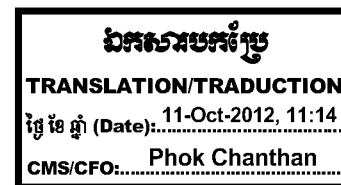


Interviewed by: Mr NGUON Im (ហ៊ុន ឌឹម) and Mr Christian BAUDESSON

Interview granted by: Mr MEAS Voeun (ម៉ាស វ៉ឺន)

Date: 3 March 2010

(Partial transcript of Audio File D369/7R)



[01:12:10]

NGUON Im: So, regarding the Western Zone Conference held on 25 July 1977 at a coconut farm in the provincial town of Kampong Speu, did you attend it? And what echelons attended?

MEAS Voeun: I attended it, but the participants were only regimental level. Regiments, battalions, Sectors.

Christian: [English]

Interpreter: So, they were leaders, weren't they? They were all leaders?

MEAS Voeun: They came from the Sector armies. Sectors, sector armies, the offices and their ministries.

[01:14:05]

NGUON Im: So, this means that the participants ranged from the Zone echelon—Zone chairmen, like that, to the Sector echelon. The Sector echelon also came to attend it.

MEAS Voeun: Divisions

NGUON Im: And divisions.

MEAS Voeun: Yes, regiments

NGUON Im: Yes.

MEAS Voeun: Battalions, ministries, and offices.

NGUON Im: There were division chairmen and deputy chairmen?

MEAS Voeun: Yes, put it down as the division committee, which was already known to consist of three persons.

NGUON Im: The division committee. And as for the regimental side, the regimental committees?

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MEAS Voeun: Yes, that's right. The regimental committees. As for a regimental committee, they brought only two people, and kept one to look after their place.

NGUON Im: Only chairman and deputy chairman—so, the regiment chairmen and deputy chairmen?

MEAS Voeun: Yes. And one was kept to look after their place.

NGUON Im: Yes. How about the districts?

MEAS Voeun: The districts! Districts too.

NGUON Im: The committees?

MEAS Voeun: The District Committees. Those who were in the District Committees were present, consisting of three people.

NGUON Im: The District Committees? District committees from all the districts, like that?

MEAS Voeun: Yes, from all the districts.

[01:15:31]

NGUON Im: The venue of the conference was arranged in what was called a coconut farm, but was that coconut farm located in Kampong Speu province or where? Can you clarify?

MEAS Voeun: That coconut farm had belonged to Prince CHĀN Raingsei (ច័ន្ទ រាំងស៊ី), the location where he farmed.

NGUON Im: Did it belong to him since a long time ago?

MEAS Voeun: Yes, it belonged to him since a long time ago.

NGUON Im: Did they call it like that? Did they call him “Prince CHĀN Raingsei” like that?

MEAS Voeun: That place was like Chbar Morn (ច្បារម័ន). It was Chamkar Chbar Morn farm, like that.

NGUON Im: Chbar Morn?

MEAS Voeun: Chbar Morn?

NGUON Im: If it was like that

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MEAS Voeun: Not Chbar Morn in Phnom Penh. Chbar Mân in Kampong Speu was the place of CHÂN Raingsei.

NGUON Im: It means that it was located along the road between Kampong Speu and Phnom Penh?

MEAS Voeun: Yes, on the left-hand side.

NGUON Im: Yes, on the left-hand side from Kampong Speu.

MEAS Voeun: Yes, Chbar Morn—they called it Chbar Morn. They put it down as Chbar Morn like that. They knew that place was a royal residence.

[01:16:49]

NGUON Im: Did they call it Chbar Morn district.

MEAS Voeun: Chbar Morn district [inaudible].

NGUON Im: That's correct. No problem. At the time of opening that conference, were there any participants from the Centre echelon, the upper echelons, and what were their names—the top leaders from the upper echelons?

MEAS Voeun: I did not seem to see any top leaders – at that time, there were only Uncle Pâl (អ័ប៉ាល់) and *Ta* [Grandfather] Si (តាស៊ី). During the opening, I saw *Ta* Soeung (តាស្មើង). That was all I saw.

Christian: [English]

NGUON Im: Was NUON Chea absent?

MEAS Voeun: I did not seem to see him. [Inaudible] but during the opening, I did not seem to see him.

NGUON Im: That was during the opening; but the following days, several days later, were there any leaders in attendance?

MEAS Voeun: He might have attended it later on—I don't know. I did not see him.

NGUON Im: At that time, as I showed the matter of this Grandfather this morning, he confirmed he was there!

MEAS Voeun: But at that level, he might have come; but, he might not have arrived yet. I did not know about that.

NGUON Im: Can you recall whether “Brother Number Two” arrived there or not?

MEAS Voeun: *Ta* NUON Chea?

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NGUON Im: Yes, they called him “Brother Number Two,” but I did not know they....

MEAS Voeun: Number 2! He came and attended it later on, but I did not see him or I had left earlier. I did not know about that.

NGUON Im: And they said that the conference was already in progress, but he attended late at that time in order to make comments. The conference was in progress, and he made comments at that conference. This is according to that document, it states that.

[01:20:04]

MEAS Voeun: I did not know about this point, but I knew that Brother Number Two came.

NGUON Im: Can you recall matters relating to the participants?

MEAS Voeun: It seems that I could not recall.

NGUON Im: In...now I'll read for you the confession of Ta Si, who wrote: “In June 1977, Brother Pål invited district and sector cadres to an Open Conference. The conference was held at the coconut farm (Speu) as put in the parentheses” and Ta Si clarified, “I did not attend, but I stayed at the large house about 50 metres away.” It was about 50 metres from the location of the conference to his house.

[01:22:13]

“As soon as Brother Number Two arrived, Brother Pål invited him to make comments at the conference. Brother Number Two made a presentation on the current situation to the conference.” And he clarified (meaning Ta Si clarified), “As far as I remember, another core task was added—that was to be defence, revolutionarily vigilance to counter further activities of the enemy, the CIA, the KGB and the Yuon lackey.” This was what he clarified, like that! This was written by—this belonged to Ta Si. But can you remember which leader Ta Si referred to as Brother Number Two? Can you....

MEAS Voeun: Number 2 could only be *Ta* NUON Chea himself.

NGUON Im: Brother Number Two?

MEAS Voeun: Yes. Just *Ta* NUON Chea. But I did not seem to see him at that time, or maybe he just came to open the session for a moment and then went somewhere that was unknown to me. But I did not see him.

NGUON Im: But were you in attendance until it ended?

MEAS Voeun: Yes, I was in attendance until it ended. I expressed life views and did something with the districts, like that. But I do not remember him, because at that time the situation in the Northwest was not going well.

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NGUON Im: Normally, did the upper echelon attend a conference just for the morning or for several hours and then leave?

[01:25:03]

MEAS Voeun: Or sometimes they just came and held discussions among themselves like that and left. But whether he came or not was unknown to me—that was not necessary, but I do not seem to remember—do not seem to remember. If the matter of fighting ...

NGUON Im: Below this, it reads, “Brother Pâl then invited him to go to make comments at the conference.”

MEAS Voeun: That’s correct— Uncle Pâl, he opened the conference. That day, Uncle Pâl, he opened it.

NGUON Im: So, he invited him [...] at the conference, and then he spoke about the situation like that.

MEAS Voeun: We are not sure about this point. So then, there is no need ...

[01:27:06]

NGUON Im: In the Revolutionary Flag we showed this morning, they also extracted the contents of instruction by the upper-level Party Representative like that. As for attendance, they published it in the Revolutionary Flag Magazine, Issue 8 dated...oh, in August 1977, which I showed this morning. This was the presentation made by the Representative of the Party Organization regarding some instructions on building, strengthening, and expanding leadership, on the occasion of the West Zone Cadre Conference on 25 July 1977. And they published this! There are just these several pages, but the instructions, as Ta Si clarified, “aimed to strengthen the core tasks of defending and promoting the era of high revolutionary vigilance” like that.

MEAS Voeun: Yes.

[01:28:04]

NGUON Im: That was the instruction! And they published it...so because of that, say that this is a meaningful document in the sense that the Revolutionary Flag published comments made by the leadership echelon in the West Zone who attended the conference!

MEAS Voeun: This

NGUON Im: Yes, for this! So that was why in this, Ta Si spoke about matters relating to the conference at the coconut farm. But like this, or if there were two conference sessions at two different times, or (inaudible), or what, I do not know about that.

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MEAS Voeun: No.

NGUON Im: Or if there was an earlier one and a later one, like that, or what, I do not...

[01:29:02]

MEAS Voeun: The conference was all together—but to my notice, as for conferences like in Longveak (លង្វែក), involving the Army and the Sectors as well as the Zones, they never skipped them. If it was not POL Pot, then it was NUON Chea. If my recollection of conferences is like that, they would have come to attend without fail, would have come.

NGUON Im: Yes. Because it was a Zone Conference!

MEAS Voeun: Yes. No matter what, they had to come like that.

NGUON Im: If not NUON Chea, then POL Pot?

MEAS Voeun: Yes, without fail.

NGUON Im: Yes.

MEAS Voeun: Never failed.

NGUON Im: Yes.

MEAS Voeun: No matter where the conference was, never failed [to attend.]

NGUON Im: Yes.

MEAS Voeun: POL Pot, *Ta* NUON Chea. POL Pot or *Ta* NUON Chea never missed it, as long as it was a big conference—annual or six months—they came. But as for me, sometimes I attended; and sometimes in the event of border problems, I returned, went back and forth— like that. They accompanied [...] to attend. Sometimes, perhaps the situation in Koh Kong was not going well, and he might have come later than me, I do not know. It was difficult like that. But [one or the other] came without fail. I say that [one or the other] never failed to attend.

[01:30:13]

NGUON Im: Yes.

MEAS Voeun: Surely, attended.

NGUON Im: But at that time, did you see him with your own eyes or what?

MEAS Voeun: It was just that I did not see him with my own eyes.

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NGUON Im: But he attended it at that time, but I do not know if you were absent or what. I want to say like this—at that time, in case you were busy for a moment, going back and forth, how was that?

MEAS Voeun: I was called to a conference for one day, and I went there for one night, after which I returned. It may have been like that.

NGUON Im: So, in case it was like that—perhaps....

MEAS Voeun: That's correct.

NGUON Im: But....

[01:30:38]

MEAS Voeun: Sometimes I never saw it. But speaking about a conference, they [one or the other] never skipped it.

NGUON Im: Never skipped it?

MEAS Voeun: Never skipped it. Came wherever there was a Zone Conference.

Christian: [English]

NGUON Im: So, it means that in case you, Uncle, had a task requiring you to be absent at a certain point of time, you would not meet.

MEAS Voeun: That is my recollection....

NGUON Im: But normally, as for the previous conferences that you attended ...

MEAS Voeun: Yes.

[01:31:33]

NGUON Im: *Ta* NUON Chea or *Ta* POL Pot attended?

MEAS Voeun: Never missed it.

NGUON Im: Never missed?

MEAS Voeun: Never missed, given that it was a Zone Conference.

Interpreter: [English]

Christian: [English]

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[01:32:48]

NGUON Im: I want to clarify further how many days the conference held at the coconut farm lasted.

MEAS Voeun: One week, straight away.

NGUON Im: About one week?

MEAS Voeun: Yes, about one week.

NGUON Im: It was lengthy!

MEAS Voeun: A long time. Suppose that we opened a session like that for two days. After two days, we took account of affairs that had to be discussed, and spent another one or two days, even at night. It was both day and night.

NGUON Im: Yes.

[01:33:54]

MEAS Voeun: Even at night too. Even until 9 p.m. or 10 p.m. And in addition to that, we were divided into groups to express personal life views, each group consisting of five or ten members, important persons. If we could not do it on time, we would continue to do it at our places. The one-week period was without rest, day and night.

NGUON Im: The meetings took place both day and night when making life views?

MEAS Voeun: Yes. Our work was far from us; we had left our workplaces. They were held both day and night, even until 9 p.m. or 10 p.m.

[01:35:00]

Christian: [English]

Interpreter: Do you remember what the subjects of the discussions were, what subjects they discussed in that agenda?

NGUON Im: Defence.

Interpreter: [English]

MEAS Voeun: Treacherous manoeuvres.

Interpreter: [English] Treacherous manoeuvres.

MEAS Voeun: The enemy's treacherous manoeuvres, like that.

Interpreter: [English]

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MEAS Voeun: Pacifist agents [Pacifist Alliance]. Do you know pacifist agents?

Interpreter: What's that? [English]

[01:36:01]

Christian: [English]

Interpreter: [English]

MEAS Voeun: Building leadership cores

Interpreter: [English]

NGUON Im: (Read for the transcriber to record: Pacifist Alliance, building revolutionary leadership cores)

MEAS Voeun: At that time, they did not have revolutionary cores. They just called them the Party cores.

NGUON Im: Party cores?

MEAS Voeun: The Communist Party of Kampuchea right away.

NGUON Im: Building Party leadership cores like that?

MEAS Voeun: The Communist Party of Kampuchea right away. Like that; they had us accept responsibility for the affairs for which we were personally responsible.

[01:37:11]

NGUON Im: A moment ago, I stated that all conferences had the attendance of the upper echelon, for example, if not NUON Chea, then POL Pot. Can you specify which conferences you attended along with the participation of senior leaders, either POL Pot or NUON Chea—other conferences in the West Zone? Can you remember? Or other conferences in the West Zone, but during the following years, or what? Can you clarify this?

MEAS Voeun: (inaudible)

NGUON Im: Oh, I want something like this. You stated that in general as long as it was a Zone conference, there was always senior leadership in attendance. *Ta* NUON or *Ta* POL Pot was also in attendance, but it was just that their attendance at some point of time was unknown to you, but he was in attendance. But as for your tasks in the West Zone, were there any meetings in addition to what you stated a moment ago? This was not clear. As for the conferences you mentioned a moment ago, during what other

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years did you attend along with the participation of POL Pot and NUON Chea in the West Zone? Just a moment ago when you mentioned the conference at the coconut farm, you seemed to be unclear. You may have been absent when [he, they, one or the other] came, is that not right?

MEAS Voeun: Yes.

NGUON Im: Because I want to clarify this point; but, at other places, did [he, they, one or the other] attend any other conferences on a later date? Did you ever meet?

MEAS Voeun: Besides this, there was a conference in Longveak with *Ta* POL Pot in attendance.

NGUON Im: A conference in Longveak?

MEAS Voeun: Yes. The conference in Longveak had *Ta* POL Pot in attendance along with the Zone.

NGUON Im: In which year was that?

Interpreter: In which year?

MEAS Voeun: This was undisputedly in 1977.

NGUON Im: Was the Longveak conference was also a Zone conference, or whose side it belonged to? Did it belong to the military side?

MEAS Voeun: It belonged to the military side—the military side together with some Sectors. It was together with some Sectors. At that time, *Ta* POL Pot, he came. And *Ta* Si also came.

NGUON Im: Yes?

MEAS Voeun: *Ta* Si also came.

NGUON Im: *Ta* Si also came?

MEAS Voeun: That conference aimed to defend both sides—primarily the principles of national defence and building the Army.

[01:40:35]