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Kew Morse, Wayne

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Sen. Wayne Morse:

THE FAILURE OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE
"THIRD WORLD"—SEEN THROUGH THE LESSON
OF CAMBODIA¹

(By Norodom Sihanouk)

The Americans, who think they have all the resources for defending their cause and establishing their influence in the nations of the "third world" at the expense of the Socialist camp, are literally furious because they have known nothing but humiliating failures there, as in our country, for instance.

Undeniably they are very smart in the art of making money in business and industry, but when it comes to foreign policy they are intellectually not capable of understanding the reason for their failures and of learning from them in order to avoid further failures.

Many—and not the least of them—refuse to recognize their mistakes, and place the responsibility for their failure on the people whose hearts their country has been unable to win. They then call those countries "ingrates," even "seller-outers to communism."

"Ingratitude" is the first reproach—in plain words or in-between-the-lines—addressed by the Americans to those who have, for some reason or other, benefited from their aid and who then find themselves forced to adopt a cautious and sometimes hostile attitude toward them.

The Americans (and pro-American) newspapers keep on addressing that reproach to us. Mr. Dean Rusk himself, in the letter which he wrote to our Government on the occasion of the breaking of relations between our two countries, did not fail to remind us that the United States had given us substantial funds since 1955.

However poor psychologists they may be, the Americans ought to remember this proverb which every schoolboy in the world has learned: "It is not the gift that counts; it is the way in which it is given."

On extending American generosity to the "third world," President Johnson said, in substance, "We are a white, rich, and advanced Nation. You are a colored, poor, and backward country. Because we are civilized, we are giving you our pity and our money. However, you must show us the gratitude that a poor man owes the generous and important man who helps him. The least you can do, however, is to approve everything we do, without ever criticizing us. You must help us repel communism in your zone. And don't you ever forget it, if your stomach is less empty, if you have weapons for fighting the Reds and your rebels, if your country can become modernized, you owe it to us, the Americans."

¹ Source: Kambuya (illustrated monthly), August 15, 1965, editorial, pp. 19-25; translated from French by Elizabeth Hanunian.

A person like Chou En-lai, on the other hand, said to us something like the following: "The aid which we take the liberty of offering to you is not what we would like it to be. It is too modest, as compared with our feelings of friendship and esteem for you, and we thank you for being so kind as to accept it. We must make it clear to you that there are absolutely no strings attached to that aid, and that you are not required to give anything in return. It is an honor for us to be able to contribute, in an extremely small way, to your national construction (or defense) effort."

"We know that your progress is due solely to your own efforts, to the work and the sacrifices of your people. We greatly appreciate your friendship, but we do not demand that it be exclusive. We respect your non-alignment and understand very well that you have other good friends, even among the powers of the free world."

You will note the difference in the ways of giving. On one side we are being humiliated, we are given a lecture, we are required to give something in return. On the other side, not only is our dignity as poor people being preserved, but our self-esteem is being flattered—and human beings have their weaknesses, and it would be futile to try to eradicate.

As impossible it is for a Johnson to hide his pride of being rich, white, and powerful, it is just as impossible for us khmers to control our incredible need for saving our dignity. For, while the rich, when he loses his honor still remains rich, the poor loses his last justification for existence.

Hence it is easy to understand that we would rather have a single Chinese yuan offered with tact than, let us say, 100 American dollars brutally thrown into our face.

If the Americans do not manage to understand us, let their friend and ally, President Diosdado Macapagal, of the Philippines, who will some day, in very similar terms, teach the overly insolent American journalists the same lesson, explain that phenomenon to them.

Another charge made by the Americans against the people who are under obligation to them and who nevertheless refuse to follow them in the domain of politics, is that they have sold out to the Communists.

Sold out—but to whom? No doubt, because the Yankees are businessmen to the highest bidder.

Well, on that count, we could only sell out to the Americans, for the Soviet or Chinese Communists will never be rich enough to compete with Uncle Sam.

Cambodia, in spite of her very bad relations with the United States of America, has remained resolutely allergic to communism. But, as Mr. Bertil Galland, a Swiss journalist, wrote with remarkable lucidity, the Americans don't know how to grab this chance (amazing for the free world) to have—not for them, but beside them—a Cambodia strongly attached to its monarchy.

"The Americans," that college writes, "ought to understand that the enthusiastic rallying of a people around their prince is a much more effective means for saving a country from communism than all the bombs of the Pentagon."

Not only does the United States of America not forgive Cambodia for being a friend of China, but it makes her furious to see the khmer people adulate—as they say—a leader who is not even republican (i.e., favoring the republic form of government), but a prince and a former king.

Mao Tse-tung takes pleasure in proclaiming that he prefers a prince refusing to align himself with the United States of America to a plebeian throwing himself into the arms of SEATO—and that choice [preference] is full of significance and intelligence.

I have been assured on many occasions that if I were not the head of the nation, many of our workers, students, and intel-

lectuals would have become Communist—being pushed into the Communist camp by the lack of understanding, distrust, and injustice of the Americans and their disciples.

The Communist powers know perfectly well that my presence in the government serves as a restraint on the communization of Cambodia.

But they are much too smart to fight me and our government right now. They still need me for a while; they need my uncompromising nationalism, for Cambodia to resist the pressures and provocations of the American camp.

By fighting me now, the Communist powers would certainly not throw me into the arms of the free world, even less into the arms of the Americans. But they would alienate the majority of the khmer people, of our clergy, of our army, and of our police, who are irreversibly nationalistic. And that mistake would create insurmountable difficulties for a seizure of power by the Red khmers of the pracheachon and by the extreme left of the sangkum. The dispute would enable the third thief—the United States of America, Bangkok, Saigon, Son Ngoc Thanh—if not to seize the power, at least to create a dangerous confusion in our country.

I think that socialism will leave us alone, at least until the departure (with no return) of the United States of America from Indochina, which will incite Thailand to proclaim herself more neutralist than we are.

Then Cambodia will be a ripe fruit for the Communists to savor without even going to the trouble of picking it, as the Red khmers will make it drop directly into their mouth.

In striking contrast with the shrewdness of the Socialist camp, the United States of America is, through the channel of the CIA, deploying a vast anti-Sihanouk operation, not so much from South Vietnam, which has more serious worries, as from Thailand, which had been relatively spared. I shall cite the secessionist subversion attempt in our Koh Kong Province and the transfer of liberation troops (our rebels) from the South Vietnamese frontiers, almost lined in their entirety by the Vietcong, to Thailand.

These liberators are now planted all along the Dangrek Chain, engaging in unrestrained anti-Sihanouk and pro-free world propaganda activities and attacking our border posts in order to save us from enslavement by Peiping.

The Americans are forgetting that by uprooting our monarchy and discouraging Sihanouk and the Sangkum, they are eliminating all obstacles to the communization of our country. For the arrival here of a Son Ngoc Thanh, and, even more, of a Sam Sary, would immediately throw our young people, our peasants, our workers, and even our clergy, into the arms of Peiping and, necessarily, of Hanoi.

It is quite obvious that the CIA has not learned anything from the lessons of Cuba and Santo Domingo.

Judging incorrigible the CIA would "sack me," as the saying goes, to get rid of me as well as of the Sangkum.

I am warning the Americans, so long as we can contain the attacks of the Thanh traitors, we will remain neutral. When we can no longer do so, we will be forced—for which the United States of America is to blame—to go over into the Socialist camp, as Cuba did in the same circumstances, as one of these days the Dominican Republic will do and other nations of Latin America for which the United States of America, as a Washington-type politician, happily departed on a witch hunt.

This is not a paradox, but a reality: U.S. policy and U.S. aid are the greatest purveyors of communism.

The United States of America has only one policy: if one is not for her, it is because one is against her. She accepts no other solu-

tion, be it Gaullist France or Sihanukist Cambodia.

The publishers of big American newspapers have classified De Gaulle as enemy No. 3 of the peace—after Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai.

As for Sihanuk, head of a pocket-size kingdom, he does not deserve to figure in such a classification: he is quite simply the "lackey of Peiping."

De Gaulle's crime is to want a French—not an American or a Soviet—France.

Sihanuk's crime is to want a Cambodian Cambodia, escaping both the free world and the Communist camp.

Let us consider the case of President Nasser: he receives economic aid from the Soviets and the Chinese, though he is extremely hard on the local Communists whom he has outlawed and forced to join the country's only party.

The Communist powers have made no remonstrations, or remarks, on this matter, and imperturbably continue to give him considerable aid and unflinching political support.

For much less serious reasons, the United States of America is threatening to cut off aid to Nasser, Sukarno, and others. Nobody knows as yet the result of that absurd method of procedure.

What is wrong with the Americans is that they have a mind like bookkeepers who are incessantly keeping book on the returns from capital invested by them. As Richard Nixon, who failed in his attempt to become the Chief Executive of the United States of America, said with almost unbelievable coarseness: "There is no reason for fattening those countries for the Communists who will take them over." The countries to which that (not very) distinguished politician referred were Latin American nations which just once (and timidly) voiced some reservations on U.S. policy in Santo Domingo.

The Soviets and the Chinese make believe that their aid is being paid without security, without guarantee of reimbursement. However, that investment is a highly paying proposition.

In Cambodia, for example, where the Chinese have become so popular because of their elegance, their know-how, and their savoir-faire, it so happens we are being suspected of being their vassals.

The Dean Rusk and the McNamaras manage to see Communists everywhere, especially in Asia and in Latin America. By getting themselves into a frenzy and treating the genuine nationalists like Communists, they create Communists at every step, thus becoming the victims of an image which they themselves have conjured up.

They do not want to leave the people—even their allies—any possible national choice. Their choice for them is Americanization or communization.

Since they have no national choice, the people prefer communism to the intolerant, brutal, and vindictive free world, as the Communists do not push them into their camp and wait until they come of their own accord—disgusted by the mistakes, pressures, and, sometimes, duress on the part of the Americans.

Ours is a convincing example. For years the Americans, infuriated by our immoral neutrality (according to John Foster Dulles) have done everything to force us to give it up. Now, the result has been the opposite of what they expected: that neutrality has turned into balking.

However, our reaction was easy to foresee: Like all the other countries (including the Latin American countries), we are balking against coercion.

If Cuba has slipped toward communism, if Latin America is becoming anti-American, if the Japanese people are no longer hiding their feelings and their anger, if Pakistan

is getting out of SEATO, and if De Gaulle is bristling up against the United States of America, it is directly and undeniably the work of Washington—and not of Peiping or of Moscow.

The Americans have always used this kind of language in dealing with the third world: "If you are not for us, you are against us and for the Communists."

The third world answers: "That is wrong. We want to be neither for you nor for the Communists. We are for our national government, for our country. We want to be the friend of all and satellite of none."

The United States of America comes back: "By reasoning that way you act like pro-Communists. You are therefore our enemies. We shall act toward you accordingly until you recognize your mistake (see the error of your ways). Neutrality is a joke—at least that which is 'not in our favor.'"

Before that wall of incomprehension and gross stupidity, why would not the people concerned be tempted to follow the example of Cuba and of the South Vietnamese patriots?

The aggressive militarism of the United States of America, finally, completes the triptych (aid—policy—militarism) which encourages the progress of communism in the world.

In South Vietnam, for example, tens and perhaps hundreds of thousands of young people who were nationalistic or unpolitical in the beginning have gone over to communism, because of the protectorate established over their country by the United States of America, and of the bombs dropped on their heads, and of the napalm.

In order to eliminate a dozen Vietcong, presumed to be in a given area, the Americans use big stuff—tons of bombs, incendiary liquids, toxic powders, and so forth. They destroy entire villages, killing hundreds of innocent persons, as well as the crops.

The survivors, who do not know how to get support or even compassion from their government under orders of the aggressors, and who naturally want to avenge their dead, are joining the ranks of the Vietcong: The United States of America has therefore created many more Communists than she has destroyed.

When that situation is laid before them, the Americans answer with irritation: "If we leave this country, it will fall within the hour entirely into the hands of the Communists."

Insofar as South Vietnam is concerned, it was not true several years ago. It is probably true today. For the Americans have, by their immeasurable stupidity, made "Reds" out of all those who only wanted a "Cambodia-like" neutrality for their country—i.e., independent of the Americans and the Communists.

Those people there should have been allowed to govern their country with the support of the people which would not have failed to defend the independence of Vietnam, but which would obviously have implicated the withdrawal (but orderly, without humiliation and with undue hardship) of the American forces.

The United States of America, on the other hand, saw to it that those who wanted, out of patriotism and nationalism, a neutral and free South Vietnam, were declared outlaws. The neutralist leaders were imprisoned, tortured, sometimes shot to death—just like the Vietcong with gun in hand. Those who could not escape are now in the maquis, where the Communist forces have taken them in hand.

The mania of the Americans for occupying foreign countries and studding the world with military bases is incomprehensible as well as unjustifiable—even if the security of the United States is being invoked. We are living in the age of intercontinental missiles, of satellite spies in space, of small cosmic craft able to accurately hit a certain target, i.e., a certain moon crater.

In our day and age, a base of U-2 planes in Pakistan, a missile base in Turkey, or a naval base in Japan cannot adequately protect the territory of the United States of America against a possible Communist strike.

What good is that rampart when Pakistan becomes the bosom friend of Red China, when Turkey maintains the best of relations with U.S.S.R., when Japan—at least her young people—protests the coming of an American battleship and receives the envoys of the White House with a hail of stones or a profusion of booling?

What good is the Thai "bastion," when the long-time pro-Chinese spy center for southeast Asia in Bangkok is next door to SEATO headquarters; when the inhabitants of the provinces bordering on Laos, according to the American special services, stopped listening to radio Bangkok years ago and are listening to the "Voice of the Pathet Lao," of Hanoi, and even of Peiping; when those same border populations do not know the name of the Prime Minister of the Thai Government, though they know Prince Suphanuvong's and Ho Chi Minh's names?

The United States of America is not even a giant with feet of clay. She has become a giant made of clay, because she does not have the courage to face reality and takes refuge in wishful thinking.

She failed to understand that in order to contain communism she must help forge a chain of strongly nationalistic, irreproachably independent and genuinely free states headed by obstinate and even intractable leaders, like De Gaulle in France and (I say this without false modesty) Sihanuk in Cambodia.

She preferred to create a chain of lamentably vassalized nations supported at a loss—a rotten branch, deceiving from a distance but breaking as soon as one leans against it.

The Americans will understand only after their total effacement of the third-world that an ideal, or an ideology, is not conquered by the force of arms or money, but by offering another ideal, or another ideology, more in keeping with the nature and aspirations of man—accepted as an intelligent being.

For having tried to make them understand this vital truth, the France of General de Gaulle—which, pursuing his line of reasoning to the end, this year refused to participate in the work of SEATO as a rightful member—the Americans and their fanatics called France, I said, a saboteur of the anti-Communist alliance and accused her of "playing into the hands of Peiping."

If France, a big power, ally of the United States of America and member of the atomic club, has for the Americans become the purveyor of communism, how can we expect our tiny Cambodia to make herself understood and respected by the United States of America some day?

The United States of America leaves the people of the third world, who refuse to give up their nationalism and their independence, only one way out: to fight until final victory against her brutal and stupid imperialism.

But that victory will leave us face to face with the victor—communism.

As tired heroes we will not be able to fight against communism, which has done us no harm and which, to the contrary, has sustained us in our fight against imperialism. We can do no more but to let the Communists pick the fruits of a victory which we would never have been able to carry off without them.

The neutralism of the third world will thus have disappeared from the earth, which is the fault of the Americans alone.

It would be unfair to blame it on the Communist powers which are not there for nothing. History which makes light of propaganda will prove one day that the Americans were the ones who brought the fruit of the third world to maturity and served it to the Communists on a platter.

That is the lesson to be learned from the aberrant policy of the Americans. That will be the conclusion to be drawn from their startling and decisive failure in the third world.

POSTSCRIPT

May I be permitted to quote, as last month, these astonishingly accurate and deep lines written by the great British historian, Arnold Toynbee, from his book, "The United States of America, Involuntary Heirs to 'Odious Colonialism'":

"To the people who suffered under Western domination in the past his voice (President Johnson's—the author) sounds like the Kaiser's and Hitler's. The United States of America is absolutely against the determination of the non-Western majority of the human race to bring about their own liberation from Western domination, which it has endured for the last 200 years.

"The United States of America, not realizing what she had done (to deserve this), has fallen heir to British, French, Dutch, and Japanese colonialism. Consequently, she has attracted to herself the hatred aroused by the European and Japanese colonialists against themselves. It is a formidable heritage; and even the U.S. military potential will not be strong enough to bear up under it for long. The haste on the part of the United States of America to occupy the place in Vietnam which had been inevitably vacated by France demonstrated that colonialism had ceased to be possible (or, acceptable). By assuming this anachronistic role, the United States of America has placed herself into an untenable position.

"When the non-Western people got rid of European and Japanese colonialism, they thought for a while that they had really regained their independence. But now the Americans have taken on the relief and are dictating to the Asians what they should or should not do. In other words, the Americans, in their turn, are treating the Asiatics like natives, which is making them furious.

"The only practical foundation for co-existence between the non-Western majority and the Western minority of the human race is the absolute equality of relations.

"All Western powers, even including the United States and the weak but incorrigible Portugal, will have to accept equality in the long run. The sooner they accept it, the smaller will be the price they will have to pay."

This final condemnation of U.S. foreign policy is even more impressive in that it was voiced by an eminent Westerner, a citizen of a country that is a loyal ally of the United States of America.

The price the American people will have to pay for the blunder of their leaders will certainly be a very heavy one.