

So at the end of 1977, they used large-scale forces to launch an attack against us. They wanted to carry out the strategy of "lightning attack, lightning victory". They carried out this strategy in order to prevent the people from opposing them, and also to prevent opposition from world opinion. If they succeeded in laying their hands on Democratic Kampuchea, there would be nothing that world opinion could do.

Relying on their forces, they launched a large attack against us in the south of this region (Kompong Cham and Svay Rieng). That was their main attack. And in this part of the country there is a secondary front, as well as one to the north of the Mekong.

They launched these large-scale attacks in this region in order to capture our Eastern Zone. This is a strategic zone for the Vietnamese as well as for us, because Saigon is locked in it. So if the Vietnamese had succeeded in capturing this region, they could have threatened Phnom Penh, the capital. And afterwards they could have captured the northeastern region and the north of the country, in order to take the whole of Kampuchea. But they have been defeated.

Their strategy of "lightning attack, lightning victory" has been defeated. Now they are trying the strategy of protracted attacks.

The first was a strategic defeat for the Vietnamese. If they have been defeated in their strategy of "lightning attack, lightning victory" they will also be defeated in their protracted attacks.

Now the Vietnamese are in a very difficult situation, especially on the military front. They are being successful in building up their armaments. Their people are against the recruitment policy. Their economy and finances are also in a very difficult situation. Inside the country there is still a sense of insecurity everywhere. And they are in a difficult situation on the international plane as well. They have been unmasked in the international arena. And now they are in conflict with China, and this makes it even more difficult for them. All the Southeast Asian peoples and the peoples of the whole world are becoming increasingly conscious of their aggressive policy against Kampuchea. And world opinion has seen that Vietnam is a lackey of the expansionist Soviets and is carrying out the Soviet policy of expansion in Southeast Asia.

As you know very well, Cuba, acting under the orders of the Soviet Union, has played the role of an expansionist and aggressor in Africa. The Soviets likewise use Vietnam as their vanguard force to carry out their

expansionist policy in Southeast Asia.

So the Soviet Union and Vietnam thought it would be very easy for them to capture Kampuchea. But they have not been able to achieve their aims. We are determined to defend our territory to the end. We dared to make every sacrifice in our struggle against US imperialism, until we achieved liberation. So we cannot agree to be enslaved by the Vietnamese. If the Vietnamese had been alone they could not have attempted to capture Kampuchea, because we know how to fight as well. And the Vietnamese cannot fight against us at their will. They despise us. They thought they could attack Kampuchea at once and swiftly capture it. But we succeeded in repelling the attack.

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Aydinlik: Prime Minister Pol Pot stated just now that Vietnam would not have dared to attack them if it had been alone. Taken from this point of view, which is the more dangerous enemy of the Kampuchean people, Vietnam or the Soviet Union? Could you shed further light on this question?

Pol Pot: Vietnam's aim is to capture Kampuchea. Taking Kampuchea would make Vietnam a big power in the Indochinese peninsula. And after that, they would extend their expansion to Southeast Asia. As for the Soviets, they don't want to capture Kampuchea themselves. So they order Vietnam to do it for them. After Vietnam has captured Kampuchea, the Soviet Union can take over the whole of Southeast Asia. And after taking the whole of Southeast Asia, the Soviets can launch an attack on either the north or the south. And they can exercise control over the strategic strait of Malakka. Many countries have political, economic and military interests in the strait of Malakka: it is a very important strategic point, and also a ~~xxxxxx~~ strategic target of the Soviet Union's.

The Soviet Union and Vietnam attacked the Asian countries in 1975, 1976 and at the beginning of 1977. For at that time, they envisaged getting hold of Southeast Asia and carrying out expansion in this region. But as they had no success in their attack against Kampuchea they were unable to go ahead towards Southeast Asia. This is why they have now changed their attitude and say that they would like to have good relations with the Southeast Asian countries. They have changed their behaviour. But if they had succeeded in capturing Kampuchea, surely they would not have changed. Indeed, if they had succeeded, I don't know what would have become of Southeast Asia.

Now since they have not succeeded in capturing Kampuchea, they want to have better relations with the Asian countries. And what is the purpose of their present move? It is to surround Kampuchea from the rear. In fact they do not want to improve their relations with Kampuchea. They are still continuing their aggression against Kampuchea. But they are pretending to develop better relations with the Asian countries, in order to isolate Kampuchea, to attack it from the rear and to succeed in their attacks against Democratic Kampuchea. And when they succeed in capturing Kampuchea they will continue their expansion over Southeast Asia.

The countries and the peoples of Southeast Asia have seen through these manoeuvres. They understand Democratic Kampuchea's desire for independence. Independent Kampuchea is an obstacle to this expansionism and is defending Southeast Asia against it.

If Kampuchea's luck had turned and she had become a slave of the Vietnamese, surely the Vietnamese would have reached the borders of Southeast Asia. The countries and peoples of Southeast Asia do not want such a thing to happen, because when Vietnam gets close to them, it will launch attacks against them. This is how the present situation stands.

Kampuchea's position is closely linked ~~with the strategy of the~~ ~~Soviet Union~~ to that of Southeast Asia, and also closely linked with the strategy of the Soviet Union. This is why the Soviet Union continues to give aid to the Vietnamese. They ~~very~~ cuddle Vietnam like a baby in the arms of their economic alliance. For the Comecon is in fact the Soviet economic alliance. And the Soviet Union gives more and more economic and financial aid to Vietnam, as well as more and more military aid. They send Vietnam, military and civilian advisors as well as armaments.

Aydinlik: During our visit to Kampuchea we were also informed on the Vietnamese attacks and heard that during these attacks some Soviet military had been captured or killed. Is this true?

Pol Pot: In December 1977, when the Vietnamese attacked us with 14 divisions they used large quantities of heavy artillery and many tanks. Among them there were many Soviet tanks. And the commanders of the heavy artillery included Soviet commanders; so did the commanders of the tanks. Soviet commanders were giving orders from Vietnamese territory. They were also giving orders from inside the tanks penetrating into our territory. There are proofs of this.

First, on the radio we listened to, we heard orders in the Russian language. There were Vietnamese speaking Russian, but also Soviet officers speaking Russian.

As a second proof, we destroyed a tank. And inside this tank we killed two Soviet soldiers. They were wearing white suits, like those of foundry workers. Those were suits made to ward off the heat.

We made this public on December 31, 1977. But we did not give their nationality, because we did not want to further complicate the situation. However, the Soviets paid no heed to our good will. They continued to despise us. This is why they continued to give aid to Vietnam and to launch attacks against us. Since then, the Soviets have not dared to penetrate into our territory. They are afraid that we might get some more proof to use against them. But they still continue to give aid to Vietnam in order to attack us.

So this Vietnamese aggression against Kampuchea is part of a very complex situation. Vietnam wants to get hold of Kampuchea, and the Soviet Union also wants to get hold of Kampuchea in order to extend its expansion to Southeast Asia.

So how can Kampuchea solve this problem? The solution of this problem lies with Vietnam and the Soviets. We are safeguarding and defending our independence, but they do not accept this.

This is why, when we formerly held negotiations with Vietnam, they did not take this into consideration. We have held many negotiations with Vietnam. But Vietnam did not come to an agreement, because Kampuchea abided by her position of independence during the negotiations.

Aydinlik: If we are not mistaken, Secretary Pol Pot personally took part in nearly fifty negotiations.

Pol Pot: I did. Apart from myself, Comrade Noun Chea, Under Secretary of the Party, and Comrade Ieng Sary, as well as all the comrades from the Central Committee of the Party took part in the negotiations. We went to Hanoi in June 1975 just after our liberation. It was the first country we visited after liberation, and at a time when the Vietnamese had captured our island Koh Way. Never in the history of world diplomacy have so many leaders left the country at the same time. In Hanoi we had the Secretary, the Under Secretary, the Permanent Members of the Central Committee and all the members of the Central Committee. This was because we wanted to solve these problems with the Vietnamese. But the Vietnamese did not agree

with us. Even on the border question which had been solved in 1966 and 1967, Vietnam refused to respect our rights. The Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Liberation Front of South Vietnam and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam had agreed at that time to respect our borders -in 1966, and 1967. But after liberation Vietnam refused to respect these borders. So the negotiations were not successful and none of the negotiations held afterwards came to a successful end. They launched an attack against us. But if we had agreed to be their slaves, this problem would have been rapidly solved. Since we refused, they continued to attack us. The Vietnamese, as well as the Soviets, refused to come to an agreement because it is a question of Kampuchea and also of Southeast Asia. In order to extend their expansion in Southeast Asia they have to do away with the obstacle of Kampuchea but we reckon that the situation in these last eight months has unmasked the aggressive face of Vietnam to the world.

The Soviet Union has a world strategy within which it has a special strategy for Southeast Asia. They will never abandon this strategy. So surely they are going to continue their acts of aggression against us. But as before, Kampuchea is determined to oppose them, and the peoples of Southeast Asia will oppose them as well. The present situation shows that the forces which stand against the forces of aggression of the Soviet Union and Vietnam have greatly increased, and shown their true nature more and more clearly.

We hold that the destiny of Kampuchea and that of Southeast Asia will not be determined by the Vietnamese and the Soviet Union: they are in the hands of the people of Kampuchea and the peoples of Southeast Asia.

US imperialism has already made this clear through its own example. They wanted to take the destiny of the Kampuchean people into their hands. And we fought against them until they were thrown out of Kampuchea. And the Kampuchean people have already gained experience in the national liberation struggle to liberate their own territory. If the enemy dares to aggress Kampuchea, the Kampuchean people will surely rise in struggle against them. If they continue their aggression, the Kampuchean people will continue to fight against them too. And the situation will become more ~~xx~~ and more complicated for them.

We have told you about the defence of our territory, because it is the most important problem and embraces all the other problems. We are carrying out the socialist revolution, we are constructing socialism, defending our territory, improving the standard of living of our people in all fields

- economic, cultural and educational. But we can do these only when Kampuchea is independent and sovereign. So we are trying to defend and safeguard our Kampuchea in order always to remain independent and sovereign. And in the defence of our territory there are countless difficult problems, because Kampuchea remains within the scope of the strategy of Vietnam and the strategy of the Soviet Union. It is under such conditions that we are defending our independence. So we have to make a great effort. If we do not or if our line is not correct, Kampuchea will become a dependent country.

Aydinlik: The Kampuchean people waged a five-year long national liberation war. And after this Kampuchea was subjected to attacks by Vietnam. What is the present ~~six~~ state of the national economy and what are your plans for the future?

Pol Pot: Our economy in general is not at a high level compared ~~ix~~ with the economies of developing countries. Before liberation Kampuchea was a semi-colonial and semi-feudal country. It had a backward agriculture. The poor peasants and the middle poor peasants made up 75% of the whole population. They were very poor. Likewise the labouring people's standard of living was very low.

During the liberation war there was tremendous devastation, destruction and damage.

After liberation we had to strive through our own efforts to reconstruct our economy, to reconstruct our country and to improve the standard of living of our people. We had to mobilise large forces in order to solve the problem of rice production. We have fundamentally solved this problem. In 1976 the rice output was enough to feed the population and also allowed for some exports. In 1977 the rice output again sufficed to feed the population and it was also possible to make some more exports. And the poor peasants, middle poor peasants and all the labourers who did not have enough to eat before liberation, now have enough to feed themselves. For many centuries this food problem was not solved. The feudalists, the landowners and the capitalists could not solve this problem. Neither could colonialism, neo-colonialism, or foreign aid. But we have solved the problem. This problem having been solved, the people and all the strata of the people in the countryside and throughout the country are very satisfied with this regime and this has strengthened the forces of the people. With such forces we can build up our country on strong foundations and this also enables us to

have stronger forces for defending our country. Now we are continuing to develop agriculture. We are continuing to develop rice production, as well as industrial crops. Our industry relies on agriculture. We export agricultural products and we import industrial goods; in the meantime we are buying industrial equipment to set up factories. But the industrial crops are used as primary commodities for our factories. Meanwhile we are striving to construct various essential factories. We have built factories for the construction industry, chemical plants, steel plants and factories for machine tools, energy plants, alcohol factories and foodstuff factories. We pay great attention to building basic factories, like cement factories, steel plants, oil refineries. These are the industries that make up an independent economy. We are now striving to build them. We are achieving this plan step by step. During the construction of these factories we also train technicians. They study and participate in production work at the same time.

Let me give you an example. Formerly one had to study for eleven or twelve years, to acquire general culture and to get a secondary school education. Now, children from twelve to fourteen years of age know how to read, write and count, and they also participate in production. On average they study general culture for two hours a day. They study for three years. They can get an education which is about the same as the one where they had to study for eleven to twelve years. They don't have a very high capability, but it is higher than the level of those who studied for nine years before liberation. We have to train technicians in this way in order to have enough technicians rapidly.

As for technique, we train them according to the ~~former~~ formerly used principles. We are developing education step by step, we are improving our knowledge step by step. In developing agriculture we are also training agricultural technicians. We have already trained many technicians in this field. They know how to combine rice seeds, and how to analyse the quality of the soil. They know how to use fertilizers, they know how to fight ~~with~~ the diseases in the rice paddies. And they know how to construct water conservancy projects. You have already visited some water conservation projects. As you have seen they study and work at the same time. If we are to wait for them to complete their studies and then to participate in production, we would have to wait sixteen years. Since they study and participate in production at the same time, we train our technicians thus. The reactionaries ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ the world say that we ~~can~~ certainly cannot train our own technicians. But in fact, all techniques and know-how stem from the productive labour of the people. In other countries those who study and

participate in production at the same time are a minority. They have very few technicians. But now in our country the majority study and participate in production at the same time. Thus we can train many technicians. This is in accordance with the mass line of our Party. And by carrying out this line we can surely create our technicians and they can surely acquire knowledge, technical knowledge. We ~~raise~~ ^{train} our technicians according to this line. This is our line ~~xxxxxxx~~ and it is applied in all fields. Surely, among them there will be people who are very good with chemicals, with electricity, or with foundry work, with machine tools or engines. This is how we train our technicians. Carrying out this line we have already succeeded in forming a technician force and we have to continue carrying out this line. This is all I want to say.

Aydinlik: Would Prime Minister Pol Pot also give us some information concerning the plans for economic construction? What are the planned targets?

Pol Pot: We have an economic plan. Just after liberation our Central Committee discussed the plan. We had liberated the country in April 1975. In January 1976 our Central Committee held a Congress during which the economic plan was discussed. We started implementing this plan in April 1976. According to this plan we must transform Kampuchea from a ~~backward~~ backward agricultural country, into a modern agricultural country within ten or fifteen years, beginning from 1977. We have to strive hard to achieve this plan, because it is a very short time. The ruling classes did not solve this food problem for hundreds of years. As for us, we have an economic plan to construct a modern country in fifteen years. Also, another aim of this plan is to transform Kampuchea from a backward agricultural country into a country with basic industries, within fifteen to twenty years. For agriculture and industry we began to take the first steps in 1977. We are propagating this plan among our people and our armed forces. We have to succeed in fulfilling this plan, otherwise the Central Committee will be responsible. The whole people, the whole army and the whole Party, would say that the Central Committee is not even capable of fulfilling this plan. Therefore, we are doing our utmost to fulfill this plan. The aim of the propaganda among the people and the army is to inform them of this plan and to make the people and the army participate in the achievement of this plan; it is also aimed at enabling the people to see whether the Central Committee will realise what it has promised, whether it can succeed in fulfilling this plan or not. So this is a plan that belongs to the

whole people. It has been officially announced and propagated to the whole people.

In line with this, we at the same time have another four-year plan, from 1977 to 1980. This is a plan for agriculture, industry, communications, culture and education, and for social affairs and health. Beginning from 1977 we have made great efforts to fulfill this plan. We are doing our utmost in all fields to fulfill it.

Aydinlik: What is the reason for abolishing the use of money? How do you evaluate your three-and-a-half year experience and its results?

Pol Pot: We have had good results with this experiment. The people have no problem in not using money. We have solved the economic problem by not using money. As for the political aspect, people have no difficulty with this complicated problem of money. This aims to put an end ~~to~~ to a part of the superstructure ~~is~~ embedded in the minds of the people. Money is only a means of conducting economic transactions. Money is not an economic or a political end in itself. It's like a bridge. But we can solve the problem of the living conditions of the people without this bridge. I see this as a way of doing away with a part of state power. Those things that are unnecessary and unimportant for us, we can do away with.

We are Marxists. Lenin has educated and trained us about the state and how to destroy the state. Marxist-Leninists should look for ways to take over the state power and to eliminate the state. Money is a part of ~~the~~ the ~~xxx~~ state. Therefore we have done away with it. And in the future if we have to do away with anything else, we will. And we have to do away with things if the people are satisfied with this in practice and if through this we can improve the standard of living of the people. Some people have said that we are making our revolution in a stupid way. But in fact we are doing as Lenin teaches us, as Marx, Engels and Lenin have taught us.