieve the ultimate goal of our three peoples'

2 Joint Statement

At the closing session of the Conference, the representatives of the three national united fronts of Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia issued the following joint statement

We delegates of the national united fronts of Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia, have gathered together on the 20th, 21st and 22nd of November 1950

This Conference convened at a time when the forces of democracy and those of international reactionaries are struggling ruthlessly, when the world peace defenders are holding their second congress, when the armed struggle of the Southeast Asian peoples is gaining great momentum, when the people and army of Viet-Nam have just won great victories against the French imperialists and when the guerrilla warfare is spreading far and wide in Laos and Cambodia

In the light of the past and present fighting experiences of our three peoples the Conference has clearly analysed the situation in the world and in Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia. It remarks that

1 — Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia are fighting the same enemies — French imperialists and American interventionists. In order to defeat their common enemies and to gain real independence and unity for their Fatherland the peoples of these three countries must unite closely and help one another in their long-drawn out struggle

1 - In their preparations for a third world war, the imperialists headed by the Americans are planning to use Indo-China as a military base of aggression against New China and of aggression against the liberation movement in Southeast Asia. Therefore, the struggle of the peoples of Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia is closely connected with the world-wide movement for the attainment of peace. In order to achieve complete independence and unity, they must stand in the world camp of peace and oppose the domination of a third world war.

After an exchange of views, the representatives of the Conference have agreed on the basic points of the joint policy of the three national united fronts and laid down the following tasks:

1 - To speed up the setting up of an alliance between the three peoples of Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia on the basis of equality and mutual respect of national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

2 - To give one another an all-out material and political assistance in order to speed up the liberation of all three countries.

3 - To help the peoples of these countries and to give advice to the other national peoples oppressed by the imperialists to pursue democratic movements, to organize local and national liberation movements and to support the united front struggle in pursuing the struggle for national independence and territorial integrity in light of the conditions.

4 - To support the movements of the peoples of all the other national united fronts and to support the peoples of all the other countries in their struggle for national independence and territorial integrity.

5 — To oppose any tendency toward self-complacency and toward underestimating the enemy, to dismiss any fear of the American imperialists and to help the people of each country understand the policy of their own government and national united front

6 — To strengthen the relations with the force of peace and democracy, first of all to establish relations and alliance with the neighbouring countries in Southeast Asia

Peoples and armies of Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia!
Patriotic organizations in Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia!

This conference is the first step toward the setting up of a brotherly alliance between the peoples of Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia. Such alliance alone, as President HO CHI MINH has pointed out, can defeat all the vicious intrigues of the French aggressors and the American interventionists and bring genuine independence and happiness to our three peoples.

In order to rid the peoples of Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia of the hardships and sufferings created by the French aggressive war and to ensure the welfare and happiness of our children, we call on the entire peoples of Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia to unite even more closely and to fight with even greater strength and aid.

While the French imperialists are sparing no efforts to divide our peoples and hamper our liberation struggles, the unity between the peoples of Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia is a vital condition for them to achieve an

early and complete victory and to build up three independent, free democratic and prosperous countries.

Viet-Nam, November 22nd, 1950.

Members of the Presidium:

(Signed) *Hoang Quoc Viet* (Viet-Nam)
Prince Souphanouvong (Pathet Lao)
Sieu Heng (Cambodia)

