DANGER OF GENOCIDE IN KAMPUCHEA

Ever in history has a people faced such a great danger of genocide as the Kampuchean people. The crimes committed by the Nazis in the past and by the racists in South Africa and Rhodesia at present cannot compare with those committed by the butchers in Phnom Penh, if one considers the ratio of the number of people killed to the population of that country. According to many Western sources the number of people killed in Kampuchea is put at 2 million or more. If the figure is correct the ratio is one to four, that is one-fourth of the Kampuchean population have been killed during the last three years.

The victims of genocide were:
Those who served in the Lon Nol army and administration.
Those who served in the Sihanouk army and administration, including supporters of the Government of National Union of Kampuchea and relatives of the former Head of State of Kampuchea. Those belonging to exploiting classes: landlords and bourgeois. Intellectuals, college students, pupils and all those who had a certain level of instruction. Leaders of Buddhism, a religion which has been completely abolished. People of ethnic minorities, especially the Cham.
Foreigners or people of Vietnamese and Chinese origin. Those blacklisted as suspected of having connections with Vietnam.
Former city-dwellers, assigned to the 3rd category for having collaborated with the old regime. And all those who, in one way or another, did not sympathize with the tyrannical regime which styles itself “pure communist”.

Altogether there are ten categories of people listed as targets of this campaign of extermination.

Only one category of people is spared. They are called “pure citizens”, that is poor peasants — the basic force of the Pol Pot-type revolution. But it is the peasants who are condemned to hard labour by the barrack-like regime of Pol Pot.

In order to carry out a system of poor peasants’ communes, the Phnom Penh rulers have abolished all forms of so-called capitalist economy or private property in general. They have banned all kinds of marketing and exchanges of commodities, and have excluded money from economic life. The people are not allowed to have private property, to have a private house or to take meals at home. Marriages are decided by Angkar (the Organization). Family life is denied. The pillars of the State machinery are the army and the intelligence service. Power is in the hands of the nuptial regime of Pol Pot and Leng Sary and their wives, two sisters. That is what they call democracy.

Under such a terrible socio-economic system and coercive machinery, the Kampuchean cannot earn his living once thrown out of the commune. Those in power keep their hold over the stomach of the citizen, they also hold tight the sword and, in consequence, the minds of the people, who can be killed at any time and for any reason.

This bizarre model of society runs counter to the laws of evolution of human society. It is in opposition to the interests of the Kampuchean nation.

By bringing their people to the disaster of genocide, the rulers in Kampuchea have turned themselves into the tools of the great-nation expansionists. Their country has been turned into a new-type colony, worse than the previous Lon Nol — Cheng Heng regime.

However it is certain that a people who have struggled for a century for independence, and freedom will turn the tables on the enemy. Freedom- and justice-loving people everywhere are on the side of the heroic Kampuchean people.

THU HUONG

Kampuchea:

An Unfinished Diary

An illiterate Kampuchean civilian refugee once showed me a note-book with frayed edges filled with hasty scribbles. It had been entrusted to him by a man named Sok Kun.

“Don’t know his real name, but people called him Sok Kun. He lived in no fixed place. Once before starting out on a journey, he asked me to keep this book for him.” I examined the note-book: It turned out to be the diary of a man who was once a member of the Kampuchean Communist Party.

Here are some excerpts from it:

One Saturday afternoon (in 1972 — Ed.) I went to the home of Leng Sary to discuss with his wife our plan for next week’s work. Leng Sary himself was then away in Peking. The war was raging. The dull explosions of US bombs came from the distance.

Leng Sary’s wife didn’t seem to like my presence at that moment. She was sitting comfortably in an arm-chair. Her hair was carefully combed and smoothed with oil for she wished to look younger than her forty-odd years.

On a mat spread on the ground some musicians were playing their instruments and singing.

Whenever the singing pleased her she would chuckle and the folds of flesh on her cheeks would quiver. Then she would take a handful of sweets and spread them on the table. This was her reward to the entertainers.

“Comrade, would you finalize the resolution of the Party cell?” I asked.

VIETNAM COURIER
The Uprising of Patriots

Editor's Note: The following story has been pieced together by Pham Hong, correspondent of the Quan Doi Nhan Dan (People's Army) newspaper, from interviews with a cross-section of Kampuchean military and civilian cadres who have sought refuge in various border provinces of Vietnam.

"Take it back with you and do as I instructed you to when we last met."

That made my blood boil. Was she deliberately refusing to listen to reason? Ieng Sary is all the time in Peking and rarely attends meetings of the Party cell, giving carte blanche to his wife here.

I am a mechanic and can repair various kinds of simple equipment, so they sent me to this office. The Party members here elected me secretary of the Party cell. Both Ieng Sary and his wife are members of the cell.

Ieng Sary's wife is an alternate member of the Party Central Committee and is in charge of both internal and external propaganda. Her maiden name is Khieu Thirit. She has a sister named Khieu Ponary, who is Pol Pot's wife. Ponary is even higher placed than her sister in Party hierarchy. The two sisters hold unlimited power in the resistance zone. This is known to everybody.

A communique from the general staff has said that the Lon Nol army supported by American airpower is launching a powerful counter-offensive along the Mekong river. Meanwhile, in Vietnam the 1972 summer campaign of the liberation forces has started from Loc Ninh to Quang Tri. Right on Kampuchean soil, Vietnamese cadres and combatants are giving all-out assistance to the young revolutionary Kampuchean army.

The blood of our Vietnamese comrades mingles with the water of our big river.

One day she introduced a very young girl to me and said: "She is a Party member, take her into our cell." I asked for the girl's background documents and introductory letter as required from any Party member seeking admittance to a cell. But Ieng Sary's wife said curtly: "The Central Committee has given its approval, don't make a fuss." I spoke no more but promised to myself to investigate the matter.

The girl was entrusted by Ieng Sary's wife with educating the youth in the office according to a document labelled "Kampuchea's Cultural Education Programme."

One day the girl was away on some mission. I was assigned to replace her temporarily in the "educational" job. I leafed through the document and was startled to find that it advocated the simultaneous carrying out of the national democratic revolution and the cultural revolution.

The document said: "The wheel of Kampuchea's history is turning. It will crush anyone and anything standing in its way." This reminded me of the recent extermination of twelve families in the resistance base, including babies and old people. Was it because they had stood in the way of the wheel of "Angkar" (The Organisation)?

My office now receives more and more Khmer cadres who have been trained in Peking. They have been dispatched by Ieng Sary to replace cadres of the older generation, who were sent to "the field." Very few of them have since returned or even been heard of. Have they died, in combat or from other causes?

The Peking-returnees often tell us about the "earth-shaking" Cultural Revolution in China. One of them once put it rather candidly: "Our deaths in the revolution are nothing compared to theirs in the Cultural Revolution."

I still remember this sentence in the "Kampuchea's Cultural Education Programme": "On the cultural front, we must pay particular attention to the bastards (sic) who have studied in Hanoi." The words are crude and leave no doubt as to the intention. I do not agree. The revolutions in Vietnam and Kampuchea are closely bound together in both peoples' fight for national liberation, why should we attack Vietnam at this moment? At a meeting of the Party cell I asked Ieng Sary's wife point-blank:

"Who wrote the pamphlet on cultural education?"

"Secretary Pol Pot did. You seem to make light of him."

"I don't, but I do think that it is not right to write such words for they mean a betrayal of the militant solidarity between the two fraternal countries."

A bitter debate ensued. One comrade angrily thumped the table wondering with tears in his eyes where such a line would take the Kampuchean revolution. Another comrade asked Ieng Sary why should the Party Constitution include such strange assertions as "even one member can be the Party" or "even one man can be Angkar". "How dangerous such statements are!" he exclaimed. Unable to answer these questions, Ieng Sary's wife frowned:

"Well, I'll soon go to Peking for consultations and we shall then examine your qualifications as Party members."

Since that day we have lived in agony. We are Communists who know that the very essence of their Party has changed, at
a time when the fight against
the Lon Nol clique of traitors
has become more and more
arduous and complicated. We feel
ashamed of our leaders, a group of
ambitious men who are using the
cover of the Kampuchean
resistance to deceive the peoples
of the world. Pol Pot has given
himself the very gentle
Chinese name of "Hai Thien"; likewise
Ieng Sary calls himself "Tu Rou" or "Tu Thong". Both use
these Vietnamese names in their
correspondence with Vietnamese
leaders. I don't know if they use
Chinese names when corresponding
with Peking.

Ieng Sary's wife has now left
for Peking, accompanied by one
of her aides, who was to look
after her comfort during the
travel.

Not long after her arrival in
Peking we received the startling
news of the death of Son Ngoc Minh. Son Ngoc Minh is a
member of the Party Central
Committee. For some time he
had developed high blood pres-
sure and so had wished to take
rest in Vietnam before
returning to his post in the resist-
ance base. But Ieng Sary, in his
capacity as a member of the
Standing Committee, decided that
he must go to Peking for treat-
ment.

We were told of Son Ngoc Minh's last moments. His death happened on the
morning of December 22, 1972. Son
Ngoc Minh had invited some of
his foreign friends to his home
for a farewell party before he
left for Kampuchea to take part
in the leadership of the resist-
ance. At one point, he felt
little dizzy and asked his wife
for his usual bottle of medicine.
His wife said it was in the medi-
cine-chest in an adjoining room.
He took the medicine and went
directly to his bed where he was
later found dead.

Ieng Sary ordered his body to
be cremated in Peking and big
memorial ceremonies to be held
at home throughout the resist-
ance base. Son Ngoc Minh's
sudden and mysterious death was
a great grief to us. Not surpris-
ingly we soon learnt that Ieng
Sary had considered "no
longer fit to be members of the
Kampuchean Communist Party".

Son Ngoc Minh's death brought
back to my mind other events
which had happened in the last
stage of the anti-French resis-
tance. We were then attending a
political course in a resistance
base in Ta Keo province. We
were told by a lecturer that
Saloth Sar had come back from
France to claim leadership of the
resistance (only after becoming
Party Secretary did Saloth Sar
change his name to Pol Pot). He
said Saloth Sar did not seem
happy to find that a full-fledged
leadership had been set up from
the centre to the provinces, and
that resistance bases had taken
shape.

In 1982 a mysterious event
happened: Comrade Tusemut, the
then Party Secretary, disap-
ppeared without leaving any trace
and Saloth Sar immediately
replaced him in his leading post.
Tusemut was a well-tested leader of worker stock who
enjoyed high prestige among the
population. Now, ten years later,
it is Son Ngoc Minh's turn to
die. He died in Peking at a
moment when he was to return
to the country to take part in
the leadership of the resistance.
These two deaths leave many
questions in our minds which
we vow to clear up. If we can't
do it in our lifetime, then our
successors, the younger genera-
tion of Kampuchean Communists,
will."

Who Is Pol Pot?

I have asked a dozen former
commanders in Military
Zone 203 of the Kampuchean
army if they had ever seen Pol
Pot in person. All had answered
in the negative.

"No. He goes nowhere. We
have been told by high-ranking
officers that he has his home in
a secluded place amid a marshy
expans near Phnom Penh, from
where he issues all orders. The
road to his residence is very
tortuous and heavily guarded."

Many Kampuchea, both
soldiers and civilians, have told
me they don't know who Pol
Pot is, some even have never
heard his name.

They only know that on top
of them is Angkor, which is
sometimes called "Pa Ko" (the
Kampuchean initials for Com-


min Party). "Angkor is the
snake and Pol Pot is its head," an
old man commented wryly.

During Pol Pot's visit to the
Democratic People's Republic of
Korea, a Korean news item said
he was born in 1925. But
Yugoslav sources said he was
born in 1928 and is now 50.

But now the mystery has been
lifted and the world had learnt
a few things about Pol Pot, alias
Saloth Sar.

Saloth Sar was born into a
peasant family. In his childhood
he shaved his head and lived in
a pagoda as a novice for six years.
Later, given a scholarship by the
French colonial administration
he attended a technical school in
Paris.

While in France, he took part
in the students' movement. Be-
cause of this his scholarship was
cancelled. He returned to Kam-
puchea in 1953 and established
contact with the anti-French resis-
tance movement. At that time
he taught history and geography
at a private primary school in
Phnom Penh. Following the mys-
terious death of Party Secretary
Tusemut a leadership crisis en-
sued in the Party. Saloth Sar
became the new secretary and
changed his name to Pol Pot. He
lived a secluded life in the coun-
tryside until 1975. He has rewrit-
ten the history of the Kampu-
chean Communist Party which, so
he says, came into existence only
after he joined its leadership.

Saloth Sar says the Party was found
amidst the hubub of the Phnom
Penh railway station on June 20,
1969. Such are the things we know
about Pol Pot before liberation.

Pol Pot owes his fame to his
bloody purges, not only the mass
slaughter of hundreds of thou-
sands of civilians and summary
executions of grass-roots and
middle-level cadres in the ruling
apparatus, but also the unac-
countable disappearance of many
well-known figures in the leader-
ship. In 1977 Hu Nim, Minister of
Information, and Tok Pheam,
Minister of Public Works, suddenly disappeared from the public scene; recently came the turn of Mei Prang, Minister of Information and Telecommunications. Hu Yun, a Politbureau member, had been ousted as early as 1975. Son Sen, Minister of National Defence, once regarded as a close associate of Pol Pot's and until last year a full member of the Standing Committee of the Party Central Committee, was referred to as a mere alternate member of this committee during his recent visit to China.

The Chinese Cultural Revolution has been hastily copied by Phnom Penh without losing any of its bloody features! In 1970 when Lon Nol staged a pustch to depose Sihanouk and launched an all-out attack into the Kampuchean resistance bases with a huge army equipped with modern US weapons, the resistance forces numbered only about 4,000 guerrillas formed into squads and platoons, with a few companies around the central base. Pol Pot personally went to the Vietnamese resistance base to ask for help in building up a number of regiment-sized regular units. From these core units, Pol Pot soon found himself in possession of six regular divisions. Dressed in black pyjamas and wearing a chequered scarf, he would say, flashing his mysterious smile: "There has never been such close relationship as that between our two fraternal countries! Your services will be recorded in our history books." But no sooner had the Lon Nol army been defeated than Pol Pot cast aside all "good" and ordered his hangmen to arrest all the key officers of these six divisions, especially those built with direct Vietnamese aid. Then he formed nearly twenty new divisions equipped with Chinese weapons and supervised by Chinese military advisers.

Since then he has completely cleared the decks for his long-cherished dream of serving as shock trooper for China's bignation expansionism:

He has put to death all the Kampuchean cadres who had returned from Vietnam to take part in the fight against the Americans and their puppets (except a few who shifted allegiance and bowed to his power).

He has dissolved all the armed units which had been formed with Vietnam's assistance and had fought side by side with the Vietnamese liberation army.

He has wiped out all those with kinship ties with Vietnamese citizens.

He has liquidated all those who had been to Vietnam or had expressed agreement with Vietnam on certain points.

Now, anyone who inadvertently uses a Vietnamese word is considered a criminal.

A tragic case is that of 250 children of Kampuchean resistance cadres who were sent to study in Hanoi during the war. After liberation in 1975 they returned to the country to rejoin their parents. But hardly had they crossed the border and zone about 300 metres into Kampuchean soil when they were all slaughtered by Kampuchean soldiers.

Pol Pot is a silent man. He has given only a few talks over the radio and written a few guiding documents. His Kampuchea's "Education Programme" is aimed at sowing hatred against Vietnam, a companion of Kampuchea in the life-and-death struggle against the common enemy.

The instructions drafted by Pol Pot for the Party cells make no mention of Marxism-Leninism.

In the autumn of 1977, after doing away with many key cadres in the country, he wrote circular No. 870, in which after lavishing praise on the cadres newly brought to power by himself since August 1977, Pol Pot dealt with Party building work. He wrote: "Even if we have to sacrifice one million people we will not hesitate. The Party must be strong."

Rebellion in Military Zone 203

BLOODY popular struggles began as early as 1976. Many small army units also opposed the regime. In September 1976 the leader of a district seven kilometres from Battambang led a 200-strong force against Phnom Penh.

Opposition grew in early 1977. Leaders of the Northern Military Zone organized a centre of rebellion in Oddar Meanchey then got into contact with some military commanders in Phnom Penh. Bitter fighting broke out in Phnom Penh, Kompong Thom and Siem reap. Pol Pot ordered brutal repression. On March 11, 1978, four aircraft from Phnom Penh landed troops in Siem reap. Dissident leaders, among them a man named Soth, were arrested, brought to Phnom Penh, charged with treason and burnt alive at the Kompong Thom stadium. Pol Pot said that only in this way could he nip "indiscipline" in the bud. Soon many Chinese trucks were seen transporting cadres and new army recruits to Siem reap and the Northern Military Zone.

In 1978 the centre of rebellion shifted eastward to Military Zone 203, one of the six military zones into which the country is divided. Military Zone 203, also called Eastern Military Zone, comprises major population centres like Svay Rieng, Neak Leang, Prey Veng and Kompong Cham. It borders the Vietnamese provinces of Tay Ninh, Long An and Dong Thap. A strip of this zone protrudes into Vietnamese territory between Tay Ninh and Long An provinces. During the anti-US resistance it was widely known as the "Parrot's Beak". The American and puppet troops were dealt stunning blows when they operated there.

This military zone also bears many memories of the deep militant friendship between Vietnam and Kampuchea. But ever since 1975 the Phnom Penh rulers have done everything they could to erase all vestiges of this friendship, even levelling the graves

(Continued on page 28)
of Vietnamese army combatants fallen on this land during the common fight against the common enemy and killing any Kampuchean who dares reminisce favourably about the Vietnamese armymen.

That's not all. Together with their Chinese advisers the Pol Pot-Teng Sary clique have chosen Military Zone 203 as a spearhead in their aggressive and expansionist plan against Vietnam.

In their views, Military Zone 203 is a good spring-board for a thrust into the strategic area along the Saigon river and Vam Co Dong river.

From the border three highways — Highway 13 passing through Loc Ninh, Highway 22 through Tay Ninh town, and Highway 1 through Cu Chi — lead to Saigon, a little more than 100 kilometres away by the longest road. Since late 1976 the Phnom Penh rulers have moved large army units to this military zone. Of the 17 divisions Kampuchea possessed at that time, from 6 to 8 were permanently stationed here. When moving their strategic reserve Division 200 to the "Parrot's Beak" which is only 60 kilometres from Saigon as the crow flies, the Pol Pot-Teng Sary clique reckoned that by cutting across muddy ricefields they could reach Saigon in about three days.

Kampuchean soldiers who have fled to Vietnam say that as early as June 1975 Kampuchean soldiers were told that "Vietnam is not our friend". In 1976 and 1977 this was officially changed to "Vietnam is our enemy; the Kampuchean army must attack and annihilate this traditional enemy." The high command told the field commanders: "There is no official border between Kampuchea and Vietnam. The border is where the Kampuchean army goes. We must use force to redefine our border."

The orders to the divisions in Military Zone 203 are even more specific: "The border of Democratic Kampuchea extends as far as Saigon."

On the fateful night of April 30, 1975, the Pol Pot-Teng Sary clique began their bloody crimes all along the border with Vietnam. Kampuchean troops made surprise attacks and slaughtered Vietnamese civilians in their sleep, Kampuchean shells fell on market places and schools a dozen kilometres from the border.

Military Zone 203 with its pointed "Parrot's Beak" is a dagger directed at Vietnam, Kampuchea's old comrade-in-arms. The blade of the dagger has been sharpened by Pol Pot and Teng Sary but the haft is held by other people. When given orders to attack Vietnam, Kampuchean military commanders were told that "China stands by us."

Unfortunately for the Phnom Penh rulers, these actions met with firm riposte from Vietnam. Then, right in Military Zone 203 rebellions broke out at regimental, divisional, and even zonal levels. By the end of May an insurrectional atmosphere prevailed. So Phim, Party secretary of the military zone and Vice-President of Democratic Kampuchea, together with his chief of staff, rallied the insurrectional forces behind them. These forces consisted chiefly of troops in the eight districts of Sector 21 and a number of districts of Sector 20 (the sector is a sub-division of the military zone equivalent to a province. Military Zone 203 has six sectors numbered from 20 to 25). This region was selected for its geographical advantages: the wide Mekong river to the west, dense forests stretching to rugged mountains in the north, while in the east and the south are populous areas of farmland and vast rubber plantations.

Sensing trouble Pol Pot appointed Ta Po deputy Party secretary of the zone. On May 29 Ta Po convened all division, regiment and battalion commanders to an "urgent meeting." The commanders of Sector 21 refused to go and thus escaped death.

On the morning of May 25, the Party Committee in Peam Chillean district received instructions from So Phim to urgently recruit young men and form a third company of guerillas. The army staff of the military zone sent 200 rifles to equip these three companies. Fighting broke out everywhere, especially in Suong, Chup, Dam Be, Frey Veng and Kompong Cham. The divisions at the frontline were in a turmoil. Three battalions deserted their posts at the border and joined the insurrectional forces. Pol Pot ordered artillery poudlings of the rebels' positions. This was like pouring oil on the flames. From Peam Reang island a battalion led by a commander named Song crossed the Mekong to reinforce So Phim's units. By now clandestine pockets of resistance within the farming cooperatives began to establish contact with the insurrectional forces. The situation evolved rapidly and got out of Pol Pot's control. The despot decided to write off Military Zone 203 and had loyal units sent from all parts of the country to fill the vacuum. These included the Kandals (a kind of praetorian
guard from Phnom Penh), naval forces from Kompong Som port, and also border guards from the frontier with Thailand. General mobilisation was ordered from Phnom Penh. Within a month as many as 300 teenagers in Ang Kunh village, Trang district, Ta Keo province, were pressed into military service.

This precipitous action incensed the population even more and sparked off popular struggles from Ratanakiri, to Siam reap, Battambang, Kompong Speu and Kampot provinces. The telephone lines of some Chinese advisory groups were cut off.

**Who Is So Phim?**

Suon Say was born in Bang hamlet, Sam Rong district, Svay Rieng province. He joined the Kampuchean army in March 1976 and was assigned to a battalion commanded by his own uncle, a man named Xuong. One day in late May, his uncle was召ed to a clandestine meeting somewhere in a rubber plantation. He returned two days later in unusually high spirits. He called Suon aside and said:

"I'll take the whole battalion to Neak Leang and Cham Ron to fight the Pol Pot army. Pol Pot is a bad man. Many other units have also risen up against him. After victory I will come back. Now I want you and your young friends to stay here and cover my departure."

About ten days later the battalion attacked Pol Pot's troops around Prey Veng town then withdrew into the jungle. That happened in mid-June.

About the same time an armoured column was sent from Phnom Penh to Military Zone 203.

Keo Kun, a male nurse in the Supply Section of the 3rd Division, told me: "Everyone of us anxiously watched as the armoured cars crossed the flooded ricefields and made straight for our positions. The situation was very tense in the 3rd Division. Before we was the Vietnamese army and behind were insurrectional troops. Word spread that some elements of the 4th and 5th Divisions had taken to the jungle for guerilla warfare.

"A man standing on the top of an armoured car introduced himself as a member of the Central Committee and ordered our division to gather in regimental formations for a meeting.

"The 3rd Division, though officially considered one of the strongest in the Kampuchean army, was actually going to rack and ruin. The 'Central Committee' member didn't even need a loudspeaker, each regiment consisting of 400 or 500 men at most. We squatted on the grass and listened to him. We startled when he mentioned the name of So Phim, secretary of Military Zone 203.

"He said: 'So Phim has rallied his men against the central authorities. He has also taken away millions of metres of cloth and thousands of tons of rice, thus depriving our people of food and clothing. Anyone of you who runs into So Phim must arrest him immediately.' The result of his words was that the name of So Phim spread among the army like a prairie fire. A thousand miraculous things were said about him, everyone swearing he spoke nothing but the truth."

Later I met some Vietnamese cadres who had met So Phim during the joint Kampuchean-Vietnam resistance against the US aggressors. Here is a story about this legendary Kampuchean leader as told by one of these cadres:

"In the former resistance base of the Vietnamese liberation forces in Tay Ninh province there was a hospital. Many leading comrades of the Kampuchean resistance came there for treatment or rest. Once Kampuchean friends brought a very sick man to the hospital: 'This is Comrade Suvanna, one of our leaders.'

"The hospital personnel took great care of this comrade. For security reasons he was called 'Mr Muoi Xu'. Later it was learnt that Suvanna was also called So Phim.

"Muoi Xu was small but wiry. He spoke little. When posing with his Vietnamese friends for a photograph he would wear a faint smile which made his cheek-bones appear still higher. Later, a Kampuchean reported that he had been 'severely criticized' for having left the hospital on a jeep provided by the 'Youn' (Vietnamese).

"In those days the Pol Pot clique on the one hand asked for Vietnamese weapons and assistance in training Kampuchean regiments but on the other repressed Vietnamese residents in areas under their control, sought to discredit Vietnam, and murdered a number of Vietnamese liaison cadres. When the Vietnamese side investigated these cases they gave it only evasive answers.

"Once the head of the liaison committee of Vietnam went to meet Mr Muoi Xu. He told the latter: Some of the Kampuchean leaders have acted very strangely. The Mekong flows through both our countries. Its water carries the blood of fighters of the two nations who have fallen in the common resistance against the Americans for the independence and happiness of Kampuchea and Vietnam. It grieves me to think of what has happened along the border of our countries, to think of those Vietnamese combatants who have died, not because killed by American bullets, but from other causes. Out of respect for you, I ask you to ponder over the root cause of this state of things. We'll never forget this statement of yours: 'Friendship is the source of our strength. It will help us weather all storms.'"
Following the fall of the Lon Nol regime, the Kampuchean rulers closed their country to the world. Only sketchy news have filtered out. Nothing certain can be learnt about the rebellions.

Pol Pot Abolishes Military Zone 203

S A KAN, a squad leader of the Kampuchean army who fled to Vietnam in early July 1978, said that a few days before he left he had picked up a leaflet signed Run Dun. Looking at the portrait printed in one corner of the leaflet he and Nem Sot, a platoon commander and a friend of his, immediately recognized their battalion commander.

"It came as a big surprise to us all. On May 28, 1978, our battalion commander Run Dun, widely known for his exploits in the anti-US resistance, had been summoned to a 'study course'. In our country a conviction to a 'study course' means something terrible. We asked each other in whispers: 'Is it true that Run Dun dares oppose Angkar? Now, here we stood in amazement looking at Run Dun's picture on the leaflet. So Angkar cannot kill everyone, we concluded: others could have escaped together with Run Dun. But soon orders came from the central authorities for all company commanders to attend a 'study course'. We said to each other: 'So the company leaders in this division must also oppose Angkar, for they are being sent to a re-education course, which means certain death.'"

"For our part, to tell the truth, we did not feel too anxious about our own safety, for we had always strictly followed all orders from Angkar, working the fields when we were ordered to work the fields, fighting Vietnam when we were ordered to fight Vietnam, and never complaining about anything. Moreover, we were only small fry not worth worrying about. The only question on our minds was who would be sent to command our company. Most probably he would be a kandal since this unit was the most trusted by the central authorities.

"But on June 28, that is a month or so after battalion commander Run Dun was sent to the 'study course', all the platoon and squad leaders in our battalion, then stationed in a border area close to Sa Mat of Vietnam, also received convocation orders. They were fifty in all, plus a number of the rank and file who were Party members. The battalion was thus left with only newly recruited soldiers without Party or Youth Union membership, one-third of them being mere children aged from 13 to 15.

"Only then, that is after all cadres and Party members in the battalion had been taken away, did the commander of the unit in charge of the 'purge', a complete stranger to us, assemble us and declare coldly: 'The Central Committee no longer needs this Military Zone 203.'"

"There was no court, no hearings, no trial, no verdict, nothing, only collective death sentence on all divisions, regiments and battalions in the military zone.'"

Even then Nem Sot and Sa Kan did not know why they should have to die.

Nem Sot and Sa Kan continued: 'One night the soldiers of the units in charge of the 'purge' tied up all the 50-odd officers and took them to a nearby forest. There the prisoners were assembled then led away in groups of three or four.' Nem Sot and Sa Kan heard heavy thuds followed by muffled cries resembling the sounds made by animals with their throats being cut.

Panic-stricken, they shouted, "Let's run away, brothers!" The more than 40 of them, all with torn clothes tied behind their backs, made a rush for their lives. Gunshots rang out and many fell. Nem Sot and Sa Kan are the only known survivors of this wholesale massacre.

The Insurrection Spreads

CHEA CHENG was a platoon commander of Regiment 116 in Svay Rieng province, Military Zone 203.

On April 3, 1978, prior to the large-scale uprising in Military Zone 203, a detachment sent from Phnom Penh arrested all the 40 officers of Regiment 116 together with 182 Party and Youth Union members, among them Chea Cheng. They were put onto five large trucks which drove away. Company commanders and higher-ranking officers were taken to unknown destinations. Chea Cheng was brought to a large clearing called Vin Apreng in Chu Cach. About 2,500 army men were detained there including many with combat wounds and some women soldiers. Daily interrogations were conducted by the Security Service of Sector 24 which was searching out participants in the insurrection which had "sullied" Military Zone 203.

In late May the prisoners at Vin Apreng heard many gunshots coming from the direction of Prey Veng. Word spread that a number of units there had also risen up against the central authorities.

On the morning of June 12, 1978, the camp was thrown into turmoil when three armoured cars were seen making their way for the camp across the surrounding flooded fields, followed by a large crowd of civilians.

Nhon, the commander of the camp, hastily took off his uniform, hid it under a heap of straw and fled.

Men jumping down from the armoured cars took on the security men and a bloody fight began.

Chea Cheng said: "We fled as quickly as our feet could carry us while the soldiers from the armoured cars and the security men fought. Who were the soldiers? I couldn't tell. Travelling along forest trails I arrived home on the afternoon of June 13.

"The following morning the president of the co-op ordered me to report to the district. As I
entered the compound I saw my elder brother. I heard him ask a soldier:

‘What have I done to be tied up thus?’

‘Are you still feigning innocence? You and your ilk are a bunch of reactionaries who are following So Phim to oppose the central authorities.’

“He then gave my brother a kick which sent him sprawling on the ground. My brother struggled back to his feet, then walked up to me, kissed me on the cheek, tears trickling down his face and said: ‘If such is their verdict, we shall die.’

‘Only then did I know that a big uprising had broken out in the region. At sunset they took all of us prisoners out of Praesaut township and led us north following a trail. Soon we arrived at a cemetery reserved for Chinese residents and there we were ordered to halt. A group of very young soldiers were summarily executing prisoners by smashing them over the head with hoes then throwing their bodies into a ditch. We broke away and ran helter-skelter into the forest. I was hit in the arm by a rifle shot but continued to run. Later a fellow prisoner untied my arms. Finally I managed to reach the border.’

‘Pol Pot and Ieng Sary have been conducting a large-scale, intensive, brutal and continuous purge among the army. They began by killing first all genuine revolutionary cadres, then all those who disapproved of their policy and later anyone who did not please them. Even before that fateful month of June 1978 when they ordered the execution of all dissidents in Military Zone 203, the “abolition” of this zone itself and the replacement of all army units there by loyal troops dispatched from other military zones, the purge had been going on over the past three years in many divisions. In many cases the “traitor”’s parents, wife, children and close relatives were also killed (When battalion commander Run Dun was led away to be executed on May 28, 1978, he was accompanied by his parents, his wife and his two uncles. These were also to be executed).

An estimated sixty per cent of the cadres having taken part in the liberation war have been murdered. Army Party Committees have been completely dismantled.

Meanwhile, the Phnom Penh rulers have urgently trained and promoted teen-age “young red guards” to whom they give the title of “most noble revolutionary combatants”.

As turmoil and division grow in the army, the rulers have persisted in their purge. This has fanned up the flames of rebellion. Chen Tei, a Navyman sent from Kompong Som port to Military Zone 203 to command a newly-formed infantry company, has just crossed over to Vietnam. He told me: “The central authorities are dispatching troops from practically all corners of the country to fill the vacuum in Military Zone 203. But even in the division charged with defending Phnom Penh and the Naval Division there have been outbreaks of mutiny. Chan the division commander, and Doum, political commissar of the Navy, have been arrested.”

PHAM HONG