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Cambodia

28 Nov. 1958

Communication from the Royal Govt of
Cambodia sent to D.H. by H. Calmerou, Perm. Repre-
-sentative of Cambodia to the U.N.

(Security Council document)



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LETTER DATED 29 NOVEMBER 1958 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF CAMBODIA ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Sir,

On the instructions of my Government, I have the honour to inform you that troops on a war footing and large amounts of military equipment are being concentrated by the Government of Thailand on the Cambodian frontier.

This decision of the Government of Thailand is devoid of any justification, since the Royal Government of Cambodia has not taken any action of this kind.

The Royal Government of Cambodia considers that such a concentration of troops and military equipment constitutes a threat to peace in this part of the world, and has instructed me to ask you to bring this matter to the attention of all the States Members of the United Nations.

The Royal Government of Cambodia points out that in spite of this provocation it has not taken any comparable action by way of retaliation.

I enclose a communication from the Royal Government of Cambodia, dated 28 November 1958, and should be grateful if you would arrange for it to be circulated to States Members of the United Nations.

I have the honour to be, etc.

For the Permanent Representative,
Measketh Calmerom
Counsellor

The Secretary-General of the United Nations
New York, N.Y.

58-29274

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COMMUNICATION FROM THE ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF CAMBODIA

The Royal Government of Cambodia has just decided on the temporary recall from Bangkok of the Ambassador and the staff of the Royal Khmer Embassy in Thailand. The Government feels that in the present circumstances it is its duty to bring to the attention of the Khmer people and of world public opinion, in a dispassionate manner, the serious reasons which have prompted this regrettable but considered action. First of all, a brief review must be made of the events which have progressively led to the deterioration of relations between our two countries and to the present suspension of diplomatic relations. The first unfriendly act towards Cambodia on the part of Thailand came in 1953, shortly after the restoration of our national independence, and took the form of the occupation by the Thai police, and the de facto annexation in defiance of signed treaties, of the temple of Preah Vihear, one of the most beautiful monuments in our national heritage of art. As a result of our solemn protests, Thailand was compelled to take the initiative of inviting us to discuss, in a spirit of mutual conciliation, the problems at issue between our two countries, including Preah Vihear. Despite a goodwill trip to Bangkok by Prince Norodom Sihanouk and despite the assurances given by the Thai Government, the negotiations were marked by an atmosphere of tension incompatible with diplomatic usage. While our representatives were at Bangkok, various forms of intimidation were directed against Cambodia by the Thai Government. For example, the agreement in force concerning frontier traffic was denounced unilaterally, and Thai armed forces took up positions along the Cambodian frontier, on the false pretext of a threat of Communist infiltration. Then, on the day after the departure of our delegation following the failure of the negotiations, the Royal Embassy of Cambodia was the object of a violent demonstration obviously inspired by a member of the Thai Government. Despite this, we made it clear to the world that we wished to resume the interrupted negotiations as soon as this deliberately fanned hostility against our country had ended. Thailand's reply to this declared desire to restore a climate of trust and to strengthen the bonds of friendship between our two countries was to heap provocation upon provocation. For more than two months now Cambodia has deliberately been presented to the people of Thailand

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and of the world as a danger to peace and stability in South East Asia. Allegations, if not official at least semi-official, are frequently made in the Press and on the radio concerning our imperialism with regard to Thailand and our complicity with the Communist-bloc Powers, especially the People's Republic of China. Certain civil and military leaders of Thailand have not hesitated to allege that our small army is being officered by Chinese military advisers and is making active preparations to invade their country. These charges, let it be said, have been denied and refuted by all foreign observers of goodwill. According to other statements by certain Thai statesmen and journalists, Cambodia is a nest of Communist subversion from which Communist agents are infiltrating into Thailand. On the basis of this empty pretext, vexatious frontier measures have been enforced against Cambodians, and certain Khmer tourists furnished with valid passports and visas have on a number of occasions been arrested by the Thai police and, after being interrogated, turned back to their country. There have also been allegations that gangs of Cambodian bandits were pillaging Thai frontier villages, whereas, very much to the contrary, our security forces have often had to fight brigands from Thailand. In addition to all this, and in defiance of the most elementary rules of international decency, the Thai Press and radio daily insult the Cambodian monarchy and Royal Family, the leaders of Cambodia and even the Khmer race with unprecedented violence. In the face of this systematic attempt to destroy the bonds of friendship between our two countries, the Royal Government feels that the maintenance of a diplomatic mission in Thailand has become pointless, and has consequently felt compelled to recall its mission as a temporary measure. This decision, let it be made clear, is in no way an act of thoughtlessness or bad temper; and for anyone who knows the desire for peace of the Cambodian people and its leaders, it likewise cannot be interpreted as showing aggressive intentions or as a challenge. This action has been taken to preserve our national dignity and has been dictated solely by the reasons which we are today bringing to the attention of the world. It does not in any way affect our policy of strict neutrality or our desire for friendship with all nations which wish to respect our independence, our institutions and our traditions. It is the only peaceful means by which a small country such as ours can preserve its national honour when that honour is being

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continually mocked and attacked. The Royal Government of Cambodia once again proclaims its consistent desire to maintain the most neighbourly and friendly relations with Thailand, even though that great and powerful neighbour has been making a systematic attempt to destroy every possibility of understanding between our two peoples. We shall never refuse to re-establish normal relations between our two countries when the time is ripe for doing so. Lastly, the Royal Government wishes to point out that this decision to suspend diplomatic relations temporarily has many precedents in contemporary history and cannot, as has been asserted by some Thai commentators, be regarded as an unprecedented measure.
