

CAMBODIA - Hell on Earth

When news of the Nazi extermination camps was broadcast at the conclusion of WW II, the world reacted in amazement and horror. No one could conceive of any government reaching such depths of depravity, and it was assumed that no government would ever match such barbarism. But today there exists a government of scoundrals whose actions are so ruthless as to make even those of the Nazi pale by comparison. It is the Cambodian government which is run by communists who call themselves the Khmer Rouge.

This gang of thugs is practicing genocide against their own people on an unbelievably horrendous scale. Out of 7 million people, it is believed that 2½ million have been systematically slaughtered. Some idea of the enormity of this crime might be appreciated when it is realized that this is equivalent to about 57 million Americans out of our 220 million being exterminated.

When these communists gained control of the country, they embarked on what appears to have been a carefully calculated plan to destroy anyone who had been connected with the previous government; who had held a professional position; or who had an education. The seventh grade was liquidated. The firing squads were so busy working overtime that rather than expend more ammunition, they finally resorted to butchering their victims with knives or hammers. In one village -- Kauk Ton -- all 360 inhabitants, including men, women and children were machine-gunned to death.

This writer has just completed reading "The Holocaust in Cambodia" by Jeff Calkins in the October 1978 issue of "The Plain Truth" and finds it

so sickening that it is with difficulty that he attempts to give the reader some conception of the ghastly actions going on in that unfortunate country.

On April 17, 1975, these communist murders captured the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh. In two days everyone had to leave their homes and march into the jungle with no provisions of food, water or shelter. Those who fell behind--the elderly, the weak, the little children were shot and left unburied. The smell of rotten flesh became unbearable. But not only those living in Phnom Penh were forced to evacuate but the people in every major city or town were compelled to leave to go into the jungle. The communists even emptied all the hospitals, stopping operations midway, forcing everyone to leave. What is going on in Cambodia under these madmen is simply indescribable.

Who are the Khmer Rouge? It is said these sadists came from middle class

They came under the influence of French communists who had adopted the policies of Stalin. The Khmer Rouge consider themselves to be the supreme communists. They are the ultimate that the logic of communism decrees. They have the courage to do what has to be done to create the communist heaven. First make everyone go through hell. Those who survive will arrive at heaven. Everyone, of course, goes through this hell but this elitist gang of thugs, None of them ever soiled their hands by working yet they extol physical labor above all else. This is typical of liberals whether of the socialist or communist sausion. They praise labor and sacrifice, no matter how great, but of course it is always some one else who is to do the labor and the sacrificing.

Probably there is no one as insanely vicious as a do-gooder intellectual who believes he has seen the vision of

heaven on earth with himself as one of the chosen few to do whatever heinous deeds must be done to create the utopia he has seen in his dreams.

Those who have survived in Cambodia find that the communist heaven means work in the fields seven days a week in an egalitarian nightmare. They receive only the barest amount of rice to live on. They get one suit of clothes a year. No pleasures are permitted--only continuous work. There are no positive inducements to labor--only the fear if one does not meet his quota he will be shot.

And what has that Tower of Babel -- the United Nations -- done about this horror? For all practical purposes, a thunderous silence comes from that glass house in New York. Its Human Rights Commission regularly condemns Israel, South Africa and Chile but for Cambodia, it merely sent a list of allegations.

And what about our own country? Altho the President belatedly called this murderous clique as "the worst violators of human rights in the world today" the United States has done little more than sit on its hands. It is a question why this is so. Possibly a feeling of guilt pervades the officials. After all, it was the invasion of Cambodia by the U.S. which set off the events which led to the communist take over. Possibly domestic politics is back of it all. But whatever the reason, nothing is being done.

And the government could do plenty. It could easily bring pressure on China the ally of these thugs to ease the conditions of these unfortunate people, but unless the people of our country demand action, nothing will be done. And Cambodian people have been noted for their gentleness and friendliness.

For us to do nothing to stop this insanity is to condone the hell on earth in Cambodia.

OSCAR B. JOHANSEN