

Shadows of Kissinger and Brzezinski Loom Over Cambodia

by Mike Billington

Cambodian police executed an arrest warrant on Kem Sokha, the president of the Cambodian Center for Human Rights, on Dec. 31, for defamation of Prime Minister Hun Sen, regarding accusations that the Prime Minister had sold out national interests in a border deal with Vietnam. As he was led away to police headquarters, Kem Sokha was surrounded by a group of his supporters, including U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia Joseph Mussomeli and British Ambassador David Reader. The American diplomat was less than diplomatic in his protest over the arrest, suggesting that the regime of Hun Sen is moving “inexorably toward a one-party state,” and that it “becomes difficult to take these trappings of democracy as the real thing.”

Such hypocritical protests from the United States are not surprising, since Kem Sokha and his organization have been created, nurtured, financed, and promoted entirely by the official U.S. agency for subversion and regime change, the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), and in particular by the NED’s Republican arm, the International Republican Institute (IRI). Nor is Ambassador Mussomeli a stranger to subversion. During his previous posting as the Chargé d’Affaires in the Philippines (he was appointed as U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia in September 2005), secret embassy documents were stolen by a Philippine-American Marine in the United States, and released to the press, showing Mussomeli plotting with Filipino generals and politicians regarding what form of regime change would meet with the Bush Administration’s support, and what would not.

The IRI has spent the better part of the past decade trying to remove the current Cambodian government. Prime Minister Hun Sen and his Cambodian People’s Party (CPP) have governed Cambodia directly or in coalition since 1979, after a large force of Cambodians, including Hun Sen, joined with the Vietnamese army to overthrow the genocidal regime of the Khmer Rouge, which, between 1975 and 1979, had killed nearly one-third of the Cambodian population, laid waste to the country’s urban and agricultural infrastructure, and left deep psychological scars on the survivors. Rather than welcoming the demise of the Khmer Rouge, the United States, under the leadership of National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski (the controller of President Jimmy Carter) de-



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Kissinger virtually created the genocidal Khmer Rouge movement, with his carpet bombing of the countryside. Brzezinski (right) subsequently insisted on U.S. and UN support for the Khmer Rouge, after their downfall. Here, Kissinger, with President Ford in tow (to his left), strides into a meeting in Indonesia, December 1975.

nounced Vietnam as an aggressor for interfering in Cambodia. Washington proceeded to provide covert military support to the Khmer Rouge (which continued fighting a guerrilla war from the jungles for the next 20 years) and forced the United Nations to recognize the deposed Khmer Rouge as the official government of Cambodia, even as the truth of the genocide under their rule was being published worldwide.

Not until 1992, when a UN-brokered peace agreement allowed for free elections under UN oversight and security, was the overwhelming popular support for Hun Sen and his CPP recognized in Washington. However, the U.S. government-financed IRI and related organizations continued the process of subversion, spending millions of dollars, both openly and covertly, to undermine the elected government. In particular, they promoted and helped finance Sam Rainsy, a Cambodian who spent 21 years in Paris (1971-92), working as a banker in French and American banks, as an opposition figure. The IRI did not hide its singular support for Rainsy and his party, even hosting him at gala dinners in Washington, and never flinched when he formed an alliance against the Cambodian government with the remnants of the Khmer Rouge, making appeals for racial hatred against the Vietnamese.

Last year, Rainsy accused Hun Sen of personal responsibility for a hand-grenade attack on a Sam Rainsy Party rally in 1997 (which killed several people and injured the IRI director in Cambodia), and accused the government's coalition

partner, Royalist Prince Norodom Ranariddh, of taking a bribe to form a coalition with Hun Sen's government. The government then stripped Rainsy of his parliamentary immunity and filed charges of defamation. Sam Rainsy fled to the safety of his second home in Paris (he is also a French citizen), where he remains today.

As early as 2002, the IRI recognized that Rainsy had no chance of gaining significant support within Cambodia. They therefore launched a "Plan B," creating the Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR), with former royalist senator Kem Sokha chosen as its leader. The IRI gave the CCHR half a million dollars of U.S. taxpayers' money for start-up funds (and millions more since), with a full-time IRI "advisor."

Cambodia was hardly lacking in human rights organizations, including several which were openly critical of the government, but none that would so baldly declare themselves to be a front for the subversive IRI (the website for the CCHR displays a large banner on its home page, reading "Supported by U.S. AID from the American People," with the

IRI logo next to it). Other human rights organizations, no matter how critical of the government, acknowledge the slow but significant progress being made in this terribly poor nation, which has held several successful elections, maintained 7% economic growth (4½% in per-capita terms), and made dramatic improvements in health, education, and the general welfare, albeit from extremely low starting levels. The IRI and its wholly owned Cambodian subsidiaries simply lie that the government's policies are failing.

Kissinger and Brzezinski in the Dock

The intention underlying the actions of the IRI and its friends in the Congress, led by Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), includes a degree of self-protection. With more than 25 years having passed since the overthrow of the Khmer Rouge, a trial of the few remaining Khmer Rouge leaders is now in the final stages of preparation, under UN sponsorship. (It is worth noting that Cambodia's government already held trials of the Khmer Rouge leaders, *in absentia*, in 1979, but at the time the United States, under Brzezinski, was supporting the Khmer Rouge, and rejected the results of the Cambodian trial.) The IRI circles have done everything in their power to demand that any such trial be under international control, screaming about corruption and a lack of independence in the Cambodian judiciary. Senator McConnell succeeded in passing a bill in the Congress preventing any U.S. financial or other support for the upcoming trial.



Cambodian National TV/Ngin Sophea

The International Republican Institute, acting as an arm of the official U.S. agency for subversion and regime change, the National Endowment for Democracy, has spent the better part of the last decade trying to remove the current Cambodian government of Prime Minister Hun Sen. EIR's Gail Billington and Dino di Paoli are shown here interviewing Hun Sen at his residence in 1999.

Since the crimes of the Khmer Rouge were committed by Cambodians, against Cambodians, and within Cambodia, why are these circles so intent on asserting foreign control of the trial?

The answer lies in the criminal responsibility of those, including especially Kissinger and Brzezinski, who could potentially be called to account in any trial which sought the full truth of the Khmer Rouge nightmare. As in the upcoming trial of Chile's fascist dictator, Gen. Augusto Pinochet, whose regime was brought to power by Kissinger and his ilk, and whose murderous Operation Condor was conducted by former Nazi networks controlled by them, exposure of the full truth would point directly at the circles around Vice President Dick Cheney, who are now trying to impose a similar fascist regime in the United States.

Take Kissinger: In the same timeframe as the Pinochet coup in Chile, then Secretary of State and National Security Advisor Kissinger orchestrated the most intensive carpet bombing in world history, against the rural villages of Cambodia. During 1970-75, millions of peasants were forced by the bombing to abandon their homes and crowd into Phnom Penh, or to join the resistance movement, which then consisted of a coalition between the Khmer Rouge and the royalists led by King Norodom Sihanouk (Sihanouk was later pushed aside by the Khmer Rouge). While the bombing is estimated to have killed between 500,000 and 1 million Cambodians, Kissinger's greater crime is the virtual creation of the Khmer Rouge as a formidable force, through his "beast man" destruction of the Cambodian countryside.

Then there's Brzezinski: As a leading architect of the "China Card," playing China against Russia, Brzezinski viewed Cambodia as a convenient tool in both fanning the flames of the Sino-Soviet split, by playing Soviet-backed Vietnam against the China-backed Khmer Rouge, and at the same time keeping Southeast Asia divided, to prevent any independent Asian cooperation to repair the ravages of the French and American Indochina wars. Even after the genocide of the Khmer Rouge was known to the world, and even after China dropped its support for the Khmer Rouge (a remnant of China's wretched Cultural Revolution), Brzezinski insisted on U.S. (and UN) recognition and support for the Khmer Rouge against the party of Hun Sen, declared to be a "puppet" of Soviet-backed Vietnam. Thus, the devas-

tated victim of war and genocide was isolated and subjected to 20 more years of Western-backed terrorism from the remaining Khmer Rouge forces.

Permanent War

To U.S. Ambassador Mussomeli's credit, he has toned down his initial denunciations of the arrest of Kem Sokha, and even denounced Sam Rainsy's accusation that the country was going "fascist," as "off the mark" and "very irresponsible." Also, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill visited Phnom Penh on Jan. 17, to inaugurate a new U.S. Embassy. After a cordial meeting between Hill and the Prime Minister, Hun Sen announced that he was writing to the court to request that Kem Sokha and three others detained on defamation charges be released on bail, as a courtesy to Assistant Secretary Hill. The four men must still face their charges in court.

The greatest danger facing Cambodia, and Asia generally, is the Cheney doctrine of permanent and pre-emptive warfare. Already IRI, Human Rights Watch, and others are referring to Cambodia as becoming "like Myanmar," which, together with North Korea, has been demonized as rogue states, deserving of military attack, in Cheney's neo-conservative, imperial perspective. As China increasingly becomes a target of the permanent warfare practitioners in Washington and London, Cambodia is another convenient "hot spot" for military adventures. Regime change in Washington is the only guarantee that such insanity does not come to fruition.