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PEACE IN CAMBODIA

BY

COLONEL TAMLIKA ALI

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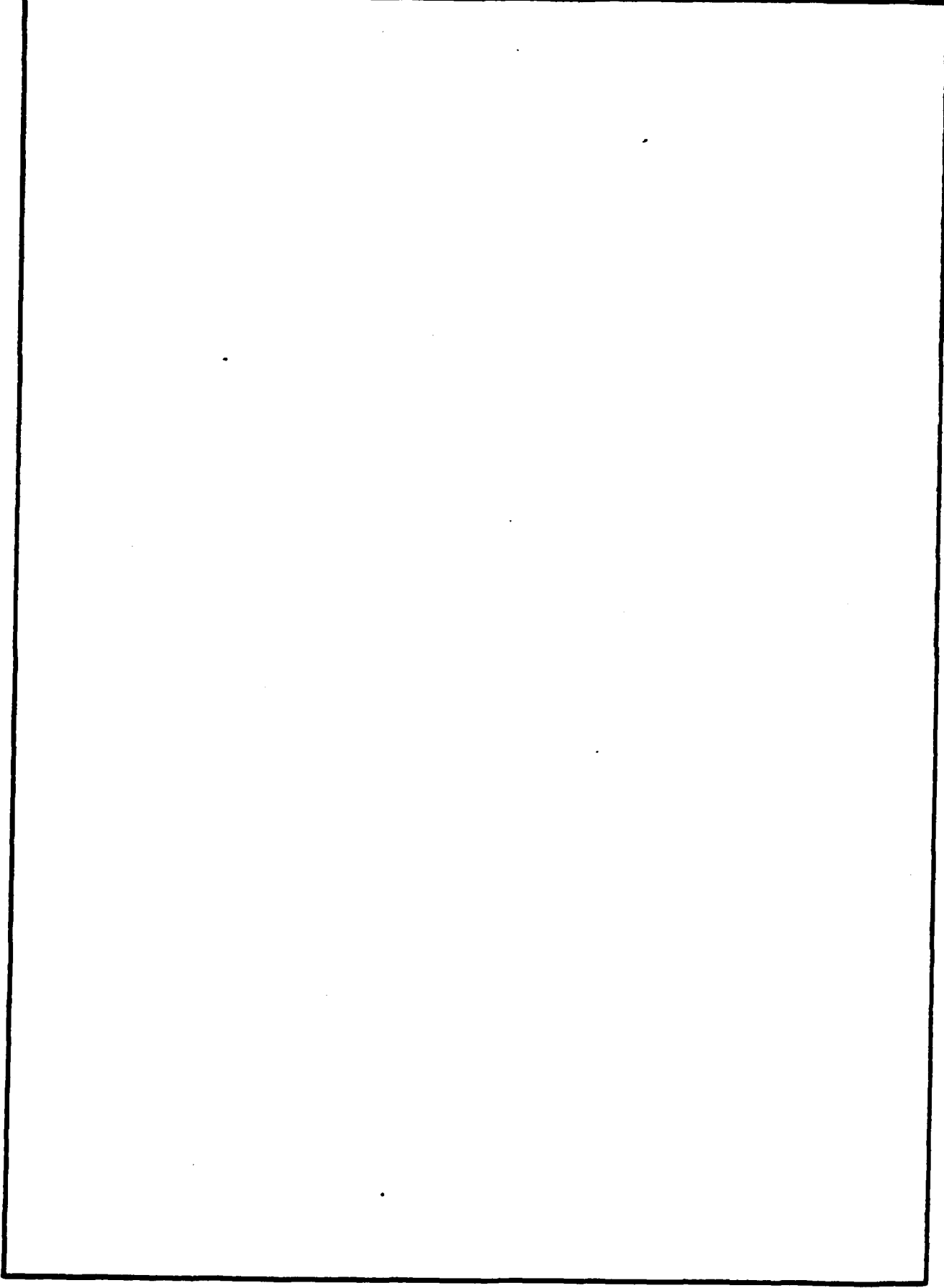
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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

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PEACE IN CAMBODIA
AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

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U.S. Army War College
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This study will examine the cases of the conflict in Cambodia and briefly discuss the present initiatives for peace. Then to assess possible designs for peace, the study discusses the advantages and disadvantages of each. In conclusion, it will present the best option available for peace in Cambodia.



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PEACE IN CAMBODIA

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

General

Peace and war cannot be separated from the development of a nation or country. Since the beginning of civilization, history has shown that a nation involved in war will subsequently make efforts to seek a solution to the end of that war. History records massive conflicts such as the First and Second World Wars and, in addition, shows numerous small wars that can be termed disputes or quarrels between one country and another. Such disputes can sometimes continue for years. In recent decades, several conflicts such as the Arab-Israeli, the Iran-Iraq, and the Afghanistan and Cambodian war have continued simultaneously throughout different parts of the world.

The current conflict in Cambodia began at the beginning of 1979, when the atrocities committed by the Pol Pot government Cambodia i.e. famine, torture and mass murder¹ invited South Vietnam to invade Cambodia and form a new government headed by Heng Samrin. Nevertheless, the displaced groups continued their opposition through guerilla operations in the jungles. Since that time Cambodia has been torn up and divided by armed conflicts between the pro-Vietnamese government and the anti-government forces. This conflict

continues to the present day and has now been going on for nearly 10 years.

The conflict in Cambodia is not only detrimental to the people of Cambodia, but also directly affects neighboring countries and disturbs regional stability. Many efforts have already been made by several parties in order to seek a peaceful solution through negotiations; including the groups directly involved in the conflict and other parties. The most active outside parties involved in the peace process are the nations of ASEAN, a regional grouping of Southeast Asian countries, the United Nations, the Peoples Republic of China, the U.S.S.R., and the United States. The solution to this conflict is not easy as this conflict continues until the present day.

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to evaluate the conflict in Cambodia, to examine several possible solutions to the conflict, and to review the advantages and disadvantages of each solution.

Scope and Methodology

The scope of this paper includes an in-depth analyses of several efforts which have been made to resolve the conflict and a look at several alternative solutions or possibilities

that may occur in the future, along with the impact of those solutions, and finally, an evaluation of which alternative is most likely to occur.

ENDNOTES

¹. Ltc. Mervin T. Avants, Jr., Cambodia in Turmoil, p. 20.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

General

Cambodia covers approximately 66,000 square miles, about the same size as Washington state, and consists of low lying fertile plains, hilly and mountainous areas and extensive forests. Cambodia sits in the middle of Southeast Asia and is bordered on the east by Vietnam, in the north by Laos, to the west and north by Thailand, and to the south by the Gulf of Siam.

The population is estimated at 7.3 million. While the majority of the population are Khmer, there are a number of ethnic minorities including Chinese, Khmer Lao (a mountain tribe), Cham Malays (in the Champa area), Thai, Laos, Vietnamese and a few Europeans, mostly French. ¹

The majority of the people are peasants who farm Cambodia's fertile land. The per capita income is extremely

low, because Cambodia has long been involved in conflicts up to the present day.

The 10th to 19th Centuries

Around the 10th century in the area of present day Cambodia there was a well known Khmer kingdom, which at the height of its power controlled a great deal of the surrounding area. The kingdom's capital was located in Angkor, northeast of Tonle Sap. Nevertheless, by the 14th century, its power began to wane and by the 15th century Cambodia was subjugated by the Thais. After that time Cambodia was continually caught up in the conflicts of its neighbors and never returned to its former grandeur. ² By the middle of the 19th century the western powers, especially England, began to take notice of this area. England became involved in Burma, which in turn prompted France to become interested in the region. Beginning with the taking of Saigon in 1859 France continued expanding its power to include Cambodia. French dominance ended with World War II when Japan took control of Cambodia in 1941. After the war, France returned to control Cambodia. Prince Norodom Sihanouk was crowned King and from that time he began the struggle for Cambodian independence. The Geneva peace conference of 1954 fully recognized Cambodian independence through free public elections. Norodom Sihanouk abdicated the crown of the kingdom in favor of his father in order to run in the public election where he won

overwhelmingly. Norodom Sihanouk became the head of state in 1955. ³

Sihanouk Government, 1955-1970

At the beginning of his 15 year rule as head of state, Sihanouk was extremely popular and greatly loved by the people of Cambodia. Sihanouk was well known for his efforts to make Cambodia a neutral country. He attempted to preserve good relations with all countries including the Soviet Union, the United States, China, and his neighboring countries. For the first ten years of his rule the situation was relatively stable, however, beginning in 1965 the seeds of disagreement with opposition groups became visible, including the Cambodian Communist Party led by Pol Pot. At the same time the conflict between South Vietnam and the Viet Cong, supported by North Vietnam, began to escalate. Both the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese used Cambodian territory as a safe base for their operations against South Vietnam. This caused South Vietnam, supported by the United States, to conduct both ground attacks and bombing operations on Cambodian territory. This increased the tension in Cambodia and made Sihanouk's position more difficult. Lon Nol and several other groups disagreed with Sihanouk's position and finally Lon Nol and Sirit Matak pulled off a bloodless coup while Sihanouk was out of the country. ⁴

The Rule of Lon Nol 1970-1975

During Lon Nol's rule the situation in Cambodia steadily worsened. South Vietnamese forces constantly conducted operations to attack the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces on Cambodian territory. In addition, North Vietnam conducted counterattacks. As a result, Cambodia became the battlefield for the North-South Vietnamese conflict. American planes also conducted frequent bombing raids on Cambodian territory which inflicted great damage on the Cambodian people. For the entire five years of the Lon Nol government Cambodia was turned into a battlefield. This situation was worsened because the Khmer Rouge constantly conducted actions against Lon Nol. At that time America continued to provide assistance to the Cambodian armed forces in order to combat the Khmer Rouge and, at the same time, assist South Vietnam combat the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese operating in Cambodia. As long as they received assistance from America, Lon Nol was able to control the situation and remain active in attacking the Khmer Rouge. However, after South Vietnamese forces were withdrawn to Vietnam and American assistance to Cambodia was stopped by the United States Congress the situation reversed. The Khmer Rouge increased their strength and were able to dominate the situation until the Lon Nol forces were totally defeated. In January 1975 the Khmer Rouge forces began a final offensive, and in April 1975 Lon Nol fled the country. The Khmer Rouge took Phnom Penh and began a reign of terror under Pol Pot.

Pol Pot Rule 1975-1979

During the three and one-half years of its rule the Pol Pot government committed many atrocities against the people of Cambodia. Forced labor, torture, and extremely cruel murders occurred everywhere. It is estimated that about one million Cambodians were killed under the Pol Pot regime. Famine and terrible suffering struck the Cambodian people. Border conflicts often broke out with Vietnam, which by that time had been taken over by North Vietnam. In December, 1978, Vietnam conducted a surprise mass invasion of Cambodia. In only two weeks Pol Pot and his close followers fled to the mountains in western Cambodia. It is strongly suspected that Vietnam invaded Cambodia because of the feeling that its security was threatened by the difficult situation in Cambodia. In addition, the invasion was probably intended to benefit Vietnam both by assisting the Cambodian people and by realizing the concept of an Indochina Federation envisioned by Ho Chi Minh. This began the era of the Vietnamese supported puppet government under Heng Samrin.

Rule of Heng Samrin, 1979-Present

After the formation of the Heng Samrin puppet government, Cambodia's name was officially changed to the PRK (People's Republic of Kampuchea) in place of the previous name of

Democratic Kampuchea. The Heng Samrin government began a program of consolidation and development and promised prosperity and happiness to the people of Cambodia. However, on the other hand, Heng Samrin still had to confront the Khmer Rouge, who continued terrorist actions against the Cambodian people. This placed a heavy burden on the Cambodians, and refugees began to stream across the Thai-Cambodian border. It is estimated that the refugees numbered in the tens of thousands ⁷ and this became a burden to the government of Thailand. In addition to operations conducted against the Khmer Rouge by the Heng Samrin forces which were assisted by the Vietnamese army, groups of Vietnamese citizens began to enter Cambodia claiming to want to assist the people of Cambodia. Some of these Vietnamese became farmers, traders, government officials, expert consultants etc. and were estimated to number about 700,000. ⁸ Unfortunately, Vietnamese farmers quickly acquired the most fertile land creating a dilemma for the Cambodians. Although most people were glad to be rid of the Pol Pot regime, in many ways with the incursion of the Vietnamese the Cambodians had, " jumped out of the frying pan and into fire ", or as the saying goes in Indonesia, " out of the mouth of the tiger into the jaws of the crocodile." ⁹

ENDNOTES

¹. Koentjaraningrat, The Khmer's Tribe in Cambodia, Kompas (Compass), Indonesian newspaper, 03 August 1988, p. 3.

². Focus, Events in the Week, Kompas (Compass).

Indonesian newspaper, 31 July 1988, pp. 1-2.

3. Cambodia Time to Time, Tempo (Time), Indonesian weekly magazine, 20 July 1988, p. 15.

4. Lt. Mervin T. Avants, Jr., Cambodia in Turmoil, p. 6.

5. Ibid., p. 6.

6. Steven Erlanger, "Gains Toward Cambodian Settlement are Seen." New York Times, 17 January 1988, p. A-14.

7. Elizabeth Becker, "Stalemate in Cambodia." Current History, April 1987, p. 157.

8. Lt. Mervin T. Avants, Jr., Cambodia in Turmoil, p. 14.

9. Devoured by the Tiger and the Crocodile, Suara Pembaruan (Voice of Innovation), Indonesian Newspaper, 12 October 1988, pp. 2-3.

CHAPTER III

CAMBODIA TODAY

Current Situation and Involved Parties

From the time of the Vietnamese invasion until the present the current conflict has continued for almost 10 years. The primary actors the conflict can be divided into several categories:

a. The Heng Samrin government, PRK (People's Republic of Kampuchea). This group is the official government in power at present and is supported by Vietnam. All levels of government have been established and are functioning; from the central government down to the village level. Total military forces

number 150,000, made up of 30,000 men in the Heng Samrin forces supported by 120,000 Vietnamese troops. ¹

b. CGDK (Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea), a shadow government formed in 1982 with Norodom Sihanouk named as head of the State. This government is a coalition of several anti-Vietnamese groups including the Khmer Rouge, the KPNLAF, and the ANS. The Khmer Rouge number about 30,000 troops, the KPNLAF have 12-15,000, and the ANS has about 5,000 troops. ² However, this coalition is never united and its members fight among themselves. As could be expected, this has not produced effective results. During the dry season offensive in 1985, the effective strength of this coalition, along with their bases, was destroyed by PRK forces assisted by Vietnamese troops. However, up to the present, they are still conducting guerilla operations, especially the Khmer Rouge who quietly and covertly receives arms assistance, including ammunition and equipment, from China. The result is that the Khmer Rouge is the strongest group opposing the PRK. Indirectly and secretly, Thailand also assists the Khmer Rouge by forwarding arms from China and by providing protected bases for Khmer Rouge operations.

In addition to the prime actors, neighboring countries are involved as a second echelon; Thailand on one side and Vietnam the other. These two countries, and especially Vietnam, have a very strong influence on the conflict. Throughout history Thailand and Vietnam have been enemies and have always been in conflict. ³ This historical background strengthens the enmity

between the two sides. The Thais, with the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia, certainly feel their security threatened by Vietnam and are worried that in the future Vietnam may invade Thailand. By assisting the Khmer Rouge, Thailand hopes to create a buffer for itself, and reduce the possibility of a direct Vietnamese invasion of Thailand. On the other hand, Vietnam feels that its security is threatened by the continued Khmer Rouge action, and as a result armed clashes often occur between PRK forces, including Vietnamese troops, and Khmer Rouge forces on the Thai-Cambodian border. In addition, violations of Thai territory by Vietnamese forces have several times occurred, causing border clashes with Thai forces. The primary excuse given by Vietnam is that they are pursuing Khmer Rouge forces which have entered Thailand. This in essence accuses Thailand of protecting the Khmer Rouge. Besides border clashes, Thailand must also bear the burden imposed by refugees continuing to stream across from Cambodia. The next actor is China, whose involvement began with Khmer Rouge rule, and has continued until the present with continued Khmer Rouge guerilla actions. China has its own judgement about Vietnam, because Vietnam and China have long been enemies. Faced with perceived threats from the Soviet Union, China feels that Vietnam is used by the USSR to threaten China from the south and southeast. With Cambodia under the sway of Vietnamese power, the Chinese become more convinced that the Soviet Union uses this situation to threaten China, both directly and through its Vietnamese or southern arm. Thus,

China believes that by helping the Khmer Rouge it can have a tool that can be used to prevent or resist the Vietnamese threat. On the other side, Vietnam is convinced that Chinese assistance to the Khmer Rouge is a deliberate Chinese effort to oppose Vietnam. Therefore, the situation has definitely continued to worsen because the role of neighboring countries is clearly dominant. If China does not want to stop its assistance to the Khmer Rouge, it is certain the conflict will continue because Vietnam sees the Khmer Rouge as its primary enemy. While in actuality, the effective power of the other Cambodian resistance groups is very small.

The Role of ASEAN

Strong ties among the ASEAN nations have caused the other member nations to solidly back Thailand. This feeling of solidarity has not gone so far as to include military action because ASEAN is not a military alliance. But from the political side the ASEAN countries feel that if threats to peace continue to occur anywhere in the Southeast Asian region, the security and safety of the entire region cannot be guaranteed. Because of this, ASEAN has a strong interest in finding a solution to the Cambodian conflict.

The Soviet Role

As the superpower that has continuously assisted Vietnam

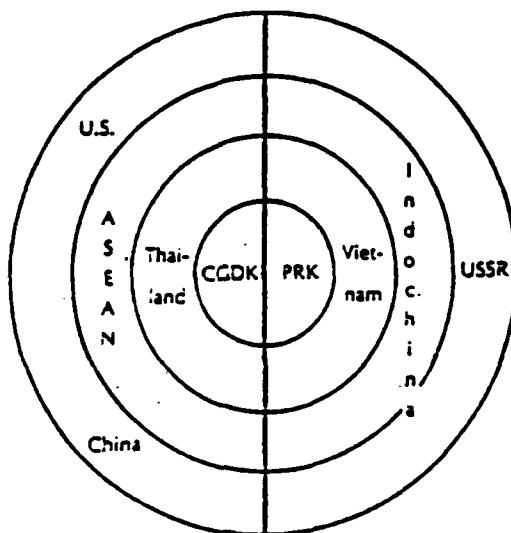
up to the present day (about US \$2 billion per year) * the Soviet Union clearly plays a role in the Cambodian conflict. Without Soviet assistance it is difficult to imagine that Vietnam would have been able to conduct the invasion of Cambodia and keep its 120,000 troops in Cambodia for almost 10 years. Thus, the Soviets play a very dominant role in addition to the other primary actors previously mentioned.

U.S. Role

Finally, the role of the U.S. cannot be ignored as at one point it assisted the anti-communist CGDK. This was intended to balance out the non-communist groups, especially the Sihanoukists, and provide them with sufficient strength.

From the above points it can clearly be seen that the Cambodian conflict involves not only the clashing Cambodian groups but also neighboring countries such as Thailand and the ASEAN nations as well as the U.S.S.R., the United States, and the Peoples Republic of China. This spectrum has been clearly illustrated by William S. Turley in his article, "Thai-Vietnamese Rivalry in the Indochina Conflict", in the form of a schematic diagram of the conflict which is shown in the following diagram: "

THAI-VIETNAMESE RIVALRY



The above diagram is, in my opinion, not entirely correct as Mr. Turley indicates that Indochina and Vietnam support the PRK. In actuality however, Indochina is composed of the countries of Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia. It would therefore be more accurate to state that the PRK is supported by Vietnam and Laos rather than Indochina. Additionally, the above diagram does not address the influence of the United Nations which attempts to moderate and resolve the conflict.

This complex interaction sets up extremely difficult obstacles to the prospects of a solution to the Cambodian problem. The concerted agreement and involvement of all the connected or active parties is required before there is any hope of an effective and complete solution to the entire problem.

As long as a solution to this problem still requires more time, it is certain that the Cambodian people will continue to suffer from the effects of this bitter, drawn out conflict.

Torture, murder, and other atrocities will continue; especially those committed by the Khmer Rouge. Gary Price, from the Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs of the U. S. State Department, reports that the human rights situation in Cambodia continues to remain critical and tragic. Price reports that torture, forced labor, and unexplained disappearances continue. There is no due process of law for prisoners under the Heng Samrin regime. In addition, civilians continue to be murdered by the Khmer Rouge. *

The political position of the CGDK is clearly more advantageous because it has the trust of the UN and has been granted a seat at UN sessions. In addition, world opinion deplored the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia and several UN resolutions criticized Vietnam, thus strengthening the CGDK position. However, in terms of actual military strength the CGDK non-communist groups are ineffective because of their relative weakness. Only the Khmer Rouge is strong enough to actively fight, but they still have insufficient force to strike a significant blow against the PRK, who are assisted by the Vietnamese troops. It can be observed that the Heng Samrin government, even though not recognized by the free world community, continues to consolidate its position. Time is clearly on the side of the Heng Samrin government.

ENDNOTES

1. Ltc. Mervin T. Avants, Jr., Cambodia in Turmoil, p. 16.

2. Ibid.

3. Focus, Events in the Week, Kompas (Compass), Indonesian newspaper, 31 July 1988, pp. 1-2.

4. John De Boutillier, "Only the U.S. can stop Pol Pot," Wall Street Journal, 19 December 1988, p. A-12.

5. William S. Turley, "Thai-Vietnamese Rivalry in the Indochina Conflict," East Asian Conflict Zone, 1987, p. 151.

6. Jane A. Morse, Peace in Cambodia Requires Difficult Compromises, Angkatan Bersenjata (The Armed Forces), Indonesian newspaper, 10 October 1988, p. 3.

CHAPTER IV

CURRENT EFFORTS

ASEAN Efforts

ASEAN, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations is comprised of Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, Singapore, and Thailand. The main emphasis of ASEAN is cooperation on social, economic, and cultural matters. Founded in 1967, the solidarity built up over the last 21 years has caused ASEAN to develop beyond cooperation on socio-economic matters. Currently, cooperation exists between individual ASEAN members on socio-economic affairs, such as the Sabah question between Malaysia and the Philippines.

In order to deal with the Cambodian problem, because Thailand is clearly directly involved in the Cambodian conflict, ASEAN, at the request of Thailand, has a duty to participate in the peace process. In addition, clearly the

stability of the ASEAN region is affected by the continued existence of the Cambodian conflict. As long as the conflict continues, the desired stability and security of the ASEAN region cannot be guaranteed. Moreover, the ASEAN desire to form a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) in Southeast Asia will never come to fruition. Because of this, ASEAN feels it has a strong interest in seeing an end to the Cambodian issue. In the ASEAN perception the only acceptable solution to the Cambodian conflict is through the use of diplomacy, and not through violence or military force. Diplomatic efforts were opened in a regional forum, and continued at an international level.

One ASEAN effort thus far was to suggest an international conference to discuss Cambodia through UN auspices. Supported by 93 member countries, the suggestion to hold the conference was accepted and was carried out in mid-July 1981. ¹ Even though it was boycotted by Vietnam, the USSR, and the Eastern European countries, ASEAN was successful in influencing world opinion about the Cambodian problem. One of the results of the conference was a call to withdraw all the Vietnamese troops from Cambodia, as had been set down in the previous UN resolution. The main result of the conference was to deplore the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia and to call on Vietnam to withdraw its forces from Cambodia. Nevertheless, Vietnam paid no attention to the appeals set down in the conference.

Proximity Talks

At the 30th anniversary of the Asia-Africa conference in Bandung in April 1985 Malaysia and Indonesia, with the full support of the other ASEAN nations, suggested the establishment of so called 'proximity talks.'² The point of such talks would be to invite the PRK and the CGDK to hold separate talks with ASEAN members to discuss the Cambodian problems. However, many obstacles arose and the idea ultimately reached a dead end.

UN Resolution

In mid-October 1987, the UN General Assembly for the 9th time passed a resolution asking Vietnam to withdraw its 160,000 troops from their positions in Cambodia and also give the Cambodian people the opportunity to direct their own fate. This resolution was sponsored by the ASEAN countries, as in preceding years.³ Surprisingly, before a vote could be taken the PRK government, backed by Vietnam, announced a plan to withdraw part of its forces from Cambodia. They also announced a policy of national reconciliation that would include all parties in an effort to find common ground. Next, in the 43rd General Assembly earlier that year, ASEAN again called for a resolution about the Cambodian issue and the resolution was accepted with 122 for, 19 opposed, and 13 abstaining. This was a significant step even though the Soviet Union and other East

Bloc countries continued to oppose. The resolution continued to press for the withdrawal of all Vietnamese troops and, in order to prevent the return of the Khmer Rouge regime, a reconciliation among all clashing parties. At that time, Singapore's UN representative Keshore Mahbubani told the assembly, "The foreign occupation forces, the tigers, will have no choice but to leave Cambodian soil soon. Our duty today is to ensure that the soil is not immediately reoccupied by the crocodiles, the Khmer Rouge, who exterminated the country's population." * The American ambassador to the UN said, "We must insure that Hanoi's withdrawal will not lead to the return to power of the Khmer Rouge, a contingency to which the United States and the international community are unalterably opposed." °

Informal Meetings, Hun Sen - Sihanouk 1987-88

Efforts to seek the best possible solution for Cambodia were also made by Sihanouk as the central Cambodian figure with Hun Sen, the PRK Prime Minister. The first meeting took place in Paris on 2 December, 1987, the second in January, 1988, and the third and final meeting in November, 1988. These meetings attempted to breakthrough the various differences separating the warring factions. During the first meeting they agreed that the Cambodian problem had to be settled by Cambodia itself, and then afterward strengthened by an international conference. The meeting was criticized by the

KPNLAF leaders and by the CGDK Prime Minister, Son San. Hanoi refused to participate in the negotiations. It appeared to be extremely difficult to reach an agreement within the CGDK itself, even though there was some basis for agreement with the PRK. At the second meeting, 20 January, 1988, Hun Sen insisted that the CGDK had to be broken up and that the CGDK army had to be disbanded before the Vietnamese troops would be withdrawn from Cambodia. This was of course difficult for the CGDK to accept, especially for the Khmer Rouge, who had a rather powerful military force. In practice, these meetings produced little result because of the vast differences of opinion. The third meeting took place near Paris and was attended by Son San. The three way meeting between Norodom Sihanouk, Hun Sen and Son San also failed to produce concrete results.

Jakarta Informal Meeting, July 1988

From the beginning, Indonesia had received approval to represent ASEAN in making various efforts to make a breakthrough in seeking a solution to the Cambodian conflict which had dragged on for nearly 10 years. Indonesia began by approaching Vietnam and tried to convince the Vietnamese to cooperate in seeking a solution. This approach paid off with an agreement reached between the foreign ministers of Indonesia and Vietnam in July 1987, and is known as the Ho Chi Minh accord. • The essence of the accord was that Vietnam

agreed to accept direct negotiations and dialogues among the warring factions with the purpose of seeking a solution acceptable to all parties. Indonesia began to make intensive contacts with all the concerned parties and finally agreed to attend the conference which came to be known as the Jakarta Informal Meeting (JIM). The meeting took place in Bogor, a small city about 60 km. from Jakarta on 27-29 July 1988.

The meeting was highly significant for all parties because it was the first time in 9 years of war that all the factions had come together. This was a positive sign in that they all agreed to switch their efforts from armed conflict to a political dialogue through negotiations or diplomacy. All parties recognized that this Jakarta Informal Meeting merely laid the base for a future solution, which would require considerable time.

The main agreement was that there was a common idea to develop a free, sovereign, peaceful, neutral, and non-aligned Cambodia under the leadership of Norodom Sihanouk based on the principle of self determination and national harmony. All parties at the Jakarta Informal Meeting were able to accept critical, interconnected key points: first, withdraw all Vietnamese troops from Cambodia and second, prevent the return of the slaughter carried out under the previous regime. It was also agreed to end all interference and assistance of all kinds, including arms supply from the outside to the involved parties, and it was agreed to plan a schedule for international meetings to oversee this process. Next, the

meeting agreed to form a "Working Group" which was given until December 1988 to compile the methods which would be used. Indonesia was designated as the host for the Working Group. The second Jakarta Informal Meeting was planned for February, 1989.

Several important statements made by representatives or officials at the first JIM can be taken such as:

a. Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas, "I believe the results are quite satisfactory because JIM is actually no more than a framework based on the Ho Chi Minh City accord in the efforts to seek a solution to the Cambodian problem. Such a framework was formulated because all earlier efforts to bring the Cambodian warring factions together had failed. What is certain is that JIM has succeeded in attaining a psychological and political breakthrough. We have successfully embarked on a long and difficult process and we cannot stop this process. All delegates agree to look at the JIM as the best framework and means to continue the efforts to end the war in Cambodia."

b. Comrade Hun Sen, Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Foreign Minister of the PRK, while answering a reporter's question stated that, "The PRK delegation, the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry Delegate and the Lao Foreign Ministry delegation to the informal conference in Jakarta brought home a success exceeding all our expectations, meaning that this was a meeting between warring Khmer parties and between two groups of countries that have been involved in the Cambodian

problem for nearly 10 years.' The Comrade then stressed that just the meeting itself is seen as a success. Yet there was another success. This was the first time the Cambodian problem was discussed in combination with two questions. First, the withdrawal of the Vietnamese volunteer army from Cambodia and second, the elimination of the Pol Pot clique and the need to stop aid to hostile Cambodian forces. For more than 9 years demands have been made for the withdrawal of the Vietnamese volunteer troops without consideration being given to the return of the Khmer Rouge forces and the international aid to the warring Khmer forces. °

Once again ASEAN believed that regional meetings such as this were the best forum for seeking a solution to the Cambodian issue. Afterwards, when the time comes, the negotiation process will be continued at the international level with meetings attended by the big countries to legitimize and strengthen the results of the regional meetings.

Chinese - Soviet Meetings

A recent meeting between China and the Soviet Union occurred in Moscow during October, 1988, and essentially covered bilateral issues between the two countries. The Cambodian issue was discussed because both countries recognized their role in connection with the Cambodian conflict. According to Soviet Vice Minister Igor Rogachev,

Moscow is prepared to, 'assist in the progress of the external aspect of the (Cambodian) problem,' and that, ' a Vietnamese pullout would promote a normalization of Sino-Soviet political ties.' Additionally, China's Vice Foreign Minister, Tian Zengpei, stated, 'the Soviets in principle agree that Vietnam should withdraw as soon as possible.' ¹⁰ Both countries have agreed upon a follow-up meeting in May, 1989, at which time they plan to concentrate more upon the Cambodian issue. ¹¹

Soviet-Vietnam Cooperation

The special relationship that exists between the Soviet Union and Vietnam hopefully will aid in their understanding regarding the need for a rapid solution to the end of the Cambodian conflict in a manner that is acceptable and beneficial to all sides. In March, 1987, Foreign Minister Edvard Shevardnadze assured Vietnam that, ' Moscow would not force Hanoi to settle the Cambodian conflict.' However, subsequent statements from Moscow indicate that the Soviets now believe that the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from Cambodia are in their best interests and that they are, in principle, currently supportive of that idea. ¹² This new attitude certainly can not be separated from the new policies of Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev. The present withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan might enhance the opportunity for the eventual withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Cambodia with the approval of the Soviet Union.

ENDNOTES

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⁵. Paul Lewis, "UN Troops Anti Khmer Rouge Policy," The New York Times, 4 November 1988, p. A-14.

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⁷. Ali Alatas, Statement by the Chairman of the Jakarta Informal Meeting, 28 July 1988, Annex II.

⁸. Time Carries Interview with Alatas, FBIS-East Asia 88-152, 8 August 1988, p. 34.

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¹⁰. Tyson, Ann Scott, Moscow to Help Speed Vietnam Pullout, Christian Science Monitor, 6 September 1988, p. 11.

¹¹. Dr. H. Ruslan Abdulgani, Cambodian Settlement Still Undecided, Merdeka (Independence), Indonesian newspaper, 4 November 1988, p. 2.

¹². Asian 1988 Yearbook, Vietnam Section, 1988, p. 284.

CHAPTER V

CHOICES

Key points

After looking at the various efforts made by the different sides, especially the steps made by ASEAN, two positive observations can be drawn or agreed upon:

a. All sides agree to seek a solution through diplomatic forums or negotiations and not with violence or military force.

b. All sides agree on the need to quickly form a coalition government for an independent, free, neutral, and self-determinate Cambodia.

Based on observations, all warring factions and outside parties see that a solution to the Cambodian conflict depends on two main points: 1. withdrawal of all Vietnamese forces from Cambodia 2. Prevention of the return of the genocidal regime of the Pol Pot clique along with an end to all interference and foreign assistance to the warring sides. The two key points above are extremely encouraging because one of the points, the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces, has already been answered. This definitely is based on Vietnam's commitment to rapidly withdraw its troops from Cambodia. During the first phase approximately 50,000 troops will be withdrawn by the end of 1988, and the remainder of the forces

by 1990. ² The question still remains whether this plan of Vietnam's will genuinely be carried out or whether it is merely a political maneuver. The next problem is how to prevent the return of the murderous Khmer Rouge regime once the Vietnamese army has been withdrawn. As we know, the Khmer Rouge have a fighting strength of 30,000 troops, trained and well armed by China. Perhaps the next question is how to convince the Chinese not to continue assisting the Khmer Rouge. One important point concerns recent statements by Sihanouk and Hun Sen. In London on 20 October, 1988, Sihanouk said, "Without the Khmer Rouge we cannot form a government. If we exclude them, we would make them irresponsible people, bandits or outlaws. It is a lesser evil to include them." ³ In Phnom Penh on 29 October 1988 Hun Sen said, "We are prepared to allow the Khmer Rouge a political role in a solution to the conflict in Kampuchea but will not make any military concession to them." ⁴

From the two statements above, we must ask if the Khmer Rouge will so easily allow themselves to be dictated to, or if they can be forced to be disarmed, who will do it?" ⁵

Next we will look at the position and role of the warring factions, and also the role of the other involved countries of the region along with the role of China and the other superpowers in terms of the extent of their involvement and the prospective role they might play in a solution. It is recognized that the Cambodian conflict has dragged on so long because so many parties are involved and all the involved

parties play an important role.

Role and position of the PRK

After ruling for almost a decade it is obvious that the position of the government headed by Heng Samrin has strengthened. Structurally and physically the Heng Samrin government has become more deep-rooted, the government functions well at all levels, right down to the village. Its military power, though not large, continues to be better trained and its defense system functions in every region of Cambodia. In addition, though maximum efficiency has not been achieved, for 20 years a variety of developmental programs have been carried out, including an important project in the field of agriculture. Even though it is recognized that these programs are still extremely limited, some of the benefits are already felt by the people of Cambodia. Logically, Heng Samrin, as the current head of government and PRK leader does not want to so easily give up his key positions in the government nor easily let go of or reduce his military power that clearly is the primary source of his ruling power. To Heng Samrin, a floating situation that drags on and on represents a positive opportunity to put things in order and entrench the position of the existing government. It is difficult to imagine that Heng Samrin would want to be easily maneuvered into forming a coalition government as the result of a settlement agreement. If the all the Vietnamese forces

are withdrawn, it is questionable whether Heng Samrin would be able to militarily resist the Khmer Rouge attacks. It does not seem improbable that Vietnamese troops would be covertly left in Cambodia disguised as Heng Samrin troops in order to support Heng Samrin. Such evaluations have certainly been considered by Heng Samrin himself. Even if the Heng Samrin forces were completely supported by all the Sihanouk and Son San troops, it is still difficult to imagine that they would be able to resist the Khmer Rouge without covert "back up" from Vietnamese forces. It can be concluded that Heng Samrin will hold out and maintain his important position in the government. Furthermore, the military will remain strong in order to maintain a viable deterrent in the event that the Khmer Rouge do not accept the results of a negotiated settlement.

Role of Vietnam

Logically, Vietnam, which has gone to so much trouble and effort over the last 10 years to root itself in Cambodia, will not allow itself to be so easily dictated to or want to completely withdraw from Cambodia. Consequently, a withdrawal of Vietnamese forces will only take place if there are guarantees that all Vietnamese interests in Cambodia will be protected and that Vietnamese security will not be threatened, particularly by Khmer Rouge actions. Thus, we can state that the essence of a coalition government must be to protect

Vietnamese interests. Logically the core of such a government must be the Heng Samrin group sitting in a dominant position where they can control all policies that might be formed. In short, Vietnam does not want to lose anything it has struggled for in Cambodia. Also, the interests of the Vietnamese who have moved to Cambodia must be protected and left undisturbed. Because of this one must return to the question of whether or not Vietnam genuinely intends to withdraw all of its troops within the next two years, or if it will leave behind elements which will guarantee the political interests of Vietnam by backing up Heng Samrin.

This sort of situation will make negotiations more difficult because in practice all sides want their own interests protected by any compromise reached. Also, if we take into account the Indochina Federation strategy idealized by Ho Chi Minh, it can be determined that a favorable Vietnamese presence is a given, either directly or indirectly through its allies such as Heng Samrin. With continued dominance by Heng Samrin there will always be a possibility that an Indochina Federation can someday be realized, although this is difficult to ensure, remembering the enmity that Cambodia has long held toward Vietnam. *

It would be extremely difficult to totally sell this idea, culturally, because the Cambodian people deeply hate the Vietnamese. Even though infrastructurally it could be forced, the idea would remain an illusion and not take root in the Cambodian people's hearts.

The Role of Thailand

From previous passages we have already seen Thailand's clear involvement in the Cambodian issue, and that Thailand is greatly concerned about the possibility of an invasion of its territory by Vietnam. The Thais are understandably upset by the burden imposed by the Cambodian refugees who continually stream across the Thai-Cambodian border. In order for this conflict to be settled, there will have to be a high level of understanding between Thailand and Vietnam. For instance, Vietnam must provide assurances that they would not violate Thai territory and likewise Thailand must assure Vietnam that they will not provide any support to the Khmer Rouge. This would decrease the power of the Khmer Rouge and would deny them safehavens from which to operate. This agreement is extremely important and must be implemented because it would go a long way toward settling the Cambodian problem. Such guarantees could perhaps be set down through negotiations.

The Role of China

A similar matter applies to China, which up to the present has continued to assist the Khmer Rouge. From the beginning, China's strategy in assisting Pol Pot has helped to keep Cambodia in China's sphere of influence and made Cambodia a buffer against the possibility of Vietnamese action, farther

north, into Chinese territory as part of a Soviet strategy. With the prospect of improved Soviet-China relations, the probability that the Soviet Union will threaten China, through Vietnam, can be eliminated. Because of this China will no longer have to fear a Vietnamese threat because Vietnam will not be able to disturb China without Soviet support. In the Cambodian question, it is hoped that China will quickly halt all its aid

to the Khmer Rouge. If this aid is stopped, China will have taken a tremendous step toward settling the Cambodian issue, because in reality the Khmer Rouge will not be able to act at all without Chinese support. Even if the Khmer Rouge were able to continue operations, they would clearly be restricted because of limitations of ammunition and other logistical supplies. The problem now hinges on whether or not China is willing to halt all its aid to the Khmer Rouge. Will China so easily give up supporting its interests in Cambodia? From several statements by Chinese leaders, there appears to be a general understanding and a trend towards such a move, thus brightening the possibility of a Cambodian solution.

The Role of the Khmer Rouge

The Khmer Rouge position is rather difficult because although they are in the strongest military position from the political side they are deplored by the Cambodian people themselves as well as most of the rest of the world.

Militarily, the Khmer Rouge forces are well trained, heavily armed, and well supplied by China. Their position is still strong because of this Chinese support. Therefore, at a negotiating table, the Khmer Rouge will not easily accept political pressure which would put them at a disadvantage. No matter what, they have the strength and the ability to dictate the terms of a negotiated settlement. This holds unless the Chinese stop supporting the Khmer Rouge, in which case the situation might alter. It is probable that the Khmer Rouge could be persuaded to negotiate and accept the results formulated by such negotiations. If not, it could occur that all the other parties would unite to isolate and eliminate them, however, this would not be easy to accomplish. Nonetheless, remembering that there would no longer be any Chinese support, Pol Pot might be amenable to negotiating. If not, the situation would most likely worsen again, i.e. the Khmer Rouge would continue guerilla actions in the jungles, opposing all enemy forces. This would mean that the peace process in Cambodia would have again failed. It is truly difficult to imagine how a peace solution can be found that can accommodate the wishes and interests of all sides.

The Role of the CGDK, Especially the Role of the Anti-Communist Groups (Minus the Khmer Rouge)

This group is basically headed by Norodom Sihanouk and Son San. Politically this group receives strong support from the international community, including the ASEAN nations. In

addition, the love of Cambodians for Sihanouk is still quite strong and Norodom Sihanouk represents the central figure acceptable to all classes, thus he must be taken into account. However, this group is militarily very weak because its military forces are few in number, and thus are unable to do much. Taking this into account, we must face the reality that for almost 10 years Heng Samrin's power, backed by Vietnamese forces, has totally ruled in Cambodia. Therefore, it is impossible to imagine a non-communist Cambodia completely free of the Heng Samrin forces or the Khmer Rouge. Thus, Sihanouk must accept a compromise or a coalition in which the communist groups are dominant. At present, Sihanouk has stated that he has resigned as head of state of the CGDK although personally he is still actively pursuing initiatives to conduct various meetings in the pursuit of a solution to the Cambodian problem and will very likely resume his post in the future. For example, Sihanouk has previously met with President Reagan in an effort to extract the solid support of the U.S. government.

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The recent moves by the CGDK can be read from a statement made by Norodom Sihanouk 25 June, 1988, based on four main points:

a. Withdrawal of all Vietnamese forces in three phases within a clear and definite time frame and under international supervision.

b. A national reconciliation in the form of a government representing the four warring parties (PRK, ANS, KPNAF, and

the Khmer Rouge) at the time of the final withdrawal of the final Vietnamese troops.

c. Free and direct elections under international supervision which will produce a strong national parliament.

d. An international conference, to include all the involved countries, the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and the UN Secretary General in order to guarantee the integrity of a free and independent Cambodia. *

The Soviet Role

As a superpower the Soviet Union plays a defining role, especially in the influence it can use with Vietnam in regard to the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Cambodia. Presently, the USSR continues to assist the Vietnamese militarily to the tune of almost \$ 2 billion a year. The provision of such an exorbitant amount of aid obviously has its compensations, in this case in the form of the use of the harbor facilities at Cam Ranh Bay by the Soviet Union. It is suspected that at some point this aid will be reduced or stopped altogether because of private Soviet considerations, with the risk that the concession of the Cam Ranh facilities would also be reduced. If this occurs it is difficult to imagine Vietnam would be able to continue to develop its economy, which is currently in desperate shape, or to pay for all of its operations in Cambodia. Thus, it is clear that the Soviets play a crucial role by pressing the Vietnamese to

reevaluate the presence of their forces in Cambodia, remembering the limits of the above mentioned aid. However, this is not as easy as might be imagined as Vietnam is an independent country and is just as sovereign as the Soviet Union; not a Soviet puppet country. The two countries conduct their agreements out of mutual respect so the Soviet approach must be fair and acceptable to Vietnam. It is possible that Vietnam might be persuaded to face the reality of the difficulty of conducting a security operation in a foreign country in the absence of Soviet aid. Possibly the Vietnamese government could learn a lesson from the Soviet involvement in Afghanistan, in which case the Soviets had to face up to reality and were forced to withdraw their forces. With Soviet understanding and persuasion it is hoped that Vietnam will be responsible and withdraw its troops, in order to consolidate its strength and develop its desperate economy, so that the aid provided by the Soviet Union can be used to build Vietnam.

Thus, it is obvious that the Soviets play a pivotal role in any solution to the Cambodian problem. It is therefore extremely encouraging that the Soviet Union in November, 1988, at high level talks with the U.S., provided America with assurances that all Vietnamese military power would be completely withdrawn within a little more than one year, even though the precise time table for the withdrawal was not given. Moscow's guarantees were forwarded at a 10 hour meeting in Paris between Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Rogachev and Assistant Secretary of State Gaston J. Sigur. 10

This goes together with a Vietnamese statement that they would immediately withdraw 50,000 troops by the end of December 1988, and the remainder by the end of 1989. However, certain parties in America, according to sources, remain skeptical about Vietnam's promise, keeping in mind the short time remaining at the time of the promise.

Another factor is the Soviet ability to influence China to accelerate the process of seeking a solution to the Cambodian issue. For example, by providing China with guarantees that Vietnam will no longer threaten China by infiltrating from China's south and southeast, China can more easily curtail aid to the Khmer Rouge. Without the infusion of huge amounts of money into their governments, all warring parties will be more apt to negotiate.

The Role of ASEAN

From previous passages the role of ASEAN is clear, that is, consistent efforts through diplomacy or negotiations to achieve a clear settlement acceptable to all sides and to the people of Cambodia. Indonesia is currently facilitating the task of the Working Groups and making preparations for JIM II in Jakarta, to be held in February, 1989. The Working Groups have encountered hang ups because the Khmer Rouge have stopped sending representatives to participate in the Working Groups. There is great hope that the second Jakarta Informal Meeting will produce a more concrete document towards a solution to

the Cambodian issue.

The U.S. Role

It is apparent that America's role is to fully support all initiatives and ideas carried out by ASEAN which will, to ASEAN, represent strong moral support. In addition, the U.S. is making efforts to extend contacts which may help produce a Cambodian solution, such as George Shultz's visits to Bangkok and Beijing in July, 1988. In these meetings talks focussed on the Cambodian problem. America's position remains to support Sihanouk and the non-communist groups in their struggle for a free and independent Cambodia. ¹¹

For the reasons given above, it still appears rather difficult to predict what will actually happen in the future in Cambodia. It still appears very difficult to produce a settlement acceptable to all sides. Any settlement will require a great deal of time because the conflict involves so many countries.

Carl Jackson, U.S. Assistant Defense Secretary for East Asia and the Pacific, at the Second International Intellectual conference on Cambodia on 29 September, 1988 said, 'Peace in Cambodia will depend in the end on the result of adroit political action in an extremely difficult situation.' Jackson said that even though there is still hope of a solution to the Cambodian issue the process of reaching such a solution, 'will be incredibly difficult.' True adroitness is required in this

political play so that the extreme suffering in Cambodia can finally be brought to an end. Making the final political play will mean simultaneously pressing Vietnam to withdraw its troops and at the same time doing something about the Khmer Rouge issue. Jackson also said that the terrible suffering in Cambodia cannot simply be blamed on the Khmer Rouge or Vietnam, but that pressure must be continually applied to both sides. Jackson finally stressed that, 'unless this action is taken simultaneously we will fall into a trap set by the Vietnamese or the Khmer Rouge.'¹² Besides Jackson, Mike Twining, Director of the office of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia Affairs said, 'The United States clearly does not have the final answer to the Cambodia problem, only Cambodia has that.'¹³ From the above opinions it is easy to see the complexity the Cambodian problem.

A Critical Analysis

Based on his personal viewpoint, this writer will try to look at several probable future developments, as explained below:

a. A preservation of the status quo until a unanimous agreement can be reached that is acceptable to all sides. This could occur quickly or not, depending upon the speed with which the results of the various peace talks can be put into

effect. Obviously, this is to the advantage of the currently ruling PRK. The PRK will continue to strengthen its position and implement its programs in accordance with Vietnam's interests. Naturally, the Cambodians themselves will be the ones to suffer from hardship.

b. A coalition government, comprising all parties including CGDK, Heng Samrin, and the Khmer Rouge. Here the problem will lie in reaching a truly balanced settlement which is acceptable to all sides. There are four main groups, that is, the Heng Samrin groups, the pro-Vietnam communists, the Sihanouk-Son San anti-communist forces, and the pro-China communist Khmer Rouge. It appears that such a coalition accommodating all parties would be extremely fragile and easily shattered so that it would not last long and Sihanouk, as head of state, would be a mere figurehead.

c. A Heng Samrin-Sihanouk coalition (without the Khmer Rouge). This might come to pass remembering the frequent contact between Norodom Sihanouk and Hun Sen. It is strongly suspected that they may form a coalition of their own excluding the Khmer Rouge. Sihanouk has said, 'I have divorced with the Khmer Rouge, they are unacceptable.' ²⁴ This alone might represent a new development, excluding the Khmer Rouge, and would last if the Khmer Rouge no longer received Chinese aid so that the coalition would be able to wipe out the Khmer Rouge. It is difficult to imagine that the Khmer Rouge would be easy to wipe out because the Khmer Rouge have such extensive guerilla war experience and are the strongest

militarily of all the factions. Thus, it is still not possible to say that the Cambodian situation is settled because there still are many conflicts.

d. A communist government under the Khmer Rouge. This is the most feared scenario and all sides are concerned it will occur. The Cambodians will never forget the time when Pol Pot ruled and around three million Cambodians were killed. A constant concern to all sides is that when the final Vietnamese withdrawal occurs at the end of 1990 the Khmer Rouge will conduct a surprise offensive and retake Phnom Penh to return to power. As this contingency is exactly what Vietnam guards against, it is possible that they will not actually withdraw all their forces because they will want to leave some behind in order to prevent such a possibility.

e. A neutral and non-communist Cambodia. The probability that this will occur is extremely small as the non-communist forces headed by Sihanouk are extremely weak and are thus unable to face the two communist forces.

f. The final possibility, a coalition in which Heng Samrin is dominant and the other groups have a small role, while Sihanouk is elevated as a symbolic head of state. A few Vietnamese troops would remain in order to keep watch over the Khmer Rouge who might not be satisfied with the settlement. This solution is more reasonable because of the extremely strong position of the Heng Samrin government, the anticipated support from Vietnam for such a coalition and its pervasive position in the countryside which presence, after 10 years,

has strongly taken root.

Taking all this into account, it is extremely difficult to make an accurate prediction of what will actually happen. Only history will eventually record the final settlement. Based on the current situation, from this writer's point of view, it seems clear that the first possibility will continue for the moment, and then the sixth and final scenario will take place in which Heng Samrin remains dominant, Sihanouk is nominal head of state and the other groups are included but play only a small role.

The alternative with the maximum benefit is the second possibility in which all parties sit in a coalition with equal positions. This can only occur if Vietnam becomes tolerant and provides looser concessions. Perhaps with stronger pressure from the superpowers or with extra concessions from the superpowers to Vietnam this might become a reality. This writer would like to point out the opinion extended by a noted American panelist who said, "It is extremely difficult to predict what will happen in the future in Cambodia. Only time will tell what will actually occur." 15

Whatever alternative comes forth, it will have to be regulated with some sort of ordered and controlled system in order to avoid future problems or dead ends. I feel that the steps to be taken, based on experience are as follows:

a. First, form a temporary coalition government which can accommodate all warring parties. This temporary coalition would be assigned to implement all policies in cooperation

until the formation of a government chosen by public elections.

b. Then form an international supervision commission which could oversee all activities of the coalition government and prevent the possibility of disruptions or actions which might oppose or deliberately restrict the process.

c. Thirdly, form an international peacekeeping force under UN auspice which would be directly under the International Supervision Commission which would have the duty to oversee the withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops and prevent hostile actions from other groups, especially the Khmer Rouge. It would be their duty to control the situation and restrict the settlement process to prevent the resurgence of the Khmer Rouge forces at the time when a power vacuum will be created by the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces.

d. Fourth, implement a cease-fire.

e. Fifth, carry out direct and free elections, sponsored by the temporary coalition government and then form a parliament from the candidates chosen in the elections.

f. Sixth, form a new government in accordance with the result of the elections, and carry out a reorganization of the Cambodian military forces.

g. Seventh, reinventory all military strength and demobilize all troops not included in the reorganization of the armed forces so that they can be given opportunities to work as civilians and return to their home villages. In addition, store all the arms of the demobilized soldiers.

h. Eighth, the world community should develop an economic aid program on the model of the Marshall Plan after World War II so that Cambodia can recover more quickly and develop its economy.

Hopes for a Solution to the Problem

It can be said that the Cambodian people eagerly await an end to the conflict in their country. The longer the conflict drags on, the longer the suffering endured by the Cambodians also continues. How will their hopes be fulfilled? According to this writer, a solution to the Cambodian conflict must be implemented with dedication by all the involved parties. The hopes for a solution to the conflict greatly depend on the success of several meetings which are planned for the end of 1988 and during 1989 such as:

a. The second Jakarta Informal Meeting (JIM II) which is already planned with a scheduled basic framework for a solution with the groundwork laid by the Working Groups.

b. Bilateral talks between Norodom Sihanouk and Hun Sen which have already occurred three times. These talks are very important because both parties have a deep interest in reaching a settlement. Even though between only two parties, hopefully these meetings will continue to grow and produce positive results.

c. Soviet-Chinese bilateral talks. The talks between these two large countries hold the key to any solution as has

already been discussed. It appears positive steps have already occurred between the two countries. A high level meeting between Gorbachev and Deng Xioping is planned for 1989. Hopefully these talks will open the way for a concrete settlement to the Cambodian problem. The world hopes the Soviet Union will play a positive role in bringing peace to Southeast Asia.

d. Vietnam-Soviet bilateral talks. Even though up till now no serious talks between the two countries have been apparent, in view of their close ties and the Soviet commitment of aid to Vietnam of almost \$ 2 billion a year, hopefully the Soviets will view more seriously the prospects for the Cambodian problem in the future; considering the great burden carried by the two nations throughout the entire conflict.

e. Finally, a complete international conference under UN auspices which can accommodate all the results of JIM II, the Soviet-Chinese meeting, and any Soviet-Vietnam meeting. This meeting would be sanctioned by the UN and would hopefully be accepted by all parties and carry the power of law. Thus, if put into effect any such agreement would be respected by all sides and carried out in an orderly manner until its conclusion as determined by the international conference. While on paper such an agreement might be feasible though lengthy, the difficult part will come with its implementation in the field. There are plenty of previous examples of the difficulty of implementing such international settlements that

testify to the need for patience, perseverance, and good coordination in order to avoid conflicts which can hinder the peace settlement process. A great deal of hard work is absolutely essential.

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³. Dr. H. Ruslan Abdulgani, Cambodian Settlement Still Undecided, Merdeka (Independence), Indonesian newspaper, 4 November 1988, p. 2.

⁴. Ibid.

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⁶. Focus, Events in the Week, Kompas (Compass), Indonesian newspaper, 31 July 1988, pp. 1-2.

⁷. Ltc. Mervin T. Avants, Jr., Cambodia in Turmoil, March 1988, p. 16.

⁸. Lou Cannon, "Reagan Backs Sihanouk on Cambodian Settlement," Washington Post, 12 October 1988, p. A-15.

⁹. Thioum Prasith, Statement of CGDK Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 5 July 1988, p. 3.

¹⁰. Oberdarfer, pp. A-12

¹¹. Cannon, pp. A-15.

¹². Jane A. Morse, Peace in Cambodia Requires Difficult Compromises, Angkatan Bersenjata (The Armed Forces), Indonesian newspaper, 10 October 1988, p. 3.

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CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

History shows that from the 10th to 14th centuries there existed a great and powerful Khmer kingdom which ruled the area of present day Cambodia and much of the surrounding territory. Its power did not last long, and afterward Cambodia was turned into a battlefield for the conflicts of its neighbors, especially Thailand and Vietnam. Cambodia is in the middle of a terribly bitter period, especially since the beginning of the Khmer Rouge regime which carried out the mass murder of one to three million of its own people and saw a Cambodia torn by unrest, fighting, and chaos. This period reached its peak when, at the end of 1978, Vietnam invaded Cambodia and took over power while forming a puppet government under Heng Samrin. Since that time a long drawn out crisis has dragged on with Heng Samrin, backed by Vietnamese troops on one side, and opposition groups including the Khmer Rouge and Son Sann and Norodom Sihanouk on the other side. Fighting and terrorism continue everywhere with the Cambodian people caught in the middle and bearing the brunt of the bitter conflict. The victims are countless and many Cambodians have fled their

land to live as refugees on the Thai border. Many groups including the UN, ASEAN, and others have since the beginning of the conflict sought to find a solution to the Cambodian problem but the efforts have not yet paid off, even though some positive results have occurred. Among the positive steps is the agreement of all sides to seek a settlement through diplomacy and negotiations. Until now ASEAN has been extremely active in various efforts to get the warring factions together to talk and jointly settle the problem. Cambodia's future is still difficult to predict. Only time will tell what will happen. However, several possible resolutions to the Cambodian conflict can be assumed ranging the spectrum from a return of the Khmer Rouge (with or without Pol Pot) and a continuation of Communist rule to a Cambodia ruled by a coalition of all the warring factions. In the view of this writer it is most likely that based on the current situation, the future Cambodia will remain a country dominated by pro-Vietnamese communists and this must be accepted, like it or not, by the Cambodian people. Hopefully, Cambodia will become stable and begin to progress even though under communist control.

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