

June 3, 1963

**Record of Conversation from Premier Zhou Enlai's
Reception of Ambassador to Cambodia Sisowath
Sirik Matak**

Citation:

"Record of Conversation from Premier Zhou Enlai's Reception of Ambassador to Cambodia Sisowath Sirik Matak", June 3, 1963, Wilson Center Digital Archive, PRC FMA 106-00821-04. Translated by Stephen Mercado.
<https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/165600>

Summary:

Zhou and Sirik Matak discuss the treatment Chinese doctors offered to Queen Sisowath Kossamak, Chinese economic aid to Cambodia, and civil disturbances in Cambodia.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Henry Luce Foundation

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

Request General Bureau for Economic Relations with Foreign Countries to Handle

Confidential

Document 431

Foreign Ministry File

Record of Conversation from Premier Zhou Enlai's Reception of Ambassador to Cambodia Sisowath Sirik Matak

Ambassador represents Cambodia's Queen and Sihanouk in expressing their gratitude to Chairman Liu for his visit to Cambodia, expresses their gratitude to our doctors for treating the Queen, and request that the cotton mill provided as Chinese aid be changed to an oil mill.

(The Premier has not yet reviewed)

Accompanying person: Department Director Zhou Qiuye

Time: 2 p.m., 3 June 1963

Location: West Flower Hall, State Council

Ambassador: After returning, I wanted to see Your Excellency the Premier. Thank you for receiving me so soon.

Premier: I should receive Your Excellency the Ambassador.

Ambassador: Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness Prince Sihanouk wanted me to express their gratitude for your profound friendship. They consider that Chairman Liu Shaoqi's visit to Cambodia has written a new page in history.

Premier: Thanks to Her Majesty the Queen, His Royal Highness Prince Sihanouk and the Cambodian Government mobilized the nation's forces for a friendly reception of Chairman Liu Shaoqi and the Chinese delegation and guaranteed their security. This struck a blow against the reactionary forces, particularly the Chiang Kai-shek clique's sabotage plots. This has made a deep impression on us. We are very grateful.

Ambassador: We should express our gratitude to you. As His Royal Highness the Prince said, due to the Chinese side providing us information and support, we cracked the case.

Premier: This is the Cambodian side's organizing disruptive action after proceeding with the investigation. At present is there an ongoing investigation?

Ambassador: At present those people are still detained.

Premier: Their plotting is not only against the Chinese side but against the Prince and the Queen. This is a huge threat against the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Ambassador: As Your Excellency says, these plots are not only against China's authorities. They are also against Cambodia. We must carry out an interrogation.

Premier: South Vietnam is a great threat to you. Because of the convenience of transport by water, land, and air, they can infiltrate Cambodia in a moment's time.

Ambassador: At present, in northern Cambodia, Ngo Dinh Diem's military forces often infiltrate Cambodia, and among the soldiers there are also white persons.

Premier: Your country's borders are unfavorable. First, those countries to your east and west are hostile to your country. In the north, Laos is unstable. In all three areas imperialism is active. This is disturbing.

Ambassador: So this often puts us in an unfavorable position.

Premier: His Royal Highness the Prince's upholding a policy of peaceful neutrality truly is not easy. Your ability to uphold peaceful neutrality in Indochina is laudable. This is worthy of respect, admiration, and support.

Ambassador: I am grateful for your support. We will never overlook the great support that China has given us. The visit of Chairman Liu Shaoqi and the Chinese delegation to our country, too, is support for us.

Premier: Your having expended so much in manpower and material to receive Chairman Liu makes us feel uncomfortable. We are very grateful.

Ambassador: We thank you for your kindness. It was our obligation to provide assistance and make His Excellency Chairman Liu's visit a success. At the same time, Her Majesty the Queen thanks you for sending doctors for her medical treatment.

Premier: Has the treatment been effective?

Ambassador: As far as I know, they have just started the acupuncture and moxibustion treatment. They have already applied needles for six days. The first course of treatment lasts for six days, followed by three days of rest. In the first two days of treatment, Her Majesty the Queen found it very painful. Afterwards, her feeling improved. It is said that she has raised her arms.

Premier: Before she could not raise her hands?

Ambassador: She could not. It seems that the treatment is very effective. Her Majesty the Queen wishes to express her gratitude to Your Excellency.

Premier: We are only doing what we can. I had a pain in my neck and underwent acupuncture and moxibustion treatment for it. At the start it hurt a bit, and then it was all right. Later, my neck felt better. Her Majesty the Queen's illness is one she has had for a long time. It may be that her treatment will take some time.

Ambassador: Her Majesty the Queen's illness is one that she has long had. It has already been several years now.

Premier: At present is it only acupuncture and moxibustion?

Ambassador: Yes.

Premier: It may also be necessary to take some medicine. According to the experience of traditional Chinese medicine, it seems that this type of disease with external symptoms may have some relation to an internal disease.

Ambassador: Yes.

Premier: Your climate there is relatively humid, and Her Majesty the Queen has very few occasions to go out. This may also have some connection.

Ambassador: Before my return from Beijing, Her Majesty the Queen is to go 15 kilometers outside Phnom Penh for three days of rest.

Premier: It is good to clear dampness from inside the body.

(Department Director Zhou Qiuye said to have a doctor write a report on the Queen's condition, then look for Elder Pu [author, Pu Xiangcheng's Experimental Verses of Acupuncture and Moxibustion] to examine whether or not it requires some medicine to be taken internally. If Elder Pu cannot go, then consider whether or not to send another doctor.)

Premier: Traditional Chinese medical treatment must be combined with internal medicine, but this must await the decision of Her Majesty the Queen following a period of treatment.

Ambassador: Her Majesty the Queen invited the doctors to go live in the palace, but the doctors said that they wanted to live in the embassy.

Premier: That was very kind of her, but it would have been too much trouble for the palace.

Ambassador: I wish to inform Your Excellency, per my government's instruction. We would like to propose a small change in regard to China's aid, that is to say, changing the cotton mill to an oil mill. I have already spoken with Department Director Zhou about this

Premier: He has informed me that we may consider changing the cotton mill to an oil mill. We will give you a reply after our General Bureau for Economic Relations with Foreign Countries has examined the issue.

Ambassador: I thank the Chinese side for its understanding.

Premier: We will do whatever is of greatest benefit for you.

Ambassador: When the Cambodian government delegation visited China, it decided on this project without understanding much of the domestic situation or having a grasp of all the materials.

Premier: Economic issues are complicated. It is impossible to have a grasp of all the materials.

Ambassador: Please excuse us.

Premier: We, too, often make mistakes. Some of them are due to insufficient consideration given to design. For example, there is the plywood board factory designed for you, which I personally toured. It is too close to the pier and easily flooded. It was only when we later undertook the remedial measure of constructing an embankment that the flooding was eliminated.

Ambassador: Yes. Your Excellency is very busy. I greatly appreciate your finding the time to receive me.

Premier: Your Excellency the Ambassador, please convey our highest regards to Her Majesty the Queen, Prince Sihanouk, His Excellency the Prime Minister, His Excellency Prince Monireth, His Excellency Prince Penn Nouth, His Excellency Nhiek Tioulong, and His Excellency Lon Nol, as well as other Cambodian friends.

Ambassador: I certainly will convey Your Excellency's greetings to each of them.

Premier: Madame Sihanouk has been making great efforts, and I express my gratitude.

Ambassador: I had wanted to do better. Please forgive me for my limited ability and where I have been insufficiently attentive.

Premier: It is said that Princess Buppha Devi has returned from Paris. Is that right?

Ambassador: Yes, she returned and performed [note: Cambodian classical dance].

Premier: We are very grateful. All right, then, I will see you again.

Ambassador: See you again.

Copies: Chairman Liu's Office; Premier's Office; Office of Foreign Affairs (4); General Bureau for Economic Relations with Foreign Countries; Health Ministry; Chen; Liu; Zhang; Huang; Qiao, Han, General Office (3); 2nd Asian Affairs Department; Protocol Department; [list ends as shown]