

Report from Paris by EIR Paris Bureau

Kampuchea's 'presentable barbarians'

A French member of parliament takes one of the Khmer Rouge butchers to court to answer for brazenly defending genocide.

Days after the Paris meeting of five members of the Security Council on the Kampuchean (Cambodian) conflict, the Chief of General Staff of the French Army, Gen. Maurice Schmitt, stated before a group of journalists that "we need international reflection to stop a bloodbath in Kampuchea. Humanitarian aid would not be sufficient."

"I am speaking as a citizen, and I take responsibility for it: I am posing the problem of intervention into a country where there is a risk of genocide," General Schmitt underlined, citing the case of "Romania yesterday, Kampuchea today, and perhaps southern Sudan tomorrow." While excluding a military intervention by France "alone," the Chief of General Staff brought up the idea of the United Nations sending in a "multinational military force."

Cambodia, located between Thailand and Vietnam on the Indochinese peninsula, was a French protectorate from 1863 until independence in 1953; hence, political, military, and cultural ties to France by all factions of Kampuchean political life remain strong.

The Pol Pot Communist (Khmer Rouge) regime was ousted after four murderous years by a Vietnamese invasion in 1978, but late in 1989 the Vietnamese withdrew from the country. They left behind a shaky government and the preconditions for civil war, as the pullout, arranged as part of the global "regional conflicts" settlements between the U.S. and Soviet Union, occurred without estab-

lishing any basis for future stability.

Two groups, Médecins sans Frontières (Physicians Without Frontiers) and Médecins du monde (Physicians of the World), have launched an appeal against the return of the Khmer Rouge to power in Kampuchea. The physicians' call features three points: 1) appeal to the international community due to the growing urgency of humanitarian aid; 2) appeal for the creation of a neutral zone under international supervision, at the Thailand-Kampuchea border; 3) appeal to the world's governments that they deny the Khmer Rouge any international legitimacy, and to international public opinion for a humanitarian mobilization against those guilty of genocide.

In an article in the Paris daily *Le Figaro* Jan. 10, Sen. Claude Huriot, who signed the call, recalled that "one of the biggest genocides of the 20th century" carried out by Pol Pot and the Red Chinese-backed Khmer Rouge—"1 million dead, and by some accounts, 3 million dead, many of them women and children—hundreds of refugees, the risk of seeing one of the oldest civilizations of the world disappear . . . all this must not leave us indifferent."

The senator from the Meurthe et Moselle Department of France proposed a "Gaullist" way out: "the constitution of a national force excluding all Khmer Rouge and supported by friendly democratic countries gathered into an 'alliance pact.'"

According to *Le Quotidien de Paris* of Jan. 10, Khieu Samphan, the "butcher of Phnom Penh," the Kam-

puchean capital, is called to appear on that same day before the 17th Correctional Chamber of the Tribunal of Paris for "apology for genocide," at the initiative of a parliamentarian from the French Democratic Union from Mayenne, François d'Aubert. Interrogated on French television last Aug. 31 about the 3 million victims of the Pol Pot regime, the present "foreign affairs minister" of the Kampuchean resistance replied with a smile that the Khmer Rouge "had committed certain mistakes."

"Everyone is supposed not to know," the newspaper points out, "that Khieu Samphan, the former doctoral student who took his exams during the 1950s in Paris on 'the economic modernization of Cambodia,' was also, some years later, a minister to [Prince] Sihanouk, and above all, after 1975, chairman of the presidium of Democratic Kampuchea and one of the masterminds of that terrifying scorched-earth machine which was established by the Khmer Rouge regime."

"This scoundrel," François d'Aubert stated, "you can't call him anything else, walks around freely just about everywhere. It's as if Göring had never been judged at Nuremberg, and as if today one asked him to preside over the reconciliation of Germany." Beyond the question of the Khmer Rouge leader, the Mayenne parliamentarian scored the "incoherence of French diplomacy," the "horrible forgetfulness" which would let certain "very presentable barbarians" pass themselves off as viable partners in a dialogue.

Since he personally did not suffer François d'Aubert runs the risk of seeing his suit thrown out of the court, but as *Le Quotidien de Paris* notes, nothing will prevent the public prosecutor from taking up the complaint on his own account.