

KAMPUCHEA

DECADE OF THE GENOCIDE

Report of a Finnish Inquiry Commission

Edited by

KIMMO KILJUNEN



Third World Studies

Kampuchea: (Decade of the Genocide)

**Report of a Finnish
Inquiry Commission)**

Edited by Kimmo Kiljunen

Kampuchea: Decade of the Genocide was first published by
Zed Books Ltd., 57 Caledonian Road, London N1 9BU, in
1984.

Copyright © Kimmo Kiljunen, 1984

Typeset by Forest Photosetting

Proofread by A.M. Berrett

Cover design by Jacque Solomons

Printed by The Pitman Press, Bath

All rights reserved

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Kampuchea.

1. Kampuchea—History—1953-1975
2. Kampuchea—History—Civil War, 1970-1975
3. Kampuchea—History—1975-

I. Kiljunen, Kimmo

959.6'04 DS554.8

ISBN 0-86232-208-1

ISBN 0-86232-209-X Pbk

US Distributor

Biblio Distribution Center, 81 Adams Drive, Totowa,
New Jersey 07512

Preface

This book is a revised and re-edited version of the report of the Finnish Inquiry Commission *Kampuchea in the Seventies* published in Helsinki in December 1982.

The Kampuchea Inquiry Commission was established in Helsinki in October 1980 to study the political, social and economic development of Kampuchea and the subsequent legal implications and repercussions on international politics, especially in light of the events of the 1970s. The Commission worked as an autonomous research body independent of any organization or institution.

At the end of the 1960s Kampuchea was a relatively stable and peaceful country, despite the extensive war in neighbouring Vietnam. During the 1970s, however, the people of Kampuchea met with a series of tragedies, the causes and extent of which the Commission wished to examine. The largest estimates of the number of people who died in Kampuchea during that decade have risen to three million, which is equivalent to one third of the entire population. According to international statistics, Kampuchea was the poorest nation in the world at the end of the 1970s.

A number of reasons for this state of affairs have been put forth: the extension of US hostilities into Kampuchea, including widespread bombing at the beginning of the 1970s; the *coup d'état* against Prince Sihanouk and the consequent drawn-out civil war; the repressive policies of the Pol Pot regime and its massive transfers of population; Vietnam's intervention in the country; starvation and the flood of refugees; and continued military operations along the border with Thailand. An objective examination of the Kampuchean situation has constantly been hampered by the strong connection of great power conflicts with the question.

The purpose of the Kampuchea Inquiry Commission was to study as objectively as possible what really happened in Kampuchea during the 1970s. The study focused on the parties to the civil war in Kampuchea as well as on the role of Vietnam and other neighbouring countries, and the policies of the great powers. Similarly, the reaction of the international community in both relief activities and in the mass media was a subject for examination as was the separate question of Finland's attitude towards the events in Indochina.

Kampuchea: Decade of the Genocide

When establishing the Inquiry Commission the stand was taken that its purpose could be fulfilled only by adhering to a position of strict neutrality, with no preconceived goal or ambition, nor was the intent to place a blame *a priori* on any party or parties. The purpose was to examine, with a view to better understanding of future international crises, the historical, great power political, regional, social and ideological factors that combined to bring about the catastrophe. Stress was laid on the aspect of human rights in the examination of the events.

The Chairman of the Commission was Professor Helge Gyllenberg of the University of Helsinki; the Secretary-General was Kimmo Kiljunen, Research Fellow at the Academy of Finland. The other members of the Commission were:

Esko Antola	Docent at the University of Turku
Osmo Apunen	Professor at the University of Tampere
Göran von Bonsdorff	Professor at the University of Helsinki
Johan von Bonsdorff	Editor-in-chief of <i>Ny Tid</i>
Vilho Harle	Docent at the University of Tampere
Pentti Holappa	Author
Jan-Magnus Jansson	Editor-in-chief of <i>Huvudstadsbladet</i>
Ville Komsí	MP
Pekka Kuusi	Former Director-General of Alko
Timo Laatonen	Managing Director of Aamulehti
K.J. Lang	Director-General of the Prison Administration
Paavo Nikula	Counsellor at the Legislative Department of the Ministry of Justice
Allan Rosas	Professor at Abo Akademi
Ensio Siilasvuo	Lt.-Gen. (retd.)
Folke Sundman	Organization Secretary of the UN Association
Helena Tuomi	Research Fellow at the Tampere Peace Research Institute
Erkki Tuomioja	Deputy Mayor of Helsinki
Mikko Valtasaari	Head of Section at the Finnish Broadcasting Co.
John Vikström	Archbishop
Reijo Vilenius	Professor at the University of Jyväskylä
Raimo Väyrynen	Professor at the University of Helsinki

The Commission was assisted by five separate research groups at the Universities of Helsinki, Tampere and Turku and at Abo Akademi. The first of these groups, led by Secretary-General Kimmo Kiljunen, has dealt with Kampuchea's historical, political and social development. The other members of the groups were Johan von Bonsdorff, Ari Huhtala and Hannu Reime ja Folke Sundman; the second group was led by Helena Tuomi and investigated the significance of international humanitarian aid in easing the Kampuchean refugee problem and famine. The other members were Gunilla Gustafs, Mervi Gustafsson, Aki Hietanen, Pekka Hiltunen, Juha Holma and Aija Löksy and Helena Rytövuori; the third group was led by Mikko Valtasaari and surveyed coverage of the Kampuchean situation in

the information media of various countries and groupings of countries. The other members were Leif Granholm, Jyrki Koulumies, Hannu Reime and Raija Valta; the fourth group was led by Allan Rosas and Esko Antola and it examined the Kampuchean situation as a question of international politics and international law. The other members of this group were Ann-Christine Eriksson, Olli Korhonen, Heli Pelkonen and Anne-Maj Takala; the fifth group was led by Osmo Apunen and it examined Finland's policy towards Indo-China. The other members of the group were Sirpa Kaare, Tarja Seppä and Unto Vesa.

The level of scientific accomplishment required by the grant from the Finnish Academy was overseen by Professor Göran von Bonsdorff; Professor Tapani Valkonen provided expert assistance in the section dealing with population; the maps were drawn by Aila Ulmanen; Katrina Aaltonen assisted in the Commission's technical work; the translation into English is by Eddy Hawkins.

A delegation of the Commission carried out a trip to Kampuchea, Vietnam and Thailand from 15 February to 16 March 1982. The delegation was led by Professor Helge Gyllenberg and included Kimmo Kiljunen and Hannu Reime. During the trip the delegation met over one hundred representatives of the various states, international organizations, international relief groups, political movements and civic organizations spanning the spectrum of the parties to the Kampuchean conflict. Among these were: Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, Hun Sen; Vietnam's Foreign Minister, Nguyen Co Thach; the Secretary General of Thailand's National Security Council, Gen. Prasong Soonsiri; US Ambassador to Thailand, John G. Dean; Minister-Counsellor of the Soviet Embassy in Kampuchea, Iosif E. Kolesnikov; a representative of Democratic Kampuchea, Bun Kim; the Commander of Prince Sihanouk's Moulinaka movement, Nhem Sophon; and the Commander of the KPNLF front, Gen. Dien Del. In Kampuchea, the delegation visited Phnom Penh and surrounding provinces, as well as Pursat, Battambang, Sisophon and Siem Reap. In Vietnam, visits were made to Saigon and Hanoi as well as to Thay Ninh along the border with Kampuchea and to Lang Son along the border with China. In Thailand, the delegation visited Bangkok and refugee camps in the Kampuchean border area as well as inland.

Chapters 1 to 5 of this book are by the study group led by Kimmo Kiljunen; chapter 7 is by the study group led by Allan Rosas, and chapter 8 by Mikko Vattasaari's group. Chapter 6, by Helena Tuomi's study group is a new addition for this revised version. The final chapter of the original report, dealing with Finnish policy towards Indo-China, and written by Osmo Apunen's group, is omitted here as its relevance was specifically to Finland.

The Commission received support from Finland's Ministry of Education, the Academy of Finland, the Development Co-operation Section of Finland's Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Nordic Institute for Asian Affairs and the Nordic Co-operation Committee for International Politics.

Kampuchea: Decade of the Genocide

The Finnish Association for Peace Research acted as the financial bookkeeping organization required by provisions concerning the receipt of state aid.

Kimmo Kiljunen
Helsinki

Contents

Preface	ix
1. Historical Background	1
The Period of Colonial and Royal Rule	2
The Khmer Republic	5
2. Democratic Kampuchea	10
The Khmer Rouge	11
Living Conditions	14
Internal Conflicts	18
3. The People's Republic of Kampuchea	22
Political Background of the KNUFNS	25
The Security Situation	27
Population	30
Reconstruction	34
Education	39
4. Refugees and Opposition Movements	46
Opposition Movements	53
5. The Interests of Power Politics	59
The Third Indo-China War	60
Diplomatic Efforts	64
6. International Humanitarian Aid	71
The Beginning of the Aid Programme	72
Main Characteristics of the Aid Programme	78
The Impact of Humanitarian Aid in Kampuchea	87
The Impact of Aid along the Border and in Thailand	91
Conclusions	98

7. International Law and the Kampuchea Question	103
Human Rights	103
Intervention	107
Representation in the UN	114
8. The Question of Kampuchea in the Mass Media	120

Maps

1. Provinces of Kampuchea	vii
2. Population Transfers, April 1975	12
3. Population Transfers, May 1975-78	13
4. Administrative Zones of Democratic Kampuchea, 1975-78	16
5. Border Clashes between Kampuchea and Vietnam, 1975-78	24
6. Military Situation in Kampuchea, 1982	32
7. Refugee Camps in 1982	51

Tables

1. Agricultural Production, 1968-74	6
2. Foreign Trade	7
3. Population Statistics, 1981	31
4. Development of the Educational System, 1979-82	40
5. Khmer Refugees, 1975-81	47
6. Khmer Refugee Camps in Thailand, February 1982	50
7. Humanitarian Assistance, October 1979 - December 1981	81
8. Shares of Aid Agencies in Three Aid Areas, October 1979 - January 1981	82
9. Distribution of Humanitarian Aid Between Four Areas of Operation	82
10. Actual and Proposed Distributions of Aid Programme, 1979-80	84
11. Use of Funds in the Kampuchean Operation in 1981	86
12. Composition of Emergency Aid Provided by Joint Mission, 1979-80	87
13. Breakdown of ICRC/UNICEF Aid Components at the Thai-Kampuchean Border	93
14. Changes in Border Camp Populations, January 1981-February 1982	95

1. Historical Background

by study group led by Kimmo Kiljunen

Up until 1970, Kampuchea was referred to as the Kingdom of Cambodia – a name retained from the period of French colonialism. The sharp social changes of the 1970s, however, have also been seen in changes in the name of the country. After the overthrow of the royal house in 1970, the country was officially referred to as the Khmer Republic. During 1975-8 the country was Democratic Kampuchea and since 1979 it has been the People's Republic of Kampuchea. The violent changes in government which have followed one after the other have stressed the significance of social changes with repeated revisions of national symbols up to and including the national flag and the name of the country. In this report systematic use is made of the name Kampuchea, including when the subject matter concerns periods during which the official form of the country's name was different. However, in passages referring to specific regimes the official name of the period or government may appear.

Kampuchea is located in Indochina; the term Indochina is not only a geographical definition, but also refers to the region's historical past. It lies both geographically and historically in the area between the two ancient cultures of China and India. Throughout history, the region of Indochina has received numerous enriching influences from both directions, but it has also been the object of difficult opposing pressures and contradictions. The northernmost parts of the region, Vietnam and Laos, have traditionally been shaped as a part of the Chinese cultural sphere. On the other hand, the most southerly areas of Indochina, including present-day Kampuchea, have, in terms of cultural heritage, been primarily Indian.

Kampuchea's problems today are centrally tied to the development of the whole of the region of Indochina and its position in the international order. Indochina is, for its part, a section of South-east Asia, a very important area in global great power politics. With the exception of the Indian subcontinent, there is hardly any other part of the world in which the direct security interests and spheres of influence of the three great powers, the United States, the Soviet Union and China, are in the same manner so fundamentally in opposition to one another. Thus, the conflicts caused by sharp internal social contradictions or ethnic and territorial disputes in South-east Asia, when connected with the state of confrontation in international power politics, form a threat to world peace.

The historical development of Kampuchea as a part of the international order during the past two centuries can be divided into six phases:

1. Pre-colonial period.
2. French colonial period (1864-1954) and first Indo-China war (1946- 54);
3. Kingdom of Cambodia (1954-70);
4. Khmer Republic (1970-5) and second Indo-China war (1960-75);
5. Democratic Kampuchea (1975-8);
6. People's Republic of Kampuchea (1979-) and third Indo-China war (1978-).

These various phases in the development of Kampuchean society differ from one another in their internal administration, power relationships and even social systems, as well as in external dependence. The most sudden and the deepest social changes took place during the 1970s at the cost of great human suffering.

The Period of Colonial and Royal Rule

When the French reduced Kampuchea to the status of a protectorate in 1864, they took control of a divided kingdom which had been split into vassel states by neighbouring Vietnam and Thailand. By then, the great age of Kampuchea, when the Khmer Empire from its centre at Angkor Thom had ruled not only modern Kampuchea but also Laos, the southern part of Vietnam, Thailand and parts of Burma as far as to the Gulf of Bengal, was a dim memory. The period of power of the Angkor Dynasty lasted from the 9th to the 15th Centuries. The remains of this military might and the advanced stage of economic and cultural development can still be seen in the great ruins of the temples and palaces of Angkor. The Empire fell apart because of internal power struggles and with the encroachment of the Siamese and Vietnamese its territory gradually came under their control.¹

The French made Kampuchea part of the Indo-Chinese Federation, which was divided into four protectorates: Annam, Tonkin, Laos and Kampuchea as well as the colony of Cochin China in south Vietnam. Thus, a united political and administrative entity was created in Indo-China, headed by a French governor-general. Under the French colonial system, Kampuchea became a peripheral area into which a great deal of development resources were not expended, rather, the traditional society remained to a large extent intact. The local royal house retained a relative degree of independence. It was not until the 1920s that a systematic effort was begun to exploit the country's natural resources by establishing plantations to produce rubber for export. Trade and enterprise were mainly in the hands of Vietnamese and Chinese², and especially Vietnamese were recruited by the colonial administration to fill the lower positions in the civil service and the police force. This had a part in giving rise to ethnic tensions within the country.

During the Second World War, Japan occupied Kampuchea and declared it independent. Norodom Sihanouk, who had been chosen as king in 1941 at the age of 19, was persuaded by the Japanese to renounce the agreements between Kampuchea and France. The right-wing nationalist Son Ngoc Thanh was named prime minister. After the War, however, France was able for a time to reinstate its colonial administration. During the War, in 1942, a politically and organizationally unco-ordinated movement, the Khmer Issarak, was founded and gradually developed into the umbrella grouping for anti-French guerrilla activities. To a growing extent it co-operated with the Vietnamese liberation movement, the Vietminh. Armed resistance against the French had spread throughout the whole of Indo-China and gradually radicalized the Kampuchians as well. Finally, in 1953, in an attempt to prevent the left from coming to power, France acceded to the demands for independence from the royal house of Kampuchea led by Prince Sihanouk.²

The 1954 Geneva Conference brought to an end the first Indo-China war and confirmed Kampuchea's independence and international status. Under the terms of the peace agreement, all foreign troops were to be withdrawn from the country, i.e. all French and Vietnamese units. At the same time it was agreed that no foreign bases were to be established in the country which thus ensured Kampuchea's neutral status. In accordance with the Geneva treaty, an international supervisory commission arrived in the country and stayed there until the end of 1969. The Vietnamese alone represented the leftist guerrilla movements of Indo-China in Geneva – which meant that the Kampuchean political left had no say of its own in the country's plan for independence. Thus, for Sihanouk, the result of the Geneva Conference was very successful in that it strengthened his position in the country's leadership.

In 1955 Prince Sihanouk abdicated in favour of his father in order to retain his position as the head of the executive power. For support he founded a broadly based national movement, the Sankum, which came to dominate the activities of the legislature. In practice Kampuchea became a one party state. The open opposition groups fell apart and their possibilities to carry on activities were suppressed. On the other hand, left and right factions were formed within the Sangkum. The power struggle between these two factions characterized the political development of Kampuchea until the rightist military coup led by Prime Minister Lon Nol in 1970.

The compromise solution reached at the Geneva Conference had defined Kampuchea's international political status as one of neutrality. This supported well Prince Sihanouk's internal political power aims and matched the geopolitical realities of the Indo-Chinese region at that time – the fact was that the background to the first Indo-China war included not only a national liberation struggle, but also an important great power policy dimension. In the last phase of the war the United States had become a major party to the conflict, in the end financing 80% of the cost of France's colonial war.

Following the Chinese Revolution, the Korean War and the defeat suffered by France in Indo-China, an attempt was made by the West to secure a military presence in South-east Asia with the founding of SEATO (South-East Asia Treaty Organization). It formed one link in the chain of military alliances surrounding the Soviet Union during the years of the cold war, and additionally it was aimed against the region's internal leftist revolutionary movements in the name of the 'defence of the free world'. In addition to the United States, the founding members of the alliance were Great Britain, France, Thailand, the Philippines, Pakistan, Australia and New Zealand. It was conceived as also encompassing Kampuchea, Laos and South Vietnam. Kampuchea, however, led by Prince Sihanouk, stressed its neutral status and declined membership of SEATO. On the other hand, Prince Sihanouk was prepared to turn to the United States not only for development aid, but also for acquiring arms aid.

In order to maintain a balance, Sihanouk also established diplomatic relations with China and the Soviet Union and signed agreements on co-operation in trade and economics with both countries. In the United States this kind of *rapprochement* with socialist countries was not looked upon favourably. It began giving covert support to rightist Khmer Serei guerrillas opposed to Sihanouk, which had started guerrilla activities out of South Vietnam and Thailand during the 1950s. Kampuchea's relations cooled with its neighbours, which were dependent on the United States, leading to border clashes. In 1961 Kampuchea broke off diplomatic relations with Thailand, a few years later it ended its military aid programme with the United States, and in the end broke off diplomatic relations with Washington in 1965.

The cessation of American aid had serious economic consequences. Nearly a third of Kampuchea's police force and army had been financed with US support. The external balance of the country's national economy had been built upon economic aid as had the standard of living of the local elite. Thus, the stoppage of American aid forced a change in the direction of economic policy. Politicians promoting a more self-deterministic model of economic development and leftist views who had been named to the government, such as Khieu Samphan, Hou Youn and Hu Nim, gained a foothold in Sihanouk's administration. Under the leadership of then Minister of the Economy, Khieu Samphan, private banks and financial institutions were nationalized while foreign trade was brought under public control.

The new economic policy and the freezing of relations with the United States, however, caused a reaction in those strata of the population – the army officer corps, the upper levels of the civil service, import-export traders, large landholders – who felt their earlier privileges threatened and who to a large extent still held the reins of social power. At the same time Kampuchea's external environment changed as the Americans became ever more actively involved in Vietnam's internal development. By the mid-1960s there were already a half a million American troops in Vietnam and individual clashes had escalated into a large-scale war. For Vietnam's

resistance movement, Kampuchea's neutral status was ideal. Being outside the war it provided a sheltered environment for the FNL's logistics connections. Very soon, however, the Americans extended their military operations to cover the whole of Indo-China.

The Americans also attempted to give more direct support to rightist forces inside Kampuchea than they had given earlier. Following elections in 1966, the right, under the leadership of Lon Nol and Sirik Matak, gained the upper hand in the country's internal development. The government and the civil service were purged of leftists, a significant number of whom – including Khieu Samphan, Hou You and Hu Nim – fled to the countryside in 1967 with the aim of organizing armed resistance to the rightist government policy. In 1967 and 1968 there were peasant uprisings in the country. The government took harsh measures to put down these rebel movements, which had the effect of gradually broadening the rebel Khmer Rouge movement.

In 1969 diplomatic relations were re-established with the United States. The terms of American aid were a change to a more open economic policy and a more favourable attitude to foreign investment. The production sectors which had been nationalized and the financial sector were to be returned to private ownership, and the regulation of foreign trade was to be ended. It was also in US interests to make the Kampuchean army a direct participant in the Vietnam War. In this respect Sihanouk's aim of neutrality formed an increasingly difficult barrier to US strategic operations in Indo-China. On 18 March 1970 he was overthrown in a military coup led by Lon Nol: the Kingdom of Cambodia was abolished and the Khmer Republic was established. In April a large-scale military operation by the Americans and South Vietnamese began in south-eastern Kampuchea with the entry of a force of 20,000 men. The Vietnam war had been transformed into an Indo-Chinese war.³

The Khmer Republic

One aspect of the background to the overthrow of Sihanouk was the internal political struggle over which alternative for development to follow: a socialist, self-reliant line, or an open line based on market forces. Another aspect was the confrontation between a policy of neutrality and an alignment with the United States. The immediate cause of the overthrow of Sihanouk was the need of the United States to secure the area for the Saigon government while gradually disengaging itself and 'Vietnamizing' the war in Indo-China.⁴

The human and material losses in the Vietnam War in Kampuchea were enormous: an estimated 600,000 people – that is, nearly 10% of the population – died as a result of the war. Massive bombing of the rural areas led to a flood of refugees who crowded into the cities under the control of the Lon Nol government. By the time the war ended in 1975 an estimated over

one third of the rural population – some two million people – had become refugees, and this meant a near complete breakdown of the traditional social structure. The population of Phnom Penh alone, within five years rose from some 600,000 to over two million. The population experienced actual famine because of the disruption of agricultural production and the break in connections with the countryside.⁵

Already during the year immediately following the military coup by Lon Nol there was a sharp decline in production of the country's most important food crop, rice, and production of the most important export product, rubber, in practice came to a halt. During the next year, 1972, the rice harvest was less than half of that of the previous year and the situation only worsened as the following Table 1 shows.

Table 1

Agricultural Production 1968-74 (thousands of tonnes)

	1968/69	1969/70	1970/71	1971/72	1972/73	1973/74
Rice	2,503	3,814	2,732	2,138	953	762
Rubber	51	52	13	1	15	12
Maize	117	137	121	80	73	—
Palm Sugar	—	34	23	—	—	—

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit, *Quarterly Economic Report, Annual Supplement 1975*.

Military actions destroyed crops and disrupted transport connections. After the war it was estimated that 75% of all domestic animals had been destroyed. The survival of the urban population depended almost entirely on deliveries of rice by the Americans. The prices of basic foodstuffs rose dramatically. For example, a kilogram of rice which had cost eight riels in 1970, cost ten times as much in 1974 and its cost rose by a factor of four by February 1975 to 340 riels.⁶

As a result of the war the country's small industrial sector also suffered heavy damage. Of the 1,400 rice mills that had been in operation only 300 were still working in 1974 and only 65 of the previous sawmills were in use. The country's only phosphate plant and only paper mill were completely destroyed. Similarly, cement and textile production facilities suffered serious damage. Of the roads, 40% were entirely unfit for use and one third of the country's bridges had been blown up. For the most part this damage had been caused by US bombing in 1973.

The country's traditional export items were rubber, rice and corn. Even though it was possible to restart rubber production, export earnings did not cover 11% of imports in 1973. The country's balance of trade collapsed irreparably into deficit. The inclusion of the balance of services increases even more the balance of payments deficit as can be seen from Table 2.

Table 2

Foreign Trade (millions of Special Drawing Rights)

	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974
Exports	65.9	41.2	13.1	6.4	4.9	1.2
Imports	99.2	68.6	55.1	65.5	42.0	22.8
Services (net)	- 1.2	- 2.6	- 11.6	- 24.0	- 8.2	-
Goods and services (net)	- 34.5	- 30.0	- 53.6	- 83.1	45.3	- 21.6
						(estimated)

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit, op. cit.

Economic chaos and external dependence complemented the internal weakness, open corruption and abuses of the Lon Nol administration. The economy was based on service activities dependent upon American aid and on the black market. The state's finances did not function. Leading civil servants and the officer corps exploited the machinery of the state as a means to acquire personal wealth. An increasing share of scarce resources went for military expenditures. Already in 1970 military spending exceeded the state's total revenues. By 1973 this gap had more than doubled. The Lon Nol administration remained intact only with the support of aid from the United States.

Corruption was especially rampant in army circles. It was typical that the commanders of military units entered on their pay-lists even entire 'phantom' companies for which they pocketed the salaries received from the Americans; they also sold weapons and supplies on the black market which often ended up in the hands of the opposing side. The fighting morale of the Lon Nol army was low and it was unable to resist the advance by more experienced Vietnamese troops and the growing number of Kampuchean guerrillas. The situation was not improved even by the large degree of fire support supplied by the United States air force, rather the Americans became even more deeply involved militarily in the war in Kampuchea.⁷

From Peking, following his overthrow, Prince Sihanouk urged the Kampuchians to rise in opposition to the military government. His appeal had an effect especially on the peasantry, which had a traditionally strong loyalty to the royal house and which was alienated from the urban upper class, leading civil servants, officers, large traders and intelligentsia upon whose support the Lon Nol administration had originally been built. The National United Front of Kampuchea, FUNK, was founded: it included not only Sihanouk's supporters, but also local communists who had previously opposed Sihanouk, so-called Khmer Rouge, and leftists who had fled to Vietnam during the 1950s.

It was the Khmer Rouge, which had been a small isolated group of a few thousand members at the beginning of the 1970s, which succeeded in gaining operative control of the resistance movement by 1973. The guerrilla

army, radicalized by the brutal war and massive bombings, rapidly grew into a force of 70,000, and the communists with their higher degree of internal organization, discipline and thus efficiency took charge of its leadership.⁸

The Khmer Rouge rejected all opportunities for compromise and began implementing ever more authoritarian administrative methods to ensure their own success, and also the livelihood of the population in the badly damaged rural areas. New soldiers were typically recruited from the poorest population strata of the villages, often from among those who had been orphaned or left homeless. The recruits were young and uneducated, but extremely disciplined and loyal to their leaders. When given command they were stamped by their intolerance and unreasonableness.

The wide-scale bombings had undoubtedly also strengthened the hardest and most reckless elements in the resistance movement. Having visited the liberated areas of Kampuchea in 1973, Prince Sihanouk, who had been reduced to the role of merely representing Kampuchea internationally, asked Chou En Lai to warn Kissinger that the longer the war continued the more radical its outcome would be. Only the withdrawal of American support for the Phnom Penh government could end the war.

Kampuchea under Prince Sihanouk in the 1960s had made an effort to remain isolated from the Vietnam war. Sihanouk, however, had to permit FNL logistic connections to go through his country and had thus attempted to keep Kampuchea's territory outside the scope of actual military operations. Sihanouk was also prepared to recognize the legitimacy of the goals of the nationalist movements in neighbouring countries, despite the fact they may have diverged sharply in social ideology from the path of development chosen by royal Kampuchea. In fact by maintaining good relations with the leftist governments and nationalist movements in neighbouring countries, Sihanouk was able to ensure for himself the freedom of movement needed to suppress activities by domestic leftists within Kampuchea.

For its part, the United States was aiming at a global containment of the 'communist threat' which meant a suppression of the nationalist movement led by Vietnam's communists. In the end, this attempt meant the loss of Kampuchea's national self-determination and the overthrow of the anti-communist government.

Notes

1. About the history of Kampuchea see for example John Audric, *Angkor and the Khmer Empire*, Robert Hale Co., Great Britain, 1972; C.P. Fitzgerald, *A Concise History of East Asia*, Pelican Books, Harmondsworth, 1978; Martin F. Herz, *A Short History of Cambodia*, Frederick A. Praeger Inc., New York, 1958; M.L. Manih Jumsai, *History of Thailand and Cambodia*, Chalermint, Bangkok, 1970.