

NED 'democrats' are pushing Cambodia toward a new disaster

by Michael O. and Gail G. Billington

Despite one of the most carefully monitored elections in recent history, and nearly unanimous recognition of the fairness of that election by international agencies and observers, the losers in Cambodia's July 26 elections have brought the country near the brink of civil war, demanding the overthrow of the democratically elected government. In recent weeks, a small mob of a few thousand followers of opposition figure Sam Rainsy, who received only 14% of the popular vote, have been riled up into a racist frenzy against the minority Vietnamese, inciting that mob to disrupt both the government and the national commerce of the country until the election results are overturned. On Sept. 5, Rainsy's mob bludgeoned to death five alleged ethnic Vietnamese street vendors in the capital of Phnom Penh.

On Sept. 7, three grenades were thrown into Second Prime Minister Hun Sen's Phnom Penh residence, two of which exploded. Fortunately, no one was hurt. The Second Prime Minister ordered the demonstrations suspended, and restricted all foreign travel for the demonstrations' leaders, pending investigations into the violence. An arrest warrant was issued for Sam Rainsy, who has taken refuge in the office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Phnom Penh, even though the warrant was lifted the following day. Prince Norodom Ranariddh, who has generally followed Rainsy's course of provocation and confrontation, may finally be taking steps to disengage from Rainsy and form a coalition with the Cambodian People's Party (CPP) of Hun Sen—which the Second Prime Minister has offered since the elections. As of this writing, the three leading parties, Hun Sen's CPP, Ranariddh's Funcinpec, and the Sam Rainsy Party, have agreed to abstain from further demonstrations and are engaged in a new round of talks with King Norodom Sihanouk, aimed at seating a new coalition by the Sept. 24 deadline. Based on the July 26 results, Hun Sen's CPP received 41% of the votes and would hold a bare majority of 64 seats in the 122-seat Parliament, against Ranariddh's 31% and Rainsy's 14%. Elected members of Parliament have also agreed to meet at Siem Reap on Sept. 24.

Rainsy's fanaticism has been increasingly denounced by governments and institutions around the world. For example, France's leading business journal, *Le Point*, wrote in its Sept.

5 issue that the majority of European and Asian ambassadors in Phnom Penh consider Rainsy "a dangerous agitator, along the same lines as the Khmer Rouge." *Le Point* quotes political analyst Raoul Jennar, who said, "Sam Rainsy's statements in English on democracy have nothing in common with his speeches in Khmer, which are outright calls to violence, sedition, and racial hatred."

Nonetheless, the U.S. government-financed National Endowment for Democracy (NED), which includes both the International Republican Institute and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, has continued to provide direct financial and political support for this overtly racist and anti-democratic destabilization of Cambodia, thus threatening the peace of the entire region. The NED, created by the George Bush machine during the 1980s, represents the deadly combination of the Bush-Newton Gingrich Republicans and the Jimmy Carter-Al Gore faction of the Democratic Party, which have now openly joined forces to undermine President Clinton's foreign policy in Russia and elsewhere, while pushing independent prosecutor Kenneth Starr's treasonous attempt to impeach the President. Under the phony cover of "democracy," the NED functions as a foreign-policy hit-squad for the British-American-Canadian financial oligarchy, now desperately trying to hold their collapsing financial system together by any means necessary, including spreading chaos.

Clinton must avoid a strategic blunder

Thus far, President Clinton has refused to fall for the NED Cambodia trap, nor has he responded to the blustering demands of NED Congressional spokesmen, including U.S. Reps. Dana Rohrabacher (R-Calif.) and Benjamin A. Gilman (R-N.Y.), who have demanded that the United States take action against Cambodia's elected Prime Minister Hun Sen. The danger is that the beleaguered President may be drawn into another strategic blunder, as he was when the same NED-linked interests induced him to include the Al-Shifa pharmaceuticals plant in Sudan as a bombing target in the air strikes against the Osama Bin Laden terrorist organization on Aug. 20. The lies fed to the President concerning Sudan were aimed at discrediting him in the Islamic world, while making him

look foolish internationally. A similar process would be repeated in Asia, if President Clinton were to follow the NED gameplan in Cambodia. As it is, the NED's fawning support for Rainsy's antics have contributed to a false perception, expressed in *Le Point's* Sept. 5 article, titled "A Controversial Agitator," that "only the Americans still support him. They give him credit to the extent he fights against the communist Hun Sen."

Rohrabacher, in one of several public letters to the administration calling for the overthrow of the July 26 election results—all in the name of democracy!—pontificated that "any communiqués or press statements by the State Department that do not criticize Hun Sen as the central figure responsible for the violence will be inadequate."

Clinton's State Department spokesman, James Rubin, however, has refused to blame Hun Sen. Rubin stated that the administration deplors "the use of racist rhetoric, which inspired the killing of five ethnic Vietnamese," and the "widespread use of violence in Cambodia, particularly the recent grenade attacks on Hun Sen's residence," while also deploring a grenade thrown at a demonstration led by Rainsy at the Ministry of the Interior.

'Miracle on the Mekong'

Other than the NED, Rainsy enjoys only the support of the most extreme of the international non-governmental organizations, such as London's Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, the plaything of the discredited speculator and drug-legalization advocate, George Soros. It was Soros who launched the initial speculative assault on Cambodia's neighbors last year, which started the global financial collapse. Now, all of Cambodia's neighbors have pleaded with Rainsy and Prince Ranariddh to end their provocations and to work with Hun Sen to form a new government. An official statement from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) urged "all parties concerned to respect the results of the 26 July 1998 general elections which were generally recognized by the international community as free and fair, as well as to exercise restraint, avoid violence, including extremist acts, and resolve their problems through dialogue and consultation in order to prevent further deterioration of the situation."

Even the European Union has spoken out against the NED-sponsored lies. The official declaration of the Presidency of the EU states: "The EU was deeply involved in the electoral process, both in voter registration and polling observation. The very high percentage of voters who registered [more than 98%] and cast their ballot [90%] proves that the Cambodian people have a strong desire for democracy and wish to decide their own political future." It calls on all the parties to "come together in a peaceful way."

Former U.S. Rep. Stephen Solarz (D-N.Y.), who has been deeply involved in Cambodian affairs for years—generally on the side of the opposition parties—and who was one of the

two NED leaders that led the U.S. observer team to monitor the elections, initially declared the elections "a miracle on the Mekong." Representative Rohrabacher, in a letter to King Sihanouk, ridiculed Solarz, and threatened the King that unless he went along with the NED plot to overthrow the election result, the U.S. Congress would refuse to authorize any assistance to Cambodia! Rohrabacher's cohort, Gilman, chairman of the House International Relations Committee, went so far as to instruct the nation of Cambodia over a Voice of America radio broadcast that they "must not take steps to amend the Cambodian Constitution," and that *he*, Gilman, would not accept Cambodia as a member of ASEAN—an organization in which the United States is not even a member! Such colonial chutzpah may pass in the House of Lords, but it has no place in the United States of America.

The man upon whom the NED has lavished such praise and financial largesse, Sam Rainsy, has displayed his peace-loving and democratic credentials in the past few weeks in several ways:

- At a rally soon after the Aug. 20 U.S. bombings in Afghanistan and Sudan, Rainsy asked, with a straight face, that the United States fire a missile at Hun Sen's residence. Not long after, the three grenades were thrown into Hun Sen's Phnom Penh residence.

- While professing regret over the brutal murder of innocent Vietnamese by mobs whipped up by his speeches, Rainsy continues to publicly denounce the ethnic Vietnamese, using the pejorative "*yuon*," a term popularized by the Khmer Rouge in their bloody liquidation of the Vietnamese minority.

- Rainsy called on soldiers and police to turn their guns on their superiors.

- Rainsy and his followers forcefully broke into the locked compound of the Interior Ministry, intending to stage an occupation against the election results. When a hand-grenade exploded outside the building, killing an employee of a Japanese newspaper, police ended the occupation.

By law, the new Parliament must meet by Sept. 24. Under Cambodian law, a two-thirds majority is required to form a government. Hun Sen has repeatedly called on both Prince Ranariddh and Rainsy to form a coalition government. Hun Sen has warned, however, that if the opposition refuses to form a coalition, he will have no choice but to call on the old Parliament, dominated by his own supporters, to change the Constitution to allow simple majority control to be sufficient to form a new government, thus allowing his party to rule alone.

Without the sponsorship of the NED, the opposition would undoubtedly come to its senses and form a government with Hun Sen's party, and Cambodia could get on with the enormous task of building a nation, while defending itself against the effects of the international economic crisis. Shutting down the NED would go a long way toward saving Cambodia from yet another bloody war, and could well save the United States itself from self-destruction.