

CAMBODIA'S WAR:
FACTIONS, POLICIES AND PROSPECTS

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In early February, 1979, U. S. and Thai intelligence sources reported that Chinese military supplies were being sent to the guerilla forces of the deposed Pol Pot regime in Cambodia via small Thai ports on the Gulf of Siam, as well as by overland routes¹. The small Cambodian island of Khemara Phumin, described in the Thai press as one of "a maze of islands, bays and estuaries" in the Gulf, was reportedly being fortified in order to serve as a storage area for the Pol Pot guerillas being supplied by Chinese vessels². According to the "Voice of Democratic Cambodia", a pro-Pol Pot radio transmitter believed to be located along the Sino-Cambodian border of China's Yunnan province, a "National Representatives Congress" convened at an undisclosed Cambodian location on February 1, 1979 and resolved that all "Kampuchean revolutionary guerillas" (i. e. the pro-Pol Pot forces) continue in their struggle to "exterminate the traitorous administration" in Phnom Penh "installed by the Vietnamese enemy"³. Continuing guerilla resistance by pro-Pol Pot units especially in the Kampot and Takeo areas near the Gulf suggest that the new "Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Council Government", officially proclaimed in Cambodia's capital Phnom Penh on January 8, 1979, as the new Cambodian government may not be able to stabilize the country for some time, despite the support of about 100 000 Vietnamese troops now in Cambodia. Meanwhile the Chinese invasion of Vietnam on February 16, 1979, to be discussed later, has added further complications.

TWO RIVAL GOVERNMENTS

The fighting going on in Cambodia involves two factions, each with their foreign supporters. In control of the capital and of most of the country, formally recognized as the legitimate government of Cambodia by the SRV (Socialist Republic of Vietnam), the USSR, Cuba, Laos and most East European states (except Rumania) is the earlier named "People's Revolutionary Government", headed by Heng Samrin as President. Samrin is described as a former executive committee member of the Kampuchea Communist Party (KCP) in the eastern region of the country, and former "political commissar" of the revolutionary army's Fourth Division. Reported to be leading scattered bands of some 6 000 guerillas against the Samrin regime, particularly along the Southern coastal region and in the Northeastern provinces of Ratanakiri and Mondulkiri, is the deposed premier Pol Pot (also known onetime as Saloth Sar), still claiming to be premier and secretary of the KCP. Pol Pot's regime is formally recognized and supported by the People's Republic of China. And in light of the fact that most members of the United Nations, whatever their views of the quality of the Pol Pot regime, condemned the accelerating Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia (or "Democratic Kampuchea") since last November, 1978, Pol Pot for the moment also formally still enjoys recognition of most other states. These include particularly Cambodia's Southeast Asian neighbor states which have developed diplomatic relations with Pot's government since April 17, 1975. On that date Pol Pot and his "Cambodian Revolutionary Army" usually called the Khmer Rouge ("Red Cambodians") occupied Phnom Penh and overthrew the previous, U. S. backed and anti-Communist government of President Lon Nol (which, in turn, had seized power in 1970 from Prince Norodom Sihanouk).

The Heng Samrin and Pol Pot factions today each are based on political "national front" organizations, have their own radio transmitters, and they issue proclamations and policy programs that bear closer analysis. Each faction, too, is well aware of the international implications of its struggle. On January 18, 1979, eleven days after Phnom Penh had fallen to the Heng Samrin forces, the earlier named radio transmitter calling itself the "Voice of Democratic Cambodia", purportedly broadcasting from Southern Cambodia but, as indicated, believed to be located in China's Southern Yunnan province, announced formation of a "Democratic and Patriotic Front for National Unity" (DPFNU). The DPFNU called on all Cambodians to "fight against the Vietnamese enemy until total defeat", emphasizing that the Pol Pot government "is the only body responsible" for the struggle and destiny of Cambodia⁴.

In subsequent, almost daily, broadcasts the "Voice" has relayed alleged "victories" of the Pol Pot regime guerilla forces against the "Vietnamese aggressors", ranging on "battlefronts" from Ratanakiri to Battambang. Bangkok sources report that deposed premier Pol Pot himself is directing the new "people's war" against the Vietnamese and Heng Samrin forces from a covert base located some 150 kilometres northwest of Phnom Penh⁵. According to the "Voice of Democratic Cambodia" the "Vietnamese enemy aggressors" are "being drowned" in Pol Pot's "people's war movement", the salient feature of which is that the guerilla forces are expected to launch "as many attacks as possible against the Vietnamese enemy each day". Especially north of Kampong Som and along the coast the Pol Pot forces appear to be well concentrated. The "Supreme Military Committee" of the KCP Central Committee, headed by Pol Pot, in early February 1979 provided detailed "people's war" instructions, and today all KCP cadres are expected to follow the new "line for the people's war" thus giving the Vietnamese a taste of what they themselves dispensed for so many years against French and American forces⁶. Because independent observers obviously have been unable to monitor the actual extent of the fighting, claims of victory by both sides must be treated with caution.

The "Voice of Democratic Cambodia" has also claimed that among recent Vietnamese casualties of guerilla attacks have been found the bodies of five "Soviet advisers"⁷, who were said to have been aiding the "Vietnamese aggressors". But this has not been confirmed by other sources, although several scores of Chinese "technicians" and "advisers" (part of a group estimated as high as 2000 in 1977, helping the Pol Pot government) are still reliably reported to be with the main body of Pol Pot regime guerillas northwest of Phnom Penh.

THE "KAMPUCHEAN NATIONAL UNITED FRONT FOR NATIONAL SALVATION" (KNUFNS)

Before taking a closer look at the Pol Pot regime and its program, it must be noted that the DPFNU's main Cambodian antagonist today is the "Kampuchean National United Front for National Salvation" (KNUFNS). KNUFNS reportedly was founded, according to Hanoi sources, on December 3, 1978 (as the Vietnamese invasion had already deeply penetrated Cambodia) at a "conference, attended by more than 200 representatives of the Kampuchean people from all walks of life", and held at an undisclosed location in what was then called the "liberated (i. e. Vietnamese controlled) zone" of Cambodia. The conference established its

own news agency, Sapordamean Kapuchea (SPK) or Kampuchean News Agency, its own radio transmitter called the "Voice of the Kampuchean People", and a new flag, red with five yellow temple towers in the center. The Pol Pot regime, then still in control of Phnom Penh, and taking note of KNUFNS' founding, countered with a communique declaring that the "clique" of SRV premier and Vietnamese party secretary Le Duan in Saigon had "established a Vietnamese political organisation" directed by and with a program entirely Vietnamese, for the purpose of facilitating Hanoi's policy of "annexation and genocide against Kampuchea"⁸.

KNUFNS' founding declaration, as relayed by SPK and Hanoi on December 4, 1979, charges the Pol Pot government with having become a "dictatorial, militarist and fascist regime", that is "matchless in history for its ferocity". According to the declaration, Pol Pot's government, under the label of "all round radical social revolution" and "social purification", razed towns, forced millions of town dwellers into the countryside, uprooted all family relations, robbed people under the guise of having them participate in "cooperative" agriculture, and overworked them like "slaves"⁹. Late in December 1978 and early January, 1979, KNUFNS issued further extensive declarations on foreign policy and domestic reconstruction, which thus far have not been repudiated and, indeed, remain today the policy principles of the "Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Council Government" headed by Heng Samrin. In foreign policy, the KNUFNS and Samrin pledge to follow "a line of independence and sovereignty", foreswearing "any military alliance" or the establishment of foreign military bases on Cambodian territory. Cooperation and normal relations with all countries, "regardless of their political and social regimes", on the basis of peaceful co-existence is pledged.

Particularly noteworthy in the KNUFNS' foreign policy declaration is that the "time honored traditions of solidarity" between the Vietnamese and Cambodian people are to be restored, and that a "high value" is placed "upon friendship with the Chinese people"¹⁰. The Heng Samrin regime, in fact, pledges itself to be prepared to establish normal relations with the People's Republic of China, thus evidently attempting to undercut the close friendship which since 1975 has existed between the deposed Pol Pot government and the Chinese.

POLICY CONTRASTS

In virtually all their official pronouncements the KNUFNS or the "Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Council Government" of Heng Samrin today seek to underscore the contrast between their planned policies and those of the Pol Pot regime. But especially the alleged cruelty and destructiveness of the latter are placed in the foreground. In an interview with a Japanese Communist organ, KNUFNS general secretary, Ros Samay, in mid-January, 1979, claimed that the Pol Pot government had even taken to killing "genuine Communists", liquidating "honest cadres" who were faithful to the party and the people¹¹. Samay's reference underscores reports of the intense intra-KCP struggle between pro- and anti-Hanoi factions in the Cambodian party known to have existed shortly after Pol Pot came to power in Phnom Penh in 1975. Samay also stressed another favorite KNUFNS theme, i. e. that the Cambodians in the Pol Pot era had been forced into a system of "complete slavery" ("even the ballpoint pen which I am using now was 'collectivized'"). In a long victory address in Phnom Penh on January 25, 1979, "People's Revolutionary Council" President Heng Samrin sought to convey something of the atmosphere in Pol Pot's day which Cambodians presumably have now left behind¹²:

"But the most distressing problem which instigated the most violent hatred was that they (i. e. the Pol Pot government) fabricated slanders, always under the excuse of 'sweeping away the CIA, KGB, the spies in the pay of Vietnam.' Under such reactionary allegations they started arresting people, cadres, men and women fighters, throwing them in jail, torturing them and executing them. They invented slanders as they pleased; they arrested and killed people as they thought fit."

The elaborate structure of work cooperatives (*krom*) in which the Cambodian people, uprooted from their families, were banded together, sometimes far from their original homes, with several *krom* constituting a commune or canton (*sahakor khum*), a process undertaken in the Pol Pot era, has been dismantled since the KNUFNS and the "People's Revolutionary Council" Government came to power. In one of its earliest policy statements, according to the SPK, the KNUFNS declared that all people were permitted to return to their families and live at their old residences. All "old administrative" and "coercive" organisations, as well as the secret police, were declared abolished. Instead, the new framework of the Cambodian socio-economy seems to be derived from the Yugoslav concept of "self management", a term frequently heard these days in the Heng Samrin government. "People's

self management committees", locally elected, will have overall governmental and economic responsibilities, each local committee having the task of "managing all work in its locality, educate, encourage and organise the local population"¹³.

These committees are expected to guide the populace in "boosting production", insure social order and security, form a local militia, guard against infiltrating "spies", and prevent the "enemy's (i. e. Pol Pot's) counter-revolutionary propaganda" from sowing discord among the population. Elected "managerial committees" are to maintain operations of factories and farms, and Mok Sakun, a member of the "Revolutionary Council" Government, declared in early February that power plants, a rice husk factory, a soft drinks factory, a textile mill, and other industries in the Phnom Penh area all were already back in operation.

KNUFNS and "Revolutionary Council" Government spokesmen ceaselessly stress the new relationship now existing between leaders and masses; as Penn Sovan, Council Vice-President and said to be the most avowedly Hanoi-oriented member of the new regime in Phnom Penh put it during the 25 January KNUFNS "victory celebration" in the capital, "we (meaning the new government) are the children of the people, we are led and protected by the people, we owe fidelity to the people and must unconditionally serve them with all our strength and heart"¹⁴. Guidance and persuasion, not fearridden regimentation associated with its predecessors presumably are to be the methods of Cambodia's new leadership. Still, the Heng Samrin regime, according to its new official journal *Kampuchea*, also expects the people to continue to "nurture their indignation" at the savage regime of Pol Pot, and in subsequent instructions to the people as to their new "tasks" the "Council" Government president not only put stress on rebuilding the country, but on "pursuing and mopping up" all those who persist in opposing the revolution and the new revolutionary administration¹⁵.

THE POL POT REGIME

What now of the nature, especially the alleged brutalities, of the deposed Pol Pot regime, reduced today to fighting on with Peking's help a "people's war", the tactics of which Pol Pot learned so well from his Vietnamese enemies? To answer that question it is necessary first to remember the long history of Vietnamese encroachments on Khmer (i. e. Cambodian) territory, a process that did not really end until the French colonial regime established its suzerainty and peace over both in the later nineteenth

RIVAL CAMBODIAN POLITICIANS

- Pol Pot
(originally known
as Saloth Sar)
age 51
- Prime Minister of the Republic of "Democratic Kampuchea", and concurrently secretary of the Kampuchea Communist Party (of which he was a founding member in 1960). Reportedly leading anti-Vietnamese resistance movement in Cardamom Mountain range, Southwestern Cambodia.
- Ieng Sary
age 49
- Vice-premier and Foreign Minister of "Democratic Kampuchea". Educated in France (like Pot and Sampan). Currently believed to be based in Beijing to coordinate foreign opposition to Heng Samrin regime.
- Khieu Sampan
age 48
- Chairman of the State Presidium (i. e. President) of "Democratic Kampuchea". Received doctorate in Law at the Sorbonne, briefly taught secondary school in Cambodia but like Pot and Sary affiliated with the Khmer Rouge (Communist Cambodian) guerillas in the early 1960's. Still believed to be with Pot in Cambodia, but serves essentially in a ceremonial role.
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- Heng Samrin
age 45
- President of the "Kampuchea People's Revolutionary Council" government in Phnom Penh today. One time "political commissar" of Khmer Rouge Fourth Division and party executive committee member for the Eastern Region. Born of peasant background in Prey Veng.
- Penn Sovan
age 43
- Vice-President of the "Kampuchea People's Revolutionary Council" government, Minister of National Defense and Commander of the Council's "Kampuchean Revolutionary Armed Forces". Served with Vietnamese guerillas against the US in early seventies.
- Ros Samay
age 42
- Secretary General of "Kampuchean National United Front for National Salvation", founded under Hanoi's auspices on December 3, 1978, to coordinate anti-Pol Pot national front resistance.

Mok Sakun Minister for Economic Affairs and People's Welfare in the "Kampuchea People's Revolutionary Council" government.

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Lon Nol One time supreme commander of Cambodian armed forces, seized power from Prince Norodom Sihanouk in March, 1970 as President of the Khmer (Cambodian) Republic. Lon Nol fell from power when Khmer Rouge "liberation" forces seized Phnom Penh on April 17, 1975.

Norodom Sihanouk Probably most astute and adaptable of Cambodia's political leaders, first serving as King of Cambodia during the French colonial period, then abdicating and serving as party leader, premier, and again as head of state (from 1960) until overthrown in March, 1970. Increasingly identified with the Khmer Rouge cause since then, he became a virtual prisoner once the Pol Pot regime had assumed power in 1975. Today again resident in Beijing or France, urging Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia. May serve as transition political leader following possible demise of Heng Samrin regime.

Sources: Far Eastern Economic Review, March 28, 1975, p. 11 and October 22, 1977, pp. 23-24; Asiaweek, May 18, 1979, pp. 30-31; Area Handbook for the Khmer Republic (Cambodia) (US Government Printing Office, 1973); Henry Kamm, "The Agony of Cambodia", The New York Times Magazine, November 19, 1978.

century. Anti-Vietnamese ethnic sentiment is deeply ingrained in Cambodian history and popular outlook, and for more than a generation Cambodian Communists themselves have been divided on cooperating with Hanoi. One faction, basically but for some time being mutedly anti-Vietnamese, was led by Pol Pot, Ieng Sary (later Pol Pot's Foreign Minister), and Khieu Sampan (later chairman of the presidium of independent Kampuchea, i. e. President), who favored total self-reliance in their struggle for an independent Cambodia¹⁶.

Pot, Sary and Sampan all studied on scholarships provided by the Sihanouk regime in France in the fifties. All moved easily in the intellectual hothouse atmosphere of French radical student Maoism and revolutionary purism of that period. They returned confirmed Communist radicals. It was not, however, until September 30, 1960 that the Kampuchean Communist Party (KCP) was born, its "organizing congress" reportedly being held in a back room in the Phnom Penh railway station. Pol Pot later was to claim in connection with that congress that "we met for three days and nights running . . . We were confined to one room during that period . . ." ¹⁷. In the early sixties after short stints as teachers, they all joined the Khmer Rouge ("Red Cambodian") underground guerilla army. Sampan received a law doctorate from the Sorbonne, his dissertation stressing the need to break the allegedly colonial stranglehold on Cambodia's economy and build a totally self-reliant industrial nation, self-supporting in food.

It should also be noted that the Cambodian Communist Party (KCP), for a long time, seemed but barely tolerated by the Vietnamese, its leaders kept in the background and apparently lived, like it or not, in the shadows of the Hanoi leadership. For that Hanoi leadership the unification struggle for South Vietnam and establishment of a single Communist state were considered the primary battles of all of Indochina.

It was during that struggle that Cambodian Communist fears that a Communist victory in South Vietnam also would mark the prelude to an eventual Hanoi domination of the whole of Indochina (Laos and Cambodia included) were strengthened. It is well to note that there is some substance to this fear, and to the Pol Pot regime's subsequently constant emphasis that Vietnam was attempting, through a "federation" scheme, to dominate all of Indochina. After all, the original "Vietnam Communist Party" (VCP), founded on February 3, 1930 by Ho Chi Minh in Hongkong, changed its name shortly there after to "Indochinese Communist Party", a change which Vietnamese party history subsequently explained as due to the fact that the "Vietnamese, Cambodian and Laotian proletariats have political and economically to be closely related in spite of their differences in language, customs and race"¹⁸. Still later, in 1951, when the Vietnamese Communists for tactical reasons again changed the name of

their party to the Lao Dong (Workers Party), a secret Lao Dong directive noted the eventual unification of the revolutionary parties of Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam, implying also a merger of all of Indochina¹⁹. Although on April 7, 1978, in an official "white paper" on the Cambodian situation the SRV (Socialist Republic of Vietnam, i. e. the now unified Vietnam state) admitted that "an Indochina Federation" had in fact been the original goal of Vietnamese Communists, that objective was claimed to have been abandoned. Yet, no Vietnamese official, even today, has denied as authoritative the statement issued by the 1970 "summit" conference of Indochinese Communist parties to the effect that while the three Indochinese states can pursue "independent" foreign policies they have common "socialist" state objectives and they will function within a "confederation"²⁰. No one in Hanoi has thus far been willing to define just what kind of "confederation" approach that will be, and how it will differ from the old "federation" idea.

The fact today is that Vietnamese domination of the original Indochina states is a reality. There are now some 40 000 SRV troops stationed in Laos. And though the Vientiane government despite Sino-Vietnamese strains still attempts to retain friendly relations with Peking, the Laotian government of President Souphanouvong and the ruling Lao People's Revolutionary (i. e. Communist) Party, remain wholly under Hanoi's control. Just so, given the political and military realities of Cambodia under the Heng Samrin regime today, it scarcely seems likely that the bulk of the 100 000 SRV forces in Cambodia will soon be withdrawn, although resurgent Cambodian nationalism may well make such a withdrawal eventually advisable.

During its tenure of power in Phnom Penh the Pol Pot government not only tapped historically well founded Cambodian fears of Vietnamese domination. As is well-known, it also sought through bloody force to impose a radical social transformation on Cambodia, evacuating major cities, and forcing the population, under the watchful eyes of young revolutionary army troops into cooperatives and brigades to work on the rice fields in order to make the country "self-reliant" and self-sufficient in food as soon as possible. The punishment for the slightest resistance or infraction was death, and mass executions, also of "untrustworthy" (i. e. pro-Hanoi) cadres became common. Thousands fled to neighboring Thailand. Together with disease and malnutrition a well authenticated holocaust descended on Cambodia²¹. It reduced a population of 7,5 million in 1975 to little more than 5 million by the end of 1978. A purist, radically uprooting, reform, with the population conceptually organised into a "collective corps" (angapheap samuhapheap), was expected to produce a "new revolutionary man" in Cambodia, willing to undertake any tasks ('if the samuhapheap assigns it to you, you must do it to the

best of your ability", Pol Pot exhorted his countrymen)²². The transforming and supposedly "purifying" process was rendered the more difficult because just as Cambodia was passing into this new socialist reconstruction phase, according to the Pot regime, "imperialism" and "foreign reactionaries" were threatening "to grasp our Cambodia"²³.

Initially a boundless confidence in the efficacy of pure revolutionary zeal led, for example, to the rejection of all formal education. Formal schooling all but ended. A visiting Yugoslav journalist was introduced in June, 1978 to a young Cambodian described to him as a surgeon. When the latter was asked where he had received his medical training he replied: "We do not require studies. Linking the experience of the people's masses with the practice and direct requirements of the revolution, we train surgeons and other experts as we require"²⁴. Toward the close of 1978 schools, also within various cooperatives, were beginning to function again. But in overcoming what it termed the "contradictions" still existing among the people, the Pol Pot regime appears to have particularly boundless confidence in the zeal and purity of spirit of the younger generation. For example, through the KCP "revolutionary children" were being selected even to work in various government ministries and to assist in the development of so-called "advanced cooperatives"²⁵. These "advanced cooperatives" were apparently intended as a collectivized stage beyond the earlier mentioned krom system, but it is not clear how many were actually established. The "advanced cooperatives" were apparently intended as large self-sustaining communes, with their own food production and arts, crafts and repair facilities.

CONFLICT WITH VIETNAM

Though border clashes with invading SRV troops, particularly in the "Parrot's Beak" region of Cambodia's Svay Rieng province, became more numerous during November and December, 1978, the Pol Pot regime declared that the "advanced cooperatives" movement was proceeding and transforming the Kampuchean "nation and race" into a single force to increase production as well as "wipe out" the "annexationist and genocidal Vietnamese aggressors". By this time also the Pol Pot government, claiming that national self-sufficiency in food production had been achieved, was beginning to lose something of its earlier extreme isolation. Increasingly, delegates from friendly foreign Communist parties, and occasional foreign journalists were being received in Phnom Penh.

Meanwhile, Pol Pot's Foreign Minister Ieng Sary began visiting Southeast Asian neighbor states, assuring them of his government's support for a "zone of peace, freedom and neutrality" in the region²⁶. Establishment of such a zone is the favorite ideal of the "Association of Southeast Asian Nations" (ASEAN), a regional cooperative grouping comprising Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and the Philippines. Discussions with the Thai government over longstanding border disputes also showed promise. Meanwhile, Peking, Pol Pot's strongest ally, was also said to have expressed its disapproval of the policy of mass purges and executions. It would seem that SRV hostility to Phnom Penh began to intensify toward the closing months of 1978, just when the worst excesses of the Pol Pot regime and its original isolation from the world were slowly beginning to mitigate.

Whether the Vietnamese were bolstered by their November 3, 1978 "Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation" with the USSR (which has a military clause, article 6, providing that in the event of threat or attack, the signatories shall consult and take "appropriate and effective measures" to safeguard their security), and by new Soviet programs of financial and technical assistance for their badly battered economy to bring the Pol Pot Regime and its own persistent border violations to heel, is not clear now. But the subsequent eruption of full scale war in Cambodia, the capture of Phnom Penh and installation of Heng Samrin and the "Revolutionary Council Government" and the reduction of the Pol Pot regime to a guerilla movement, all have had important international repercussions.

REACTION OF ASEAN

There has been, for example, the ASEAN reaction. On January 13, 1979, at their special Foreign Ministers meeting in Bangkok held to deal with the Cambodian crisis, and when it had become apparent that the 'United Nations' Security Council action in the matter would lead nowhere, the ASEAN pointedly reminded Vietnam of its "pledge to ASEAN member countries scrupulously to respect each other's independence", and called for the "immediate and total withdrawal" of all foreign forces from Cambodia.

Individual ASEAN member country reactions were a good deal more acerbic. For example, already on December 12, 1978, Singapore's Foreign Minister S. Rajaratnam wondered aloud whether the founding of KNUFNS meant that the Vietnamese in future would be setting up "salva-

tion fronts for other countries"²⁷. ASEAN countries today regularly participate in bilateral military exercises among themselves against Communist border insurgents, as well as in manoeuvres with British, Australian, New Zealand and occasionally even U. S. forces. The effect of the Cambodian war has been to accentuate ASEAN collective security thinking. Malaysian deputy premier Mahathir bin Muhammad said on January 9, 1979, in a comment on Cambodian events, that "should the Communist menace increase significantly in Thailand following the Cambodian take-over", then the Malaysian government would consider the situation in light of the already existing "bilateral arrangements on security" between Thailand and Malaysia²⁸.

THE CHINESE INVADE VIETNAM

On January 31, 1979, during his Washington visit, Chinese Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-ping, in a comment to the press on the badly deteriorating relations between Peking and Hanoi, had already spoken of the need to "teach them (i. e. the Vietnamese) some lessons". And on February 16, 1979 some 150 000 Chinese troops, backed by armor and airpower, invaded the SRV, initially for about six to ten miles, in a broad frontal attack all along their common five hundred mile border in what appeared to be intended at first as a brief, but sharply punitive "lesson". The SRV's earlier invasion of Cambodia and the overthrow of the Pol Pot regime was but one cause for this Chinese strike. As important a reason was Peking's anger over the treatment accorded to some one million ethnic Chinese, mostly in South Vietnam, who, in accordance with Hanoi's new policy of a "socialist transformation" of South Vietnam's economy announced in April, 1978, had lost their property, including small shops and industries, and had been assigned to labor in undeveloped "new economic zones".

As the Hanoi periodical *Tap Chi Cong San* had put it in September, 1978, those Chinese residents of Vietnam were to be changed from the role of "yellow race capitalists" to which they had been assigned since French colonial times²⁹. Some 300 000 Chinese ultimately fled Vietnam for China and their tales of woe deepened the Peking government's official indignation. Mutual violations of the SRV-China border had, by mid-December, 1978, aggravated relations to such a degree that Hanoi Radio was accusing the Chinese of a "hostile anti-Vietnam policy" because the Chinese "view an independent sovereign Vietnam as the greatest obstacle to their expansionist policy in Southeast Asia"³⁰.

Though Moscow promised to stand by its November 3, 1978, Friendship Treaty with Hanoi, it became unclear just what the USSR could do in succor of its Vietnamese ally, particularly as some Chinese forces at first were reported to begin withdrawing from Vietnam within three days after their initial punitive strike. Chinese Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-ping reportedly gave reassurances that these forces had had no intention other than a brief incursion in the first place. By the beginning of March, 1979, most Chinese forces had withdrawn. Boundary disputes continued to raise tensions between Hanoi and Peking, however. The U. S. meanwhile (which on January 17, 1979 had already warned both the Soviets and the Vietnamese not to let the fighting in Cambodia endanger the security of Thailand) has strongly counselled Soviet restraint. The Cambodian incursion, plus the problem of the status of the Chinese, had already caused Peking to cancel all further aid to Vietnam as of July 3, 1978. Total Chinese aid to Hanoi over the past two decades had amounted to over \$ 10 billion, and an additional \$ 3 billion had been anticipated before the strains of 1978 began to develop, so that the price of bringing down Pol Pot has come rather high for Hanoi.

FUTURE PROSPECTS

It would be premature to speculate on the outcome of the as yet unfinished conflict in Cambodia. It does seem likely that China has committed herself to the continuing support of the Pol Pot regime and its guerillas, while the Heng Samrin government, backed by the SRV and ultimately by the USSR, sets about the difficult task of consolidating its power. On February 20, 1979, the SRV and Heng Samrin government in Phnom Penh signed a "peace and friendship" treaty, which appears to consolidate the new Kampuchean regime's satellite status vis-à-vis Hanoi. Soviet aid also began arriving in Phnom Penh. The Heng Samrin government's Foreign Minister Hun Sen, stressed in mid-March, 1979, that "the question of Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea only concerns our two countries and people" and he declared that the overthrow of the Pol Pot regime had been accomplished, in fact, by the Cambodians themselves, not by the Vietnamese³¹.

A Laotian delegation, headed by President Souphanouvong, visited Phnom Penh on March 19, 1979. A joint statement of "cooperation" was signed with the Heng Samrin government. This agreement gives new impetus to what the Vietnamese press now is calling "the invincible strength of the Vietnam-Lao-Kampuchea bloc"³², a concept that may well have far-

reaching strategic consequences for Southeast Asia, in light of its Soviet backing. Just how strong Soviet and Vietnamese influence will be permitted to become in Cambodia and, indeed, in Indochina as a whole remains, of course, to be seen, to be sure. But non-Communist Southeast Asia is now confronted with new uncertainties, into which the U. S. will be inevitably drawn, if it wishes to retain a balancing presence in the region.

Footnotes:

- 1) The New York Times, February 7 and 9, 1979.
- 2) The Bangkok Post, February 1, 1979.
- 3) Voice of Democratic Cambodia, in Cambodian to Cambodia, January 3, 1979 (Foreign Broadcast Information Service Daily Reports, hereafter FBIS, February 5, 1979). For the Vietnamese-Cambodian fighting see also Karl D. Jackson, "Cambodia 1978: War, Pillage and Purge in Democratic Kampuchea", Asian Survey, January 1979, pp. 72-84.
- 4) Agence France Presse despatch, Bangkok, January 18, 1979 (FBIS, January 18, 1979).
- 5) Agence France Presse despatch, Bangkok, January 20, 1979 (FBIS, January 22, 1979).
- 6) Voice of Democratic Cambodia in Cambodian to Cambodia, February 2, 1979 (FBIS, February 5, 1979), and January 25, 1979 (FBIS, January 26, 1979).
- 7) Voice of Democratic Cambodia, in Cambodian to Cambodia, January 30, 1979 (FBIS, January 31, 1979).
- 8) Radio Phnom Penh, domestic service in Cambodian, December 8, 1978 (December 11, 1978).
- 9) SPK (Sapordamean Kampuchea) in French to Cambodia, December 4, 1978 (FBIS, December 4, 1978).
- 10) SPK in French to Cambodia, December 26, 1978 (FBIS, December 27, 1978).
- 11) Tokyo, Akahata, in Japanese, January 15, 1979 (FBIS, January 19, 1979).

- 12) SPK in French to Cambodia, January 25, 1979 (FBIS, January 29, 1979). On the general character of the Pol Pot regime see François Ponchaud: *Cambodia: Year Zero*, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978, and Karl D. Jackson, in *Asian Survey*, January, 1978, pp. 76-90.
- 13) Radio Hanoi, Vietnamese News Agency (VNA) in English, January 6, 1979 (FBIS, January 8, 1979). On the krom and sahakor khum see Pol Pot's September 27, 1977 address (FBIS, October 4, 1977), and Donald Wise in the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, September 23, 1977, p. 33.
- 14) SPK in French to Cambodia, January 25, 1979 (FBIS, January 29, 1979).
- 15) Editorial in *Kampuchea* (Phnom Penh), February 3, 1979, and Heng Samrin interview, SPK in French to Cambodia, February 7, 1979 (FBIS, February 7 and 8, 1979).
- 16) "Indo-China - The First Communist War", *Asiaweek* (Hongkong), December 29, 1978 - January 5, 1979, p. 23. See also *Far Eastern Economic Review*, February 2, 1979, p. 18.
- 17) Radio Phnom Penh, domestic service in Cambodian, September 28, 1977 (FBIS, October 4, 1977). For the intellectual environment and ideological perceptions of Pot, Sary, and Sampan see also the articles by Henry Kamm in *The New York Times Magazine*, November 19, 1978 and February 4, 1979, and Ashok Perakumbar in *Orientations*, June, 1978, p. 10.
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- 29) *Tap Chi Cong San*, 1978, no. 8, as cited FBIS, September 18, 1978.
- 30) Radio Hanoi, domestic service in Vietnamese, December 15, 1978 (FBIS).
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