

## PSMLS Notes for 12/14/17

### The U.S. Is Even More Guilty Than Pol Pot By Dr. Grover Furr Phd

(Note: Pol Pot died in April 1998, when the U.S. government was making noises about "trying" him for "genocide". Nowhere was there any mention of U.S. support for the Khmer Rouge under Pol Pot, though this had been well documented. The following letter was published in The Montclairion (weekly student newspaper of Montclair State University) of April 23, 1998, page 22, under the title "The U.S. Is Just As Guilty As Pol Pot".)

To the Editor:

In all the hubbub about the death of Pol Pot, neither the U.S. government nor the American news media have seen fit to mention that

this mass murderer was supported for fifteen years by the United States.

the U.S. bombing of Cambodia during 1970-75 killed as many or more Cambodians as Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge ever did;

Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge were not Communists.

These last two facts have been documented by anti-communist researchers (see "Who Is and Was Really Responsible for Genocide in Cambodia? Pol Pot Was Not and Is Not A Communist,"). For example: The Khmer Rouge not communist? Yes, by their own statement:

"We are not communists ... we are revolutionaries" who do not 'belong to the commonly accepted grouping of communist Indochina.'"(Ieng Sary, 1977, quoted by Vickery, Cambodia: 1978-1983, p. 288).

As for how many were killed by American bombing, Zasloff and Brown, in Problems of Communism, Jan.-Feb. 1979, write of the "heavy toll in lives" which "the enormous U.S. bombing and the intensity of the fighting" caused before 1975, and imply the Khmer Rouge claims of 600,000 to "more than 1 million" dead are credible. (These two authors are dedicated anti-Communists who did much research for the U.S. government during the Vietnam War.)

U.S. support of Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge is thoroughly documented in an article in CAQ magazine (formerly Covert Action Quarterly) by Australian journalist John Pilger, "The Long Secret Alliance: Uncle Sam and Pol Pot."\* Some quotations from that article:

"The US not only helped to create conditions that brought Cambodia's Khmer Rouge to power in 1975, but actively supported the genocidal force, politically and financially. By January 1980, the US was secretly funding Pol Pot's exiled forces on the Thai border. The extent of this support -- \$85 million from 1980-86 -- was revealed 6 years later in correspondence between congressional lawyer Jonathan Winer, then counsel to Sen. John Kerry (D-MA) of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation."

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"In 1981, Pres. Carter's national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, said, "I encouraged the Chinese to support Pol Pot. The US", he added, "winked publicly" as China sent arms to the Khmer Rouge(KR) through Thailand."

"In 1980, under US pressure, the World Food Program handed over food worth \$12 million to the Thai Army to pass on to the KR. According to former Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke,'20,000 to 40,000 Pol Pot guerrillas benefited. This aid helped restore the KR to a fighting force, based in Thailand, from which it destabilized Cambodia for more than a decade."

"In 1982, the US and China, supported by Singapore, invented the Coalition of the Democratic Government

of Kampuchea, which was, as Ben Kiernan pointed out, neither a coalition, nor democratic, nor a government, not in Kampuchea. Rather, it was what the CIA calls a 'master illusion.' ... Cambodia's former ruler, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, was appointed its head; otherwise little changed. The KR dominated the two "non-communist" members, the Sihanoukists and the Khmer Peoples' National Liberation Front (KPNLF). From his office at the UN, Pol Pot's ambassador, the urbane Thereon Parish, continued to speak for Cambodia. A close associate of Pol Pot, he had in 1975 called on Khmer expatriates to return home, whereupon many of them disappeared."

(I have also put another article from Covert Action Information Bulletin No. 34, Summer 1990, on this subject: Jack Colhoun, "On the side of Pol Pot: U.S. Supports Khmer Rouge".\*

The United States government pressured the United Nations to retain Pol Pot's representative as the "official" representative of Cambodia to the UN, to keep the pro-Vietnamese government out.

During the past year or two the Khmer Rouge guerrilla forces have begun to disintegrate, and Pol Pot's usefulness to the Western imperialists has evaporated. Therefore the U.S. government has talked vaguely about putting Pol Pot on trial for genocide. His death last week spared the imperialists a potentially embarrassing situation.

What does this all mean for us?

1. There is no substitute for real communism -- egalitarian, anti-racist, based on class interests, anti-nationalist. Pol Pot's nationalism -- based upon "peasant" radicalism, anti-Vietnamese racism, and anti-communism -- created a nightmare state in which hundreds of thousands of Cambodians, including Communists, who had opportunistically entered into an alliance with them against French and American imperialists, were slaughtered.
2. The western imperialists, the U.S. among them, are the biggest mass murderers in history.
3. The mass media usually play the role of unofficial mouthpiece for government propaganda. What they write about communism, "human rights", and so on, is normally false. Do not drink water from a poisoned well! Don't believe anything they say.

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\* These are .pdf files -- you need the free Adobe Acrobat Reader to view it, whether on-line or downloaded.

BACK to Grover Furr's Politics and Social Issues Page.

<http://chss.montclair.edu/english/furr/pol/polpotmontclarion0498.html>

## On the Side of Pol Pot: U.S. Supports Khmer Rouge by Jack Colhoun

Covert Action Quarterly magazine, Summer 1990

For the last eleven years the United States government, in a covert operation born of cynicism and hypocrisy, has collaborated with the genocidal Khmer Rouge in Cambodia. More specifically, Washington has covertly aided and abetted the Pol Potists' guerrilla war to overthrow the Vietnamese backed government of Prime Minister Hun Sen, which replaced the Khmer Rouge regime.

The U.S. government's secret partnership with the Khmer Rouge grew out of the U.S. defeat in the Vietnam War. After the fall of Saigon in 1975, the U.S.-worried by the shift in the Southeast Asian balance of power-

turned once again to geopolitical confrontation. It quickly formalized an anti-Vietnamese, anti-Soviet strategic alliance with China—an alliance whose disastrous effects have been most evident in Cambodia. For the U.S., playing the "China card" has meant sustaining the Khmer Rouge as a geopolitical counterweight capable of destabilizing the Hun Sen government in Cambodia and its Vietnamese allies.

When Vietnam intervened in Cambodia and drove the Pol Potists from power in January 1972, Washington took immediate steps to preserve the Khmer Rouge as a guerrilla movement. International relief agencies were pressured by the U.S. to provide humanitarian assistance to the Khmer Rouge guerrillas who fled into Thailand. For more than a decade, the Khmer Rouge have used the refugee camps they occupy as military bases to wage a contra-war in Cambodia. According to Linda Mason and Roger Brown, who studied the relief operations in Thailand for Cambodian refugees:

...relief organizations supplied the Khmer Rouge resistance movement with food and medicines.... In the Fall of 1979 the Khmer Rouge were the most desperate of all the refugees who came to the Thai-Kampuchean border. Throughout 1980, however, their health rapidly improved, and relief organizations began questioning the legitimacy of feeding them. The Khmer Rouge, . . . having regained strength...had begun actively fighting the Vietnamese. The relief organizations considered supporting the Khmer Rouge inconsistent with their humanitarian goals.... Yet Thailand, the country that hosted the relief operation, and the U.S. government, which funded the bulk of the relief operations, insisted that the Khmer Rouge be fed.

During his reign as National Security Adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski played an important role in determining how the U.S. would support the Pol Pot guerrillas. Elizabeth Becker, an expert on Cambodia, recently wrote, "Brzezinski himself claims that he concocted the idea of persuading Thailand to cooperate fully with China in efforts to rebuild the Khmer Rouge.... Brzezinski said, " I encouraged the Chinese to support Pol Pot. I encouraged the Thai to help the DK [Democratic Kampuchea]. The question was how to help the Cambodian people. Pol Pot was an abomination. We could not support him but China could."

### An Unholy Alliance

The U.S. not only permitted the Khmer Rouge to use the refugee camps in Thailand as a base for its war against the new government in Phnom Penh but it also helped Prince Norodom Sihanouk and former Prime Minister Son Sann to organize their own guerrilla armies from the refugee population in the camps. These camps are an integral factor in the ability of the Khmer Rouge, the Sihanoukist National Army (ANS) and Son Sann's Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF) to wage war against the Hun Sen government.

In 1979, Washington began "a small program" of support for Sihanouk's and Son Sann's guerrillas by providing "travel expenses" for the "insurgent leaders" and funds "for the up keep of resistance camps near the Thai-Cambodian border." In addition, since 1982, the U.S. has provided the ANS and KPNLF with covert and overt "humanitarian" and "non lethal" military aid. By 1989, the secret non lethal aid had grown to between \$20 million and \$24 million annually and the overt humanitarian aid had reached \$5 million. The Bush administration requested \$7 million more in humanitarian aid for 1990.

When Congress approved the \$5 million aid package for the ANS and KPNLF in 1985, it prohibited use of the aid "...for the purpose or with the effect of promoting, sustaining or augmenting, directly or indirectly, the capacity of the Khmer Rouge...to conduct military or paramilitary operations in Cambodia or elsewhere...." From the beginning, U.S. aid for the ANS and KPNLF has been a complimentary source of aid for the Khmer Rouge. According to a western diplomat stationed in Southeast Asia, "... two-thirds of the arms aid to the noncommunist forces appears to come from Peking [Beijing], along with more extensive aid to the

communist fighters [the Khmer Rouge].... China is estimated to spend \$60 million to \$100 million yearly in aid to all factions of the anti-Vietnamese resistance."

In 1982, under pressure from the U.S., China, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Sihanouk and Son Sann joined forces with the Khmer Rouge to form the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK). The ANS and KPNLF, which were more politically respectable than the Khmer Rouge, gained military credibility from the guerrilla alliance. However, the Khmer Rouge gained considerable political legitimacy from the alliance and Khmer Rouge diplomats now represent the CGDK at the United Nations.

The CGDK receives large amounts of military aid from Singapore. When asked about the relationship between money from the U.S. and arms from Singapore, another U.S. diplomat in Southeast Asia replied, "Let's put it this way. If the U.S. supplies [the guerrilla coalition] with food, then they can spend their food money on something else."

#### Direct U.S. Aid

But there are indications of direct U.S. links to the Khmer Rouge. Former Deputy Director of the CIA, Ray Cline, visited a Khmer Rouge camp inside Cambodia in November 1980. When asked about the visit, the Thai Foreign Ministry denied that Cline had illegally crossed into Cambodian territory. However, privately, the Thai government admitted that the trip had occurred. Cline's trip to the Pol Pot camp was originally revealed in a press statement released by Khmer Rouge diplomats at the United Nations.

Cline also went to Thailand as a representative of the Reagan-Bush transition team and briefed the Thai government on the new administration's policy toward Southeast Asia. Cline told the Thais the Reagan administration planned to "strengthen its cooperation" with Thailand and the other ASEAN members opposed to the Phnom Penh government. There have been numerous other reports about direct links between the CIA and the Khmer Rouge. According to Jack Anderson, "through China, the CIA is even supporting the jungle forces of the murderous Pol Pot in Cambodia." Sihanouk himself admitted that CIA advisers were present in Khmer Rouge camps in late 1989: "Just one month ago, I received intelligence informing me that there were U.S. advisers in the Khmer Rouge camps in Thailand, notably in Site B camp.... The CIA men are teaching the Khmer Rouge human rights! The CIA wants to turn tigers into kittens!

By late 1989 the distinction between "direct or indirect" U.S. support for the Khmer Rouge was less clear. When CGDK forces launched an offensive in September 1989, Sihanouk's and Son Sann's armies openly cooperated with the Khmer Rouge. Moreover, by then the Khmer Rouge had infiltrated the military and political wings of the ANS and KPNLF.

Sihanouk confirmed ANS and KPNLF military collaboration with the Khmer Rouge in a radio message broadcast clandestinely in Cambodia. "I would particularly like to commend the fact that our three armies know how to cordially cooperate with one another...We assist each other in every circumstance and cooperate with one another on the battlefield of the Cambodian motherland....", Sihanouk specifically mentioned military cooperation in battles at Battambang, Siem Reap, and Oddar Meanchey.

Evidence of increased involvement of U.S. military advisers in Cambodia has also begun to surface. A report in the London Sunday Correspondent noted that "American advisers are reported to have been helping train guerrillas of the non communist Khmer resistance and may have recently gone into Cambodia with them....Reports of increased U.S. involvement have also emerged from the northern town of Sisophon, where local officials say four westerners accompanied guerrillas in an attack on the town last month."

Although the U.S. government denies supplying the ANS and KPNLF with military hardware, a recent report claimed that KPNLF forces had received a shipment of weapons from the U.S. including M-16s,

grenade launchers, and recoilless rifles. It has also been reported that the U.S. is providing the KPNLF with high resolution satellite photographs and "several KPNLF commanders claim Americans were sent to train some 40 elite guerrillas in the use of sophisticated U.S.-made Dragon anti-tank missiles in a four-month course that ended last month." When the KPNLF launched a major offensive on September 30, a large number of U.S. officials were sighted in the border region, near the fighting.

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Washington's link to the anti-Phnom Penh guerrilla factions was formalized in 1989 when KPNLF diplomat Sichan Siv was appointed as a deputy assistant to President George Bush. Siv's official assignment in the White House is the Public Liaison Office, where he works with different constituency groups, such as Khmer residents in the U.S. and other minority, foreign policy, youth, and education groups. Sives escaped from Cambodia in 1976 and immigrated to the U.S., where he joined the KPNLF. From 1983 to 1987, Siv served as a KPNLF representative at the United Nations as part of the CGDK delegation which was headed by Khmer Rouge diplomats.

As part of the Bush administration, Sichan Siv is significantly involved in the formulation and conduct of U.S. policy in Cambodia. He was a "senior adviser" to the U.S. delegation attending an international conference on Cambodia held last summer in Paris, where the U.S. demanded the dismantling of the Hun Sen government and the inclusion of the Khmer Rouge in an interim four-party government. He was also the moderator of a White House briefing on Cambodia in October 1989 for Khmer residents in the U.S. Another one of Siv's assignments has been to work as a liaison with far Right groups which provide political and material support for the KPNLF. He attended a World Anti Communist League (WACL) conference in Dallas, Texas in September 1985 along with other anti-communist "freedom fighters" from around the world. At the WACL conference, the KPNLF openly sought "outside training and support in intelligence and demolition."

Siv has also worked with retired U.S. Army Brigadier General Theodore Mataxis, who heads up the North Carolina-based Committee for a Free Cambodia (CFC). Mataxis was approached by senior KPNLF generals in 1986 to set up the CFC to organize support in the U.S. for the KPNLF.

## Right Wing Support

According to the Reagan doctrine, the goal of U.S. foreign policy was to "contain Soviet expansion" by supporting counterrevolutionary groups in Angola, Nicaragua, Cambodia, etc. and, in essence, "roll back" the "Soviet empire." Many of the right wing groups which gained prominence after Reagan's election immediately started programs to support contras across the globe. The World Anti-Communist League, the Heritage Foundation, the Freedom Research Foundation, as well as many others, all pressed hard for support of the "freedom fighters."

In its 1984 policy report entitled, *Mandate for Leadership II: Continuing the Conservative Revolution*, the Heritage Foundation called on the Reagan administration to focus even more closely on these counterrevolutionary struggles and to: "...employ paramilitary assets to weaken those communist and noncommunist regimes that may already be facing the early stages of insurgency within their borders and which threaten U.S. interests....Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam reflect such conditions, as do Angola, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Iran and Libya.

In 1984, right wing activist / adventurer Jack Wheeler stated that "[t]here are eight anti-Soviet guerrilla wars being conducted in the third world at this moment....Sooner or later, one of these movements is going to win....The first successful overthrow of a Soviet puppet regime may, in fact, precipitate a 'reverse domino effect,' a toppling of Soviet dominos, one after the other."

Not surprisingly, Wheeler is a big supporter of the Cambodian contra movement and has openly solicited material and political support for the KPNLF. In August 1984 he wrote an article for the Moonie-owned Washington Times in which he said, "After spending a week with the KPNLF inside Cambodia...one is drawn inescapably to the conclusion that the KPNLF does indeed represent a real third noncommunist alternative for Cambodia....[But] the KPNLF is...running seriously low on weapons and ammunition. The lack of ammunition for rifles, rocket launchers, machine guns and mortars, is especially critical."

Just how "private" the support Wheeler solicits for the KPNLF is open to question. Listed, along with Wheeler, on the Board of Directors of Freedom Research Foundation are Alex Alexiev and Mike Kelly. Alexiev is "with the National Security Division of the Rand Corporation. . . [and is] an expert on Soviet activities in the third world." Kelly was Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower Resources and Military Personnel in the early 1980s. Kelly had earlier been a legislative assistant to the right wing Senators Bill Armstrong (Rep.-Colo.) and John Tower(Rep.-Tex.).

Soldier of Fortune (SOF) magazine also journeyed to Cambodia in support of the KPNLF. In an article written after their visit to the front, SOF authors David Mills and Dale Andrade appealed for readers to contribute to the KPNLF and to send their donations to a Bangkok address. "Any private citizen who wants to give more than just moral support to help the KPNLF rebels can send "Any private citizen who wants to give more than just moral support to help the KPNLF rebels can send money." It doesn't take much. Forty dollars will buy two uniforms, one pair of shoes, two pairs of socks, knapsack, plastic sheet and a scarf for one soldier. That's not a bad deal."

#### Ted Mataxis Rides Again

Retired Brigadier-General Ted Mataxis personifies the historic ties of the U.S. to the KPNLF. In 1971-72, Mataxis worked with General Sak Sutsakhan when he was chief of the U.S. Military Equipment Delivery Team (MEDT) in Phnom Penh. Mataxis's official role was to supervise the delivery of U.S military aid to then-Cambodian Premier Lon Nol. However, Mataxis's assignment also included a covert role-over seeing the escalation of U.S. forces in Cambodia after the April 1970 U.S. invasion. Mataxis was well suited for working on covert operations in Cambodia, having trained at the Army's Strategic Intelligence School in the late 1940s.

Despite a 1970 congressional ban on aid to the Lon Nol army, there continued to be reports of MEDT personnel working as advisers to the Cambodian military. There were also reports of U.S. helicopters providing transport for Cambodian troops as well as supplying them with ammunition during battles. The U.S. also opened a radio station at Pochentong Airport, near Phnom Penh, to "help coordinate air support for Cambodian troops."

When Mataxis retired from the U.S. Army in 1972, he began working as a "military consultant" to the Defense Ministry of Singapore. "When I was down in Singapore I worked with them [Sak and the other Lon Nol generals] very closely. We used to do repairs on their ships and other things," Mataxis explained. "When Congress cut off money to them in 1973, they came down to see what Singapore could do to help them out. I got a team together from Singapore, and we went up to Phnom Penh. We made arrangements to buy old brass, old weapons and other stuff [to sell for profit] so they'd have money for supplies and other things." Under U.S. law, old U.S. weapons and scrap metal military equipment provided to allies is U.S. property, but there was no known official objection to Mataxis's end run around the congressional ban on U.S. military aid to the Lon Nol generals.

Mataxis recalled when Major General Pak Son Anh (who at the time worked closely with General Sak, the

military commander of the KPNLF) visited him in Washington in 1986. "They [Pak and other KPNLF officers] came to see me and asked what I could do. They came up to my office at the Committee for a Free Afghanistan....They asked us to set up something like that [for the KPNLF]. So I went over to see Admiral [Thomas] Moorer. I took General Pak along and asked Admiral Moorer if he could act as a Godfather for us. He said, 'Yes, you can use my name.' Moorer was chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff when Mataxis was head of the MEDT, and Mataxis's work in Cambodia was supervised by Moorer and Admiral John Mc Cain, Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Forces, 1968-72.

Mataxis spent much of 1987 setting up the Committee for a Free Cambodia (CFC). He visited General Sak in Thailand to determine the KPNLF's needs and promoted the KPNLF in the U.S. "I set it up for Pak to go to one of those American Security Council meetings [in Washington] in 1986. Then we had another one in 1987, where guerrillas from around the world came.... They'd get together and each guerrilla group would have a chance to get up and give his bit. It gave them a chance to exchange ideas and say what they were doing," Mataxis stated. Right wing support has been an important factor in keeping the Cambodian contras supplied. Even though Ted Mataxis lost in Vietnam, his war is not over.

## Conclusion

Although most people believe that the U.S. ended its intervention in Southeast Asia in 1975, it is evident from the information provided here that the U.S. continues to support repressive and non-democratic forces in the jungles of Cambodia. When asked about U.S. policy in Cambodia during an April 26, 1990 ABC News special, Rep. Chester Atkins (Dem. Mass.) characterized it as "a policy of hatred."

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The U.S. is directly responsible for millions of deaths in Southeast Asia over the past 30 years. Now, the U.S. government provides support to a movement condemned by the international community as genocidal. How long must this policy of hatred continue?  
How Thatcher helped Pol Pot

By John Pilger  
Global Research, April 11, 2013  
New Statesman and Green Left Weekly  
Region: Asia  
Theme: Intelligence

The corporate media will eulogise Margaret Thatcher, and criticise those who dare use her death to point out her many terrible crimes. But among her many crimes that will go unmentioned was the support her government gave in the 1980s to the genocidal Pol Pot-led Khmer Rouge.

Below is an article by independent journalist John Pilger on the support the West, including Thatcher, gave the Khmer Rouge. It was first published on April 17, 2000 in the New Statesman.  
Visit [www.johnpilger.com](http://www.johnpilger.com) for more articles. See also the archive of Pilger articles on Global Research.

On April 17 [2000], it is 25 years since Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge entered Phnom Penh. In the calendar of fanaticism, this was Year Zero; as many as two million people, a fifth of Cambodia's population, were to die as a consequence. To mark the anniversary, the evil of Pol Pot will be recalled, almost as a ritual act for voyeurs of the politically dark and inexplicable.

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For the managers of western power, no true lessons will be drawn, because no connections will be made to them and to their predecessors, who were Pol Pot's Faustian partners. Yet, without the complicity of the west, Year Zero might never have happened, nor the threat of its return maintained for so long.

Declassified United States government documents leave little doubt that the secret and illegal bombing of then neutral Cambodia by President Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger between 1969 and 1973 caused such widespread death and devastation that it was critical in Pol Pot's drive for power.

"They are using damage caused by B52 strikes as the main theme of their propaganda," the CIA director of operations reported on 2 May 1973. "This approach has resulted in the successful recruitment of young men. Residents say the propaganda campaign has been effective with refugees in areas that have been subject to B52 strikes."

In dropping the equivalent of five Hiroshimas on a peasant society, Nixon and Kissinger killed an estimated half a million people. Year Zero began, in effect, with them; the bombing was a catalyst for the rise of a small sectarian group, the Khmer Rouge, whose combination of Maoism and medievalism had no popular base.

After two and a half years in power, the Khmer Rouge was overthrown by the Vietnamese on Christmas Day, 1978. In the months and years that followed, the US and China and their allies, notably the Thatcher government, backed Pol Pot in exile in Thailand. He was the enemy of their enemy: Vietnam, whose liberation of Cambodia could never be recognised because it had come from the wrong side of the cold war. For the Americans, now backing Beijing against Moscow, there was also a score to be settled for their humiliation on the rooftops of Saigon.

To this end, the United Nations was abused by the powerful. Although the Khmer Rouge government ("Democratic Kampuchea") had ceased to exist in January 1979, its representatives were allowed to continue occupying Cambodia's seat at the UN; indeed, the US, China and Britain insisted on it.

Meanwhile, a Security Council embargo on Cambodia compounded the suffering of a traumatised nation, while the Khmer Rouge in exile got almost everything it wanted. In 1981, President Jimmy Carter's national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, said: "I encouraged the Chinese to support Pol Pot." The US, he added, "winked publicly" as China sent arms to the Khmer Rouge.

In fact, the US had been secretly funding Pol Pot in exile since January 1980. The extent of this support – \$85m from 1980 to 1986 – was revealed in correspondence to a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. On the Thai border with Cambodia, the CIA and other intelligence agencies set up the Kampuchea Emergency Group, which ensured that humanitarian aid went to Khmer Rouge enclaves in the refugee camps and across the border.

Two American aid workers, Linda Mason and Roger Brown, later wrote: "The US government insisted that the Khmer Rouge be fed . . . the US preferred that the Khmer Rouge operation benefit from the credibility of an internationally known relief operation." Under American pressure, the World Food Programme handed over \$12m in food to the Thai army to pass on to the Khmer Rouge; "20,000 to 40,000 Pol Pot guerillas benefited," wrote Richard Holbrooke, the then US assistant secretary of state.

I witnessed this. Travelling with a UN convoy of 40 trucks, I drove to a Khmer Rouge operations base at Phnom Chat. The base commander was the infamous Nam Phann, known to relief workers as "The Butcher" and Pol Pot's Himmler. After the supplies had been unloaded, literally at his feet, he said: "Thank you very much, and we wish for more."

In November of that year, 1980, direct contact was made between the White House and the Khmer Rouge when Dr Ray Cline, a former deputy director of the CIA, made a secret visit to a Khmer Rouge operational headquarters. Cline was then a foreign policy adviser on President-elect Reagan's transitional team.

By 1981, a number of governments had become decidedly uneasy about the charade of the UN's continuing recognition of the defunct Pol Pot regime. Something had to be done. The following year, the US and China invented the Coalition of the Democratic Government of Kampuchea, which was neither a coalition nor democratic, nor a government, nor in Kampuchea (Cambodia).

It was what the CIA calls “a master illusion”. Prince Norodom Sihanouk was appointed its head; otherwise little changed. The two “non-communist” members, the Sihanoukists, led by the Prince’s son, Norodom Ranariddh, and the Khmer People’s National Liberation Front, were dominated, diplomatically and militarily, by the Khmer Rouge. One of Pol Pot’s closet cronies, Thaoun Prasith, ran the office at the UN in New York.

In Bangkok, the Americans provided the “coalition” with battle plans, uniforms, money and satellite intelligence; arms came direct from China and from the west, via Singapore. The non-communist fig leaf allowed Congress – spurred on by a cold-war zealot Stephen Solarz, a powerful committee chairman – to approve \$24m in aid to the “resistance”.

Until 1989, the British role in Cambodia remained secret. The first reports appeared in the Sunday Telegraph, written by Simon O’Dwyer-Russell, a diplomatic and defence correspondent with close professional and family contacts with the SAS. He revealed that the SAS was training the Pol Pot-led force.

Soon afterwards, Jane’s Defence Weekly reported that the British training for the “non-communist” members of the “coalition” had been going on “at secret bases in Thailand for more than four years”. The instructors were from the SAS, “all serving military personnel, all veterans of the Falklands conflict, led by a captain”.

The Cambodian training became an exclusively British operation after the “Irangate” arms-for-hostages scandal broke in Washington in 1986. “If Congress had found out that Americans were mixed up in clandestine training in Indo-China, let alone with Pol Pot,” a Ministry of Defence source told O’Dwyer-Russell, “the balloon would have gone right up. It was one of those classic Thatcher-Reagan arrangements.” Moreover, Margaret Thatcher had let slip, to the consternation of the Foreign Office, that “the more reasonable ones in the Khmer Rouge will have to play some part in a future government”.

In 1991, I interviewed a member of “R” (reserve) Squadron of the SAS, who had served on the border. “We trained the KR in a lot of technical stuff – a lot about mines,” he said. “We used mines that came originally from Royal Ordnance in Britain, which we got by way of Egypt with marking changed . . . We even gave them psychological training. At first, they wanted to go into the villages and just chop people up. We told them how to go easy . . .”

The Foreign Office response was to lie. “Britain does not give military aid in any form to the Cambodian factions,” stated a parliamentary reply. The then prime minister, Thatcher, wrote to Neil Kinnock: “I confirm that there is no British government involvement of any kind in training, equipping or co-operating with Khmer Rouge forces or those allied to them.”

On 25 June 1991, after two years of denials, the government finally admitted that the SAS had been secretly training the “resistance” since 1983. A report by Asia Watch filled in the detail: the SAS had taught “the use of improvised explosive devices, booby traps and the manufacture and use of time-delay devices”. The author of the report, Rae McGrath (who shared a joint Nobel Peace Prize for the international campaign on landmines), wrote in the Guardian that “the SAS training was a criminally irresponsible and cynical policy”.

When a UN “peacekeeping force” finally arrived in Cambodia in 1992, the Faustian pact was never clearer. Declared merely a “warring faction”, the Khmer Rouge was welcomed back to Phnom Penh by UN officials, if not the people. The western politician who claimed credit for the “peace process”, Gareth Evans (then Australia’s foreign minister), set the tone by calling for an “even-handed” approach to the Khmer Rouge and questioning whether calling it genocidal was “a specific stumbling block”.

Khieu Samphan, Pol Pot’s prime minister during the years of genocide, took the salute of UN troops with their commander, the Australian general John Sanderson, at his side. Eric Falt, the UN spokesman in Cambodia, told me: “The peace process was aimed at allowing [the Khmer Rouge] to gain respectability.”

The consequence of the UN’s involvement was the unofficial ceding of at least a quarter of Cambodia to the Khmer Rouge (according to UN military maps), the continuation of a low-level civil war and the election

of a government impossibly divided between “two prime ministers”: Hun Sen and Norodom Ranariddh.

The Hun Sen government has since won a second election outright. Authoritarian and at times brutal, yet by Cambodian standards extraordinarily stable, the government led by a former Khmer Rouge dissident, Hun Sen, who fled to Vietnam in the 1970s, has since done deals with leading figures of the Pol Pot era, notably the breakaway faction of Ieng Sary, while denying others immunity from prosecution.

Once the Phnom Penh government and the UN can agree on its form, an international war crimes tribunal seems likely to go ahead. The Americans want the Cambodians to play virtually no part; their understandable concern is that not only the Khmer Rouge will be indicted.

The Cambodian lawyer defending Ta Mok, the Khmer Rouge military leader captured last year, has said:

“All the foreigners involved have to be called to court, and there will be no exceptions . . . Madeleine Albright, Margaret Thatcher, Henry Kissinger, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan and George Bush . . . we are going to invite them to tell the world why they supported the Khmer Rouge.”

It is an important principle, of which those in Washington and Whitehall currently sustaining bloodstained tyrannies elsewhere might take note.

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[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allegations\\_of\\_United\\_States\\_support\\_for\\_the\\_Khmer\\_Rouge](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allegations_of_United_States_support_for_the_Khmer_Rouge)

## **To those in the Left who have illusions on the Khmer Rouge & Pol Pot:**

The US and NATO have a long history of overthrowing democratically elected regimes and giving financial support to brutal regimes in order to further its financial interests from the overthrow of Mossadegh in Iran and Allende from Chile to supporting the brutal white South African Apartheid government and Indonesian Regime; the later which murdered over 25% of its population. The Killing Fields of Cambodia were created to discredit "communism". So effective was the US/UK that the Khmer Rouge are still considered "communist" although they murdered all the Leftists in Cambodia on their first few days of power.

From NATO's Secret Armies: Operation Gladio and Terrorism in Western Europe by Daniele Ganser (2005 Cass Press):

“In another top secret operation US Green Berets trained genocide Khmer Rouge units in Cambodia after contact had been established by Ray Cline, senior CIA agent and special adviser to US President Reagan Steve Arnold Reagan. When the Iran Contra scandal got under way in 1983, President Reagan, fearing another unpleasant exposure, asked British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to take over, who sent the SAS to train Pol Pot forces. ‘We first went to Thailand in 1984’ senior officials of the SAS (British equivalent of CIA) later testified, ‘The Yanks and us work together; we’re close like brothers they didn’t like it anymore than we did. We trained the Khmer Rouge in a lot of technical stuff’, the officer remembers. ‘At first they wanted to go into the villages and just chop people up. We told them go easy’. The SAS felt uneasy with the operation and a lot of us would change sides given half a chance. That’s how pissed off we are. We hate being mixed up with Pol Pot. I tell you: we are soldiers, not child murderers”

The Reagan administration was furious when in 1986 the correspondence of Congressional lawyer Jonathan Winer exposed that the US has been funding Pol Pot with 85 million dollars between 1980 and 1986 (see John Pilger's article in the British daily The Guardian October 6 1990) . The British side was not less embarrassed. In 1990 British Prime Minister Thatcher according to plausible denial logics denied British involvement in the training of the Khmer Rouge units despite the testimonies of SAS officers. Finally in a libel case in 1991 involving John Pilger the British department of Defense admitted that Britain had helped train Khmer Rouge allies ( Guardian April 20, 1993)”