correspondent for the Daily Telegraph and Sunday Telegraph in 1969. L. Rushbrook Williams is an elderly South Asian historian, who made his first trip to the subcontinent in 1914 and who has written widely about its politics. Both of their books were completed before the final denouement of the Bangladesh crisis. Both books are essentially chronologies of events in Pakistan up to the summer of 1971.

Despite similarities in structure and purpose, however, the two interpretations are radically different. Loeshak is generally pro-Bengali. His book is full of the familiar facts concerning West Pakistani exploitation of the East. His argument that the violence which engulfed Bengal in the summer and fall of 1971 was the work of the army, not of Awami League militants, is the standard Bengali one. He deplores the actions, and nonactions, of the Great Powers during the conflict.

At the same time, however, Loeshak's work is much too full of a sense of inevitability. He contends repeatedly that Pakistan was never a viable political entity and that cultural and economic differences between its peoples made compromise impossible. Given this perspective, he sees all actors in 1969-71 playing their parts on a stage in which the outcome has already been determined. General Yahya was probably well intentioned, Loeshak says, but his efforts were doomed from the start. Sheikh Mujib tried to find a common ground with the military, but East Bengal was bound to become an independent state anyway. Such arguments are seductive, and indeed logical, if one forgets that the constraints on the transition to civilian rule were basically military ones. Pakistan was not doomed because its two parts were geographically separated, or because its people were culturally different, or because the West had exploited the East for twenty-five years. It fell apart instead because the military could not bear to turn the national government over to Bengalis. Sheikh Mujib wanted to be prime minister of a united Pakistan.

Rushbrook Williams provides a dramatic contrast. He is militantly pro-Pakistani. An overwhelming concern that the Pakistani government has been unjustly maligned is evident throughout his book. The case rests on two key points: (1) that General Yahya and the military were genuinely disinterested in the results of the 1970 election and would have abided by whatever results it produced; and (2) that the violence in Bengal was brought about by Awami League irresponsibility and that the army acted only to contain it.

Both claims are false. Even if General Yahya himself was sincere in seeking a return to civilian government, the military had its conditions. A "Legal Framework Order" made public in March, 1970, specified that no serious political decentralization was to be permitted (as Mujib demanded) and that the military government was to approve whatever constitution the new Assembly drew up. And on the second point, though there undoubtedly is evidence of widespread civil disorder in the period before the military crackdown on March 25, 1971, the vast majority of the slaughter in Bengal occurred after that event.

Nevertheless, Rushbrook William's book is valuable because it is partisan. It will probably stand as one of the major statements of the Pakistani position. Some of his material evidently comes from the "many informal talks" he reports having had with General Yahya. His account of the final talks General Yahya had with Sheikh Mujib in Dacca in March, 1971, is one of the only ones available. In contrast, Loeshak's book is more complete and more balanced, but also less interesting and certainly less provocative. No true Bengali version of the events of 1969-71 is yet available in an American edition.

My War With the CIA: The Memoirs of Prince Norodom Sihanouk as related to Wilfred Burchett
(Pantheon; 273 pp.; $7.95)

Tran Van Dinh

The most revered divinity in Cambodia is the benevolent Naga. The Naga, Serpent Gods of the nether regions, are identified with the genies of the waters who held first place in the local cults. The Kings of Angkor themselves claimed descent from the union of an exiled Indian prince and the daughter of the King of the Naga, who gave to his daughter as dowry the soil of Cambodia after drinking the water that covered it. Indeed, the civilization of Cambodia has been a civilization of the water, by the water and for the water. Yet the Naga today seem to be helpless in drying up the rains of death from the American Eagle.

Until three years ago the 6.5 million people of Cambodia lived in peace, protected by the omnipotent Naga and by their leader, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, from the war that ravaged their neighbors. In March, 1970, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, who has consistently maintained a posture of neutrality for his country, was deposed while he was abroad on an official visit to the USSR by a coup d'état staged by Marshal Lon Nol. In his Memoirs he accuses the CIA of being the promoter of the coup. To him, the coup was the most decisive chapter in his war with the CIA, a war which dated back to 1955.

According to Sihanouk's own ac-
count, Allen Dulles, then director of the CIA, turned up one day in Phnom Penh, capital of Cambodia, carrying with him a "briefcase full of documents 'proving' that Cambodia was about to fall victim to Communist aggression and [asserting] that the only way to save the country, the monarchy and myself was to accept the protection of SEATO. The 'proofs' did not coincide with my own information and I replied to Allen Dulles as I had replied to John Foster: Cambodia wanted no part in SEATO. We would look after ourselves as neutrals and Buddhists. There was nothing for the secret service chief to do but pack up his dubious documents and leave."

To Allen Dulles and his brother, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, the answer was tantamount to a declaration of war against the CIA and against the Dulles brothers' belief that to be neutral in the deadly conflict between communism and the "free world" was to commit a cardinal sin. Consequently, the CIA's "Department of Dirty Tricks" was ordered to mobilize its resources to bring down both Sihanouk and his neutrality. The CIA enlisted the cooperation of Cambodia's anti-Communist neighbors: South Vietnam and Thailand. Of the South Vietnamese intrigues against Prince Norodom Sihanouk I had knowledge when I was South Vietnamese Minister Plenipotentiary in Burma.

In the late 1950's, of all the South Vietnamese chiefs of diplomatic missions who returned yearly to Saigon for consultations and conferences, Ngo Trong Hieu was indeed the most colorful and the most powerful. He had direct access to President Ngo Dinh Diem and his brother, Counselor Ngo Dinh Nhu. He was a close friend of Dr. Tran Kim Tuyen, the feared director of the "Office for Political and Social Studies of the Presidency," a cover for foreign intelligence and sabotage. Ngo Trong Hieu was the subject of much attention and support from his government, not because of his rank (he was not even an ambassador), but because of his assignment. He was then Saigon's "representative" in Phnom Penh, and his mission was to get rid of Prince Norodom Sihanouk in cooperation and coordination with the CIA, the Cambodian traitors (in particular, General Dap Chuon) and the Thailand secret service.

Ngo Trong Hieu's mission impossible failed, and in February, 1959, he was expelled from Cambodia. Prince Norodom Sihanouk's account of that episode confirmed all I knew about the case. This episode was later used as a theme for a film, Shadow on Angkor, which the Prince himself produced and in which he played a leading part. Despite his war with the CIA Prince Norodom Sihanouk still had time to pursue his artistic activities. He made movies and wrote romantic love songs.

The Dap Chuon Plot was one among many plots described by Sihanouk, who affirmed that the CIA "was in the forefront—except when it suited their purposes to remain concealed—of every plot directed against my life and my country's integrity. From 1954 until diplomatic relations were broken in 1965, my intelligence services listed twenty-seven known CIA agents registered as 'diplomats' at the Phnom Penh Embassy, and the list was certainly incomplete. They were backed by scores of others in the Saigon and Bangkok embassies, working hand-in-glove with them."

After the March, 1970, overthrow of Prince Norodom Sihanouk, followed by the May, 1970, massive U.S.-South Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia, the American "CIA diplomacy" was no longer needed. The B-52 diplomacy took over. The life of Prince Norodom Sihanouk was no longer in danger. He is out of reach of the CIA, living in exile in Peking, where he is treated with the full dignity of a head of state. But the lives of millions of Cambodians are destroyed and threatened. The intensive U.S. bombing raids have had a devastating effect on the people of Cambodia. The Washington Post reported on May 6, 1973: "Western sources have estimated that perhaps 700 civilians are being killed each week by American bombing. It is considered a conservative estimate."

The U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Refugees conducted a study in March, 1973, to document the needs of Cambodian refugees. Their findings provide a tragic picture of the daily crises to which the Cambodian people are being subjected. The study put the number of refugees at three million men, women and children. Orphans number some 260,000, and over 50,000 war widows have registered with the government. On April 27, 1973, the Committee on Foreign Relations of the United States Senate made public a study titled "U.S. Air Operations in Cambodia," which proved beyond a doubt that the U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh coordinates and directs all the bombings. Yet, the study noted:

We found widespread doubt on the part of experienced observers in Phnom Penh that even continued American air support and a reorganization of the Lon Nol government to include opposition leaders would arrest the government's decline. . . . We found that Sihanouk's return is no longer considered unthinkable in Phnom Penh and that the more dispirited the Cambodians become, the more acceptable they find the idea of his return, particularly if it were to mean an end to the fighting.

It is obvious that Prince Norodom Sihanouk cannot return to his land (he has recently made a secret visit to the liberated zones controlled by the Cambodian Liberation Army) while the U.S. Administration, against the will of the Congress, against all international laws, against all human decency, continues to use its B-52 diplomacy against a people who never had any quarrel with the Americans. And if and when he returns, maybe his "war with the CIA" will continue, but the U.S. air war against his people will surely stop.