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REGIME CHANGE AND REGIME MAINTENANCE
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In recent years there have been some dramatic changes of political leadership in the Asia-Pacific region, and also some dramas without leadership change. In a few countries the demise of well-entrenched political leaders appears imminent; in others regular processes of parliamentary government still prevail. These differing patterns of regime change and regime maintenance raise fundamental questions about the nature of political systems in the region. Specifically, how have some political leaders or leadership groups been able to stay in power for relatively long periods and why have they eventually been displaced? What are the factors associated with the stability or instability of political regimes? What happens when longstanding leaderships change?

The Regime Change and Regime Maintenance in Asia and the Pacific Project will address these and other questions from an Asia-Pacific regional perspective and at a broader theoretical level.

The project is under the joint direction of Dr R.J. May and Dr Harold Crouch.

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CAMBODIA: A POLITICAL SURVEY

Michael Vickery

The ‘Peace Process’ leading to elections

The 1993 election and new Constituent Assembly mark the beginning of a phase in Cambodia's modern history as crucial as the deposition of Sihanouk in 1970 which began nine years of war and revolution, the revolutionary victory of 1975, and the destruction of Democratic Kampuchea (the 'Pol Pot Regime', 'Khmer Rouge') by Vietnam in 1979.

The Paris Agreement, under which this election was held, was the culmination of a long process of harassment and negotiation begun soon after the overthrow of Pol Pot in 1979. Read carefully, it seems to have been designed to ensure further destabilization rather than lasting peace. It is the last stage in the international campaign to destroy the PRK/SOC as part of the US vendetta against Vietnam. Negotiations reached this stage because the PRK refused to dissolve as had been predicted for ten years, and it was realized that the PRK was a relative success, not a Vietnamese Front; that the Vietnamese army was really leaving; and that the new Cambodian state could not be defeated militarily by its enemies.

When it was seen that the PRK — which by 1981 had a constitution, a national assembly chosen in an election, and a new government structure of genuine Khmer elements, not just disguised Vietnamese — could not be destroyed by recycling the Khmer Rouge and creating new contra groups (some of which were the nuclei for Son Sann's KPNLF and Sihanouk's FUNCINPEC), the international community in 1982 cobbled together the three-party Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK), taking the name of Pol Pot's 'Khmer Rouge' regime. This strange creature, a shotgun marriage of three partners whose mutual hatred was only exceeded by their antipathy for the PRK and Vietnamese, and all of whom at one time or another had been rejected by the Cambodian nation, received international recognition and Cambodia's UN
seat, thus setting the stage for the comedy of the next few years; during this time the government that steadily improved the conditions of its people was treated as a pariah, while the contras became legitimate Cambodia.2

The contra coalition was preserved only by increasing foreign aid. While able to blow up bridges, attack civilian trains, and murder a few people here and there, their military success was never impressive. The confidence of the PRK side was shown by the annual withdrawals of Vietnamese troops, which by 1983 were undoubtedly under way, an increasingly Khmer administration, particularly after the 5th Party Congress in 1985, and gradual, even if limited, political relaxation within Cambodia.

At the same time, changes in geopolitics, in particular in Sino-Soviet relations, meant that China’s interest in the Khmer Rouge was decreasing; and the ostensible reason for their support, Vietnamese ‘occupation’, was disappearing. By 1988 there was serious reason to hope that some influential Western country, perhaps Australia or France, which were the most positively engaged in Cambodia, would break ranks and recognize the PRK. Had any such government had the courage, that act might well have ended the ‘Cambodia Problem’, and the frightful muddle of 1992-93 would never have come about.3

Australian Senator Gareth Evans has apparently argued against this proposition, saying that the ‘Khmer Rouge could not effectively be excluded from a political settlement through the mechanism of extending recognition to the SOC’ (Frost 1991:147, citing Evans). The reasoning was that ‘the Khmer Rouge cannot be effectively isolated and marginalised with their military influence nullified, so long as it continues to be supplied, especially by China, with arms and money and diplomatic support’, and China had maintained that ‘it will give a commitment to cease military support... only in the context of a comprehensive settlement agreed by all four Cambodian parties....unless and until China is prepared to withdraw...whatever Australia and other countries choose to do, the continuation of the bloody war is inevitable’ (ibid. quoting a statement by Evans, 6 December 1990).

Certain important points were neglected by Evans. The problem since 1979 had not been the ‘isolation’ and ‘marginalization’ of the Khmer Rouge. That had been accomplished by the Vietnamese in 1979, after which the Khmer Rouge were with all deliberation revived, rearmed and pushed onto centre stage with an aid program involving international cooperation, in particular among China,
the United States and Thailand, with Australia following faithfully behind the US once Senator Evans had become minister for Foreign Affairs. In spite of this the new PRK, though cut off from most of the world, had developed sufficient military capability to combat the Khmer Rouge rather effectively (even after Vietnamese troops left, more than a year before the remarks of Senator Evans). Recognition of the PRK by Western countries, then as now, would have enabled them to re-marginalize the Khmer Rouge, whatever Chinese desires, particularly as Chinese policy gradually changed in conformity with changes in China's national interests.

By the late 1980s the real leader of the anti-PRK vendetta was not China, but the United States. It was not fear of Chinese reaction which prevented recognition of the PRK. The US had no fear of offending China (or Thailand, through which Chinese aid to the Khmer Rouge must pass) on other issues, such as human rights, intellectual property or trade imbalances; the pressure was sometimes crude and offensive. But not the least objection was expressed about Chinese and Thai aid to the Khmer Rouge.4

US foot-dragging, in comparison to Chinese flexibility, was seen most clearly near the end, at the time of the Pattaya meeting of August 1991, the meeting at which all parties agreed to what they would sign in Paris two months later.

By that time it was clear that everyone else, from Phnom Penh to Peking, except possibly the Khmer Rouge, had found a formula which could become a signed peace agreement. Even though Phnom Penh had been forced to give away almost everything but their formal existence, the US objected that it was not the 'comprehensive' solution which had been sought, to the extent that Hun Sen, Sihanouk, and other parties complained about the US attitude.

It was reported that 'Phnom Penh government officials increasingly view China...as the best hope for ending 12 years of war...'; 'China has been doing its best'; and 'the officials said they viewed China's softening stance toward them as part of a changing world political order'. No such 'softening stance' was perceived on the part of the US: 'Phnom Penh fears the United States could impede Cambodian peace efforts by insisting that a United Nations peace plan be followed to the letter'. Sihanouk also feared this, urging 'Washington to be "realistic" and "flexible" taking into account the true situation in Cambodia', and the fact that, according to him, 'France, China and Thailand have been
supportive of the “compromise solution”. Hun Sen also expressed worries, saying “some foreign countries” might slow down progress, apparently ‘directing his comments at the United States, which is reluctant to accept...amendments’, although China and France...have joined Thailand in saying they are prepared to accept any compromise solution adopted by the Cambodians’. The journalists’ ubiquitous favourite, the ‘Bangkok-based diplomat’ also fretted about ‘the remarkably slow speed taken by...especially the United States...[and] “this kind of attitude could impede the peace process”’; while a colleague thought ‘the US reluctant to see the Cambodian conflict resolved outside the lines it has drawn...[because] Washington has raised a comprehensive settlement in Cambodia as one condition for full normalization of ties with Vietnam’. Even ‘a Cambodian resistance source said it seemed the Americans “are digging their own grave...if it [the United States] remain the only one...to oppose the Cambodian approach to find their own solutions, it could be viewed as trying to infringe upon a small nation’s sovereignty”’.5

Finally it was clear to all that the US claim over the past ten years to be following ASEAN on Cambodia was a smokescreen. The US had been pushing, not following, ASEAN, perhaps even China.

It was not, in the end, China’s support for the Khmer Rouge which held back a Cambodian peace agreement, but the US position (see Vickery 1991); and when the Chinese were freed from US pressure by the peace agreement, they were eager to develop good relations with Phnom Penh and provide generous aid, while the US still grumbled about its ‘road map’. Chinese diplomats returned to their old embassy in Phnom Penh; offered a token payment to the SOC for taking care of it; pledged humanitarian aid; and were reported to be planning ‘technical and financial resources to reactivate Cambodia’s discarded [sic] industries...[of which] five...were built with aid from Beijing in the past....While other countries...build up their presence...slowly and cautiously, Sino-Cambodian ties have already begun to flourish’. This is not, moreover, a sudden reversal of position imposed on China by the peace agreement. It appears that the ‘Chinese reappearance on the scene...was the result of calculated diplomatic moves begun in September 1990 during peace talks in Jakarta, where representatives of Phnom Penh and Beijing met for the first time’ (Kavi Chongkittavorn in The Nation 20 November 1991).
An intriguing piece of evidence about the nature of US involvement in the peace process was published after the Pattaya conference by the well-connected Thai journalist Kavi Chongkittavorn: 'At the end of May 1990, one of Gen Chatichai Choonhavan's policy advisers, Pansak Vinyarat, secretly flew to Rome to meet with a senior US official to work out a linkage between the setting up of a Supreme National Council in Cambodia and a ceasefire agreement' (Kavi Chongkittavorn in The Nation 23 October 1991). What role did the US have in that discussion? For whom was the US speaking? Whose ceasing of fire could they influence? The Khmer faction on whom the US is believed to have had the most leverage, Son Sann's KPNLF, was of so little significance that they could be ignored. General Chatichai's adviser could only have been concerned about US pressure on Thailand, or US influence, direct or indirect, on the Khmer Rouge, perhaps via US connections with China.

Equally intriguing was the timing of a visit to Thailand by 'deputy assistant for public relations to the US president Sichan Siv', who was feted by Thai Foreign Affairs Minister Arsa Sarasin rather than by a Thai public relations official, and whose visit was announced only on the 'Society' page of the Bangkok Post, without comment in the general news or political pages. Sichan Siv is a former US-based official of the KPNLF, and his visit occurred just before the Pattaya conference. What special instructions from President Bush to the Thai government with respect to Cambodia was Sichan Siv transmitting? Was it related to Son Sann's last-minute efforts to delay the settlement, or to ways of using the split between Son San and the military wing of the KPNLF under General Sak Sutsakhan, one of the Cambodian military who was close to the US during 1970-75, and who in 1991 appeared unhappy with the peace agreements and the exclusion of his faction from the Supreme National Council (SNC)?

In view of their record since 1975, the alleged concern of 'a few Western nations with high human rights values...alarmed with the strong possibility of a return of the genocidal Khmer Rouge....[and] the United States, Britain and Australia...at the forefront in warning the delegates of the Paris International Conference on Cambodia' (The Nation [Bangkok] 25 October 1991), or pious 'statements before the signing ceremony [when] the foreign ministers of the US, Britain, and Australia underscored the brutality of the Khmer Rouge rule' (Bangkok Post 29 October 1991), or 'Bush "express[ing] our on-going concern"
about the possibility that the murderous Khmer Rouge might once again
dominate Cambodian politics' (*Los Angeles Times* 25 September 1991), seem
hardly worth the newsprint on which they appear.

The reason for the inventing the 'Peace Process' was not to marginalize the
Khmer Rouge, nor to end a war, but to forestall the danger of PRK victory, or
its recognition. This meant that the international diplomatic campaign against
the PRK was cranked up a couple of notches. It proceeded through the Jakarta
Informal Meetings beginning in July 1988, meetings in Tokyo, Bangkok, and
Pattaya, and three draft agreements before the signatures of October 1991. The
'Peace Process' was an element of the Nicaragua Strategy which the US had
worked on that country — political isolation, economic blockade, support for
'contras' just across the border, resulting in economic disintegration, declining
standards of human rights, and political disaffection within the target country,
until, in an election, the targetted party loses (Vickery 1991).

In all of the various proposals and formats the principal demands made by
opponents of the PRK centred on withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops in
Cambodia and free elections. An assumption behind this emphasis was that the
PRK existed only by virtue of the Vietnamese. Once the Vietnamese were gone,
the reasoning went, the PRK would quickly fall, and in free elections the present
PRK leaders would stand no chance. As it gradually became clear that the PRK
would not just fade away, the proposals called for formation of a coalition
government among the PRK and its Cambodian enemies.

In the face of clear Vietnamese intentions to get out fast, ASEAN began to
engage in delaying tactics. Just before the first Jakarta Informal Meeting in July
1988, an ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Joint Communiqué (as though there had
been no changes since 1979), expressed ‘deep concern over the continued illegal
occupation of Kampuchea by Vietnamese military forces’, which by then had
already decreased from 200,000 to 50-70,000. A subtle new approach was the
foreign ministers’ ‘call for a durable and comprehensive political settlement in
Kampuchea which will lead to the total withdrawal...under international su-
 pervision’ (‘ASEAN Joint Communiqué’, *The Nation* [Bangkok] 6 July 1988
[emphasis added]).

The Vietnamese were not to be permitted to just leave, and the ASEAN
foreign ministers were even seeking to delay their departure until new machinery
could be set up to undermine the PRK. As Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali
Alatas told a Thai journalist, the question is no longer just ‘the unilateral withdrawal of Vietnamese troops’, but withdrawal ‘in a context of an overall comprehensive solution’, meaning within a framework supervised by those powers which desired a change in the Cambodian government. What was really causing concern was not the Vietnamese troops, whose numbers were dwindling, but PRK durability. ASEAN even seemed to be calling for another foreign occupation, named the ‘International Peacekeeping Force’, in the embarrassing event of a real Vietnamese withdrawal. The US also chimed in with ‘uncertainty about Vietnamese intentions’ and the ‘direct threat to Thailand of continuing Vietnamese occupation’ (The Nation [Bangkok] 6, 8, 10 July 1988; Bangkok Post, 2 July 1988).

The enemies of the PRK were caught in a dilemma created by a too-wishful belief in their own propaganda. Behind all of the moves since 1979 was a conviction that the PRK could never become anything more than a Vietnamese puppet state, without any national base, which would collapse as soon as the Vietnamese could be made to leave, of course unwillingly. The maintenance of this view against all the accumulating evidence to the contrary resulted from a rare dialectical reinforcement between official US and ASEAN disinformation and house-broken journalists who, with witless reverence, repeated whatever their favourite ‘Western diplomats’ said, until apparently they all came to believe their own propaganda. Ultimately they could not avoid perceiving that the Vietnamese really intended to leave; and embarrassment was caused by the sudden realization that the PRK was a real Cambodian government which might survive.

The position of the anti-PRK parties at the end of 1988 was that the PRK must not be allowed to survive the Vietnamese withdrawal as government of Cambodia. The international settlement planned to precede or coincide with the Vietnamese withdrawal would require replacement of the PRK with a four-power coalition (DK, KPNLF, Sihanouk, PRK) in which no party would be dominant, and the arrangement would be assured by an international force. Naturally the PRK refused to dissolve itself after having rather successfully governed for ten years. PRK leaders agreed to some kind of participation of their enemies, minus eight DK leaders, in a new government which would be in fact an enlarged PRK. They also agreed to hold elections under international observation and to abide by the results even if they lost their dominant position.
Together with this was a warning that by 1990 at the latest the Vietnamese forces would be gone, and then the problem would have resolved itself and would no longer require any concessions to the coalition. Their apparent success in building an army, the restoration of agriculture to near self-sufficiency, and the impetus to economic growth provided by the new encouragement for some privatization after 1988 indicated that this was not an idle threat.

The Paris Accord incorporated most of the anti-SOC provisions of the draft agreements devised by Western states, starting with the Australian ‘Redbook’ of February 1990, whose authors thanked US Congressman Stephen Solarz and Prince Norodom Sihanouk, and no one else, for inspiration. No more ardent enemies of Phnom Penh, outside of the Khmer Rouge leadership, could be imagined.

The Australian Peace Proposal started with the assumption that the State of Cambodia government in Phnom Penh and the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK) were of equal stature and legitimacy, and its preferred option was for a Supreme National Council consisting of ‘representatives of the four parties [three of them within the CGDK], explicitly structured on a quadripartite basis’, which would hold ‘all government authority’, and ‘would irrevocably devolve all that government authority — legislative, executive and judicial — to the UN Secretary-General’ (DFAT 1990:12, 15). Most peculiarly, in its ‘Working Paper II’, which ‘gives an account of the existing structure of the civil administrations in Cambodia’, the ‘National Government of Cambodia’ (the CGDK) is given precedence and to the extent possible is described, like the State of Cambodia, as having a constitution, a ministerial structure, civil servants, and a provincial administration (ibid.:21–24).

The most reasonable draft proposal was the August 1990 UN ‘Framework’ (UN 1990). It was what its title said, a ‘Framework’, and it permitted joint discussions among all Cambodian factions concerning ‘[t]he composition of the SNC, including the selection and number of its members’, who ‘should be composed of representative individuals with authority among the Cambodian people [and]...acceptable to each other’(ibid.:7–8). This gave Cambodians, in principle, considerable control over their fate, and that may have been why the ‘Big Five’, before there had been time to get intra-Cambodian discussions started, rushed through their November 1990 ‘Proposed Structure’, with very detailed decisions about administration and election modalities imposed on the
Cambodians, in particular imposed on the SOC which already had a functioning government, but whose dissolution was implicit in the 'Proposed Structure'.

What did the Paris Accord mean politically? At worst the State of Cambodia appeared to have signed away its existence. If the agreement had been read literally, and enforced in that interpretation, the UN would have been able to control five key ministries: Interior, Defense, Finance, Foreign Affairs, and Information, on the grounds that those ministries could influence the election; the UN could also have decided unilaterally that other ministries or departments must be taken under tutelage for the same reason. That control was never exercised, however, and the SOC administration remained intact, bringing accusations from the anti-SOC factions that UNTAC was not implementing the Paris Accord, and was in fact favouring SOC.

Organizing for elections

Under the Paris Accord the elections were stacked, as far as possible, against the SOC. After much protest they signed for proportional representation by province, contrary to former Cambodian practice, a formula designed to give the maximum chance to their enemies, in particular the Khmer Rouge, and to any other parties formed. The agreement provided that any group of 5,000 persons could be registered as a political party, and the multi-party system which was accepted, both in the agreements and in the new Cambodian People's Party program, had the potential to produce an incompetent legislature and an impotent government.

Furthermore, Cambodian voters were restricted to choosing party slates, not individual candidates. This may be a good system in a country with stable government, an educated population, and well-known, ideologically-based parties, all of which were lacking in Cambodia. A plausible interpretation of this arrangement by the Big Five was that SOC candidates were expected to be local administrators, many of whom may have had good records, or at least were known; whereas the candidates of parties deriving from FUNCINPEC or KPNLF, or formed by returned emigrés, would be unknown, and if their backgrounds were discovered, many might be less popular among voters than even mediocre SOC candidates. In some cases, the result was that voters did not know the identities of the people for whom they were ostensibly voting. It is uncertain whether lists of candidates in Khmer were posted in or near all polling
places, a task which was the responsibility of the Cambodian parties. UNTAC prepared lists of the candidates of all parties in English, but the transcription of many names was so eccentric that it could have disoriented specialists — for example, ‘Seun Souberdo’ for ‘Son Soubert’. Apparently UNTAC did not seek competent advice on Khmer transliteration conventions.\(^\text{13}\)

The most dangerous joke, however, was the provision that anyone born in Cambodia, and their children, wherever born, if aged 18 or over, could vote. This implied that all refugees overseas aged 18 or more — even if they had never seen Cambodia, did not speak the language, and were citizens of another country — might vote. Such practice would not be accepted anywhere in the world, and forcing it on Cambodia illustrates the malevolence of those members of the international community who were responsible for the texts of the new agreements. The purpose was to garner as many anti-SOC votes as possible, for it was well known that most of the refugees would vote against Phnom Penh. In what was certainly an oversight, the text also implied that all the Vietnamese born in Cambodia and now resident in Vietnam, and their children, perhaps up to half a million persons, could also vote. As could have been predicted, this forced a change in the rules, to stipulate that a voter must be a ‘Cambodian person’, defined as a person born in Cambodia, at least one of whose parents was born in Cambodia; or a person, wherever born, at least one of whose parents was born in Cambodia and had a parent also born there. This still permitted most Cambodian refugees to vote, if they returned to Cambodia to register, a stipulation which discouraged all but the most committed. In fact, few refugees took the trouble to register and vote, far too few to affect the outcome.\(^\text{14}\)

The zeal to undermine the SOC meant that the Paris Agreement favoured the Khmer Rouge, as they themselves gleefully recognized. In the transcript of a talk by Pol Pot to a group of cadres in February 1992, leaked to the SOC and distributed to foreign journalists in December 1992, Pol Pot emphasized the advantages which they derived from the Agreement, and complained about the delay in setting up UNTAC, which he felt would permit the favourable application of the Agreement and protect the Khmer Rouge from hostility by UNAMIC under the French General Loridon. Pol Pot’s remarks indicate that he considered Loridon a serious threat which would disappear with the arrival of UNTAC, an assessment on which he was proved correct. We may be sure he considered Loridon’s removal a great favour.\(^\text{15}\) I must emphasize that my pur-
pose in saying this is only to publicize the Khmer Rouge attitude at the time, not to say that UN forces should have gone to war with them. Even if such a campaign had been successful, it might have been counterproductive because of the destruction and the Cambodian deaths which would have been caused.

Other weaknesses emphasized by Pol Pot were the end of Chinese aid, and the defection of KPNLF and FUNCINPEC elements from the tripartite coalition. Sihanouk was unreliable, and 'went around the bend' in moments of stress, and Ranariddh, Pol Pot felt, might move toward the PRK/SOC.

Nevertheless, once UNTAC under Akashi arrived, the KR incessantly complained, first, that UNTAC did not take over the government as the Paris Accord allowed, and secondly, that UNTAC did not supervise withdrawal of the Vietnamese who still allegedly occupied Cambodia and dominated the government. These complaints were part of a strategy outlined by Pol Pot in his February talk, and it appears he had mistakenly interpreted the Paris Accord as setting up an equal four-party regime under the SNC. In part, the sense of Pol Pot's assessment of the Paris Agreement as favoring them was that it permitted their policy of stonewalling on those two points. There was no mention at all in Pol Pot's talk of the election.

The Khmer Rouge were assigned, though not explicitly, a particular role in the plans to destroy the PRK/SOC. In arguments such as that of Evans cited above, concern about the 'Red Khmer' was a red herring. They were needed as the ever-present threat to keep Phnom Penh from simply going its own way; and by 1990, in spite of relative success on the battlefield, the SOC knew they could not maintain sufficient military force against the Khmer Rouge who still received foreign aid. During the negotiations throughout the 1980s it was asserted that the Khmer Rouge were too strong to be excluded, even if they were abhorred. Phnom Penh denied that, and said the problem was foreign support for the Khmer Rouge; now we know they were right. After the agreement was signed, there was even some noise from the US, blaming SOC for agreeing to association with the Khmer Rouge, and American insistence that they would never recognize a government in which the Khmer Rouge were included. Phnom Penh was conned. Once the international community had forced them to accept the Khmer Rouge, it was their faction which started to get the blame.

A journalist commented on the possible future of Pen Sovan that he is 'the only noteworthy Cambodian politician untainted by the current Phnom Penh
government's cooperation with the Khmer Rouge in the peace plan', that is, by the acceptance of the Khmer Rouge into the new coalition which was forced on Phnom Penh by the Big Five. And the US Congress, with its typical perspicacity, grumbled about paying the US share of a UN operation if the Khmer Rouge was included (The Nation 5 December 1991). In Phnom Penh in June 1992 I was told by one of Hun Sen's associates that before his trip to the US in March, Solomon warned him that he would face hard questioning from Congress about the Khmer Rouge in the new SNC.

Loridon had to be removed to prevent the destruction of the Khmer Rouge before they had served their purpose. His removal meant that UNTAC would never enforce 'phase 2'. A year later, as an excuse to avoid enforcement, someone provided Akashi with an assessment that the Khmer Rouge were a great risk to the elections: 'the KR are stronger than before'; 'their military strength has increased by at least 50 per cent, they have new weapons, they are operating in larger units, they are led by leaders who are more extreme than in past years, so we have to be prepared' (The Nation 20 May 1993, citing a statement by Akashi). It is now clear that this was all nonsense, but it was necessary in order to counter the declining estimates of Khmer Rouge strength which might have undermined the role in which they had been cast.

The Khmer Rouge are now collapsing under attack from the new Cambodian government; estimates of their strength after the election fell once and for all from over 30,000 to 10,000 or even less, just about what the PRK was saying in 1988–90, and there has been no identification, or even mention, of new leaders. Akashi was no doubt disinfomed, probably by one of the peculiar analyses for which his own '[Dis] Information and Education Component' became famous. Had there been no Khmer Rouge, the PRK/SOC could not have been defeated with the 'peace process' mechanism.

By May 1993 it seemed that the 'free and fair internationally supervised election' would take place in the worst possible conditions. The Democratic Kampuchea (DK) group, or 'Khmer Rouge', had withdrawn from the election, with a spurious claim that a crucial clause of the Agreement, withdrawal of Vietnamese armed forces, had not been observed, and it appeared that they had convinced a large part of the populace of the truth of that claim. The same theme was taken up by FUNCINPEC, and even more stridently by Son Sann.
Violence, among the parties, against Vietnamese, and among the citizenry, all armed in the American and Thai laissez-faire style, was generalized. The economy, which in spite of the US-led blockade, showed slow, steady progress from 1980 to 1988, had collapsed since the peace agreement had been signed, and a wide wealth gap, which PRK/SOC policy up to 1988 had tried to prevent, had brought misery to much of the population.

Twenty parties were accepted for registration by the UNTAC Electoral Component. Few of them, perhaps fortunately, appeared serious. Seven were founded by people who had spent most of the last 10–20 years in the United States or France. Most of the party names were permutations of a few clichés — Democracy, Republican, Neutralist etc.; and their platforms consisted of praise for everything good — democracy, freedom, human rights, social welfare, peace, and of course a free market economy — without concrete policies to achieve such virtues. The party logos, which appeared prominently on the ballot papers, ostensibly as a guide for illiterate voters, were equally complex and confusing, most constituted by a multiplicity of intertwined symbols. One new party leader, returned from the US, showed his level of realism by raising the American flag over his office and hanging a picture of George Bush on the wall.¹⁹

The serious parties were the Phnom Penh government’s Cambodian Peoples Party (CPP), FUNCINPEC under Sihanouk’s son Norodom Ranariddh, and two branches of the former KPNLF of Son Sann, his own BLDP and Sak Sutsakhan’s LDP. If the Khmer Rouge had not rejected participation, they also would have been serious contenders, if only because they would probably have had total control over the votes of 10–15 per cent of the population. We must not forget that in spite of their refusal to open their zones to UNTAC, to canton their troops, and partially disarm, the door was left open for them to participate in the election until virtually the last minute.

Still another party with a serious name and leader was Le Parti Democrat of In Tam, although it was difficult to guess what attraction its candidates might have for voters in 1993. The Democrat Party was the strongest party of pre-independence Cambodia, winning all the country’s past free elections, in 1946, 1947, and 1951, on a platform of pluralism, nationalism, understood if unexpressed resistance to the monarchy, and a covert goal of full independence,
including sympathy for Cambodian, and Vietnamese, guerrillas fighting against the French (Vickery 1982; Chandler 1991). They were destroyed by government harassment after Sihanouk’s victory of 1955, but until 1975 they were remembered with sympathy by politically conscious Cambodians, in particular the educated middle class, survivors of which made up a large section of the PRK/SOC second- and third-level administrators. In Tam himself was not one of the original Democrats, but he helped revive the party in opposition to Lon Nol in 1971–72, ran against the latter for president in 1972, and perhaps lost because of dishonest ballot counting. At least he gained considerable popularity at the time. After 1979 he organized an armed force on the Thai border, was one of the founders of FUNCINPEC, then renounced warmongering and in 1988 returned to visit Phnom Penh in a manner indicating support for the PRK. His new Parti Democrat looked like a potential collaborator with the Phnom Penh government party in an eventual coalition.

During the last half of 1992 it appeared that no party would win a majority, and most observers were betting on the election resulting in a coalition of Ranariddh’s FUNCINPEC and Hun Sen’s Cambodian Peoples Party, or even on a pre-election coalition. At least that is what people who did not desire chaos hoped for. The SOC was the only group with a national administrative capability, and Ranariddh, of all other party leaders, had been making the most conciliatory and rational noises, notably opposing violence against the Vietnamese. A debacle by SOC, desired by the United States, leaving a coalition of FUNCINPEC and the ex-KPNLF parties, or either or all of them with the refugee parties, would have been a disaster. Defection of Ranariddh from the tripartite coalition including the Khmer Rouge, and a coalition between FUNCINPEC and the CPP, was a major concern of Pol Pot as expressed in his February 1992 talk, and he was insistent that efforts must be made to prevent it.

One striking feature of the platforms of most parties was lack of any reference to Cambodia’s traditional royalty. With the exception of one small explicitly Royalist Party and FUNCINPEC, it would appear that the parties were republican, as could be expected from the backgrounds of those leaders whose previous political activities are known.

Because of this, the enthusiasm for Sihanouk since the election seems opportunistic, and shows that no group has sufficient political imagination to escape from tradition. Or rather, even if they do not like Sihanouk, they are returning to traditional Cambodian politics (see below and see Thion 1993).
Election predictions

After 1992 the burgeoning cooperation between FUNCINPEC and the CPP broke down with accusations of CPP responsibility for attacks on, and killings of, FUNCINPEC personnel. Clear guilt was demonstrated in only a few cases, and it must not be forgotten that such cooperation was anathema to two important players, the Khmer Rouge and the United States. The CPP, in particular Hun Sen, had no reason to initiate attacks on FUNCINPEC until it was clear that the latter had declared their enmity; and Hun Sen’s assertions that some of the attacks were Khmer Rouge provocation or internal FUNCINPEC feuding were not unreasonable.

In early May most predictions were that the CPP would at least come first, perhaps with a small absolute majority.

This was the prediction even of the two American ‘Democracy institutes’ whose members were personally hostile to SOC. In their seminar for international election observers on 21 May, one of them warned that the post-election period could be the most dangerous for those who worked against the SOC, because CPP was expected to win the largest number of seats, and thus to dominate the new government.

Gareth Evans also reluctantly made a similar assessment, saying the Khmer Rouge were not just non-cooperative, but were making an ‘active attempt at disruption and discrediting the outcome’. If the pro-Sihanouk group won, the Khmer Rouge would hold back from violence and try to negotiate reconciliation and participation. ‘If, on the other hand, as is possibly a little more likely, the Hun Sen people gained a clear majority’, the Khmer Rouge might consider further insurgency etc. That was no doubt true, because Hun Sen was saying that if he won he would wipe them out, while FUNCINPEC was explicitly conciliatory. Evans’s statement illustrates the role assigned the Khmer Rouge, which I evoked above.

A journalist reporting from Kompong Cham, the largest constituency, wrote, ‘Rival political parties [citing the Liberal Democrats, a breakaway group from Son Sann’s KPNLF]...say they believe the Phnom Penh government will win....’ (Chris Burslem in The Nation 13 May 1993); and even some FUNCINPEC leaders doubted their party’s strength, as was seen in the defection of three of their generals to CPP just a few days before the election. They said the reason for changing sides was disapproval of Ranariddh, who had taken over from...
Sihanouk, and was cooperating with the Khmer Rouge, but it is more likely that their defection meant they thought the CPP was going to win the best result in the election and dominate the post-election government, probably with Sihanouk, whom they had willingly served, as some kind of honorary chief of state or king. One of them, Sou Kim Sun, had been a FUNCINPEC division commander, and chief of FUNCINPEC’s election campaign in Phnom Penh, where he was a candidate.\(^{23}\) His defection must have been particularly embarrassing.

The CPP officially proclaimed that they expected a 60-70 per cent majority, and their reworking of the candidate lists after the election suggests they believed it (see below).

One very peculiar analysis in the opposite direction, made in January 1993, gave the CPP only fourth place with a mere 9 per cent support, behind FUNCINPEC with 30 per cent, the BLDP with 18.5 per cent, and the Democrats with 10 per cent. This analysis emanated from UNTAC’s Information and Education Component, Washington’s base within UNTAC, dominated by anti-Vietnam vendetta types who were responsible for another disinformative tract after the election. It may have been merely the working of blind prejudice, or it may have had a covert purpose. Certainly no one outside that agency would have agreed with their figure for the CPP. Given its date, we might infer that it was to undermine the potential FUNCINPEC-CPP cooperation, by introducing a ‘confidential’, authoritative UN assessment that the CPP was extremely weak, unworthy as an election ally. If not leaked directly to FUNCINPEC, it would have been intercepted by FUNCINPEC agents within UNTAC, such as Norodom Sirivudh’s wife, Christine Alfons Norodom, who was employed in the Rehabilitation Component.\(^{24}\)

**Election results**

The final election results were announced by UNTAC on 10 July 1993 and officially proclaimed the next day; the new Constituent Assembly held its opening ceremony on 14 June. In the total popular vote FUNCINPEC won approximately 45 per cent, the CPP 38 per cent, and the Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party of Son Sann nearly 4 per cent, with the rest spread among minor parties. Since seats in the new Constituent Assembly were determined proportionally by province, the two largest parties have representatives from all provinces except
the six provinces with only one seat each, where the largest vote determined the seat. FUNCINPEC won 58 seats, CPP 51, BLDP 10, and Moulinaka, the party which had the fifth largest total popular vote (1.37 per cent), one seat. The fourth highest popular vote was taken by Sak Sutsakan's Liberal Democratic Party, but they did not win enough in any province to get a seat.

The complete failure of all other small parties to obtain enough votes to get seats, even with the advantage of proportional representation, was not expected, but it might be interpreted as showing a degree of political maturity among voters who realized that only the larger parties could govern. It showed further that the blatant Americanism of four or five of the small parties did not have the attraction for Cambodians which the leaders of those parties, and their foreign supporters, had expected. And some prominent figures from an older political generation who had remained outside Cambodia from the 1970s to 1991 must finally realize that they are no longer of interest to the Cambodian public. It was also a rejection of one common characteristic of most of the small parties: their antipathy for both Sihanouk and the Phnom Penh government. In this connection it may be well to emphasize that the roughly 11 per cent of votes cast for non-royalist small parties, plus the CPP's 38 per cent and BLDP's 4 per cent was that over half the electorate voted against monarchy and against Sihanouk.

The collapse of In Tam's Democrat Party took most knowledgeable observers by surprise, and may have been the result of his own gaffes. His expected supporters would have been urban, educated, 'middle-class' professionals and state employees, who were anti-Sihanouk, and who did not want a return to traditional politics. Many such people worked loyally for the PRK, but liked the idea of a more pluralist system, and would have been attracted by a party which represented an alternative to the CPP, but not rejection of all it represented. At the last joint rally of all parties just before the election, In Tam simply played the Sihanouk card, offering complete loyalty, which he said he had always had, and boasting that he had been one of the founders of FUNCINPEC. He personally had been a loyal Sihanoukist until at least 1970, but that is not what the Democrat Party had represented. His potential voters that day might have thought that if they wanted Sihanouk they should vote for FUNCINPEC, and if they didn't, for the CPP. In neither case was Le Parti Democrat any longer an attractive alternative.
The Cambodian refugee community, because of its extremely low participation in the election, and because its representatives (seven parties) were rejected by the Cambodian public, can be expected to have no further role in Cambodian politics. The Cambodian population showed that it wishes to be governed by persons and parties which have either remained in Cambodia during the difficult years, or, if not, are believed to represent Prince Sihanouk.

The method of proportional representation for allocating seats in the new Assembly — which seemed to be designed to weaken the CPP when it was expected that the CPP would receive a majority of the vote — did not work as expected, first of all because of the near total rejection of the small parties and the unexpectedly poor showing of Son Sann’s BLDP. The new Assembly, contrary to expectations, is essentially a two-party organ, with a small BLDP in a position to affect majority votes. Proportional representation has, however, performed its function of diluting the power of the party receiving the largest vote, that is FUNCINPEC. Had the election law incorporated the principle of largest party taking all seats in any election district, then FUNCINPEC would have won 79 seats to 41 for the Cambodian Peoples Party; and no other parties would have been represented in the Assembly. The designers of the election law would appear to have outsmarted themselves.

Although FUNCINPEC ‘won’, it does not have a majority. Its most logical ally in a coalition, according to normal parliamentary procedure and the known ideologies of the respective parties, would be BLDP, but their combined total of 68 seats did not get them the two thirds (80 seats) necessary to pass the constitution, and subsequently necessary to vote confidence in a government. Thus, drafting of a new constitution could have been blocked if cooperation between FUNCINPEC and CPP had not been achieved. Even the combined FUNCINPEC-BLDP majority which would normally have sufficed to form a government might be only theoretical, for those two parties do not have a national administrative capability; and continuing administration must count on support by the cadres of CPP. There must either be open cooperation between FUNCINPEC and CPP in the future government, or FUNCINPEC must persuade a large number of CPP politicians and administrators to defect to FUNCINPEC.

The leaders of the BLDP, and of the LDP — the party of General Sak Sutsakan which also derived from the KPNLF — have a history of opposition to and dislike of Sihanouk, which might prevent close cooperation
between them and FUNCINPEC, in spite of the antipathy of both toward the CPP, communism, and Vietnam.32

Election irregularities

When it became clear that FUNCINPEC would win, CPP called a press conference on 1 June to announce that they had complained since the beginning of the election, and were continuing to complain, about irregularities in the election in three provinces and Phnom Penh, and would request new elections in those areas. Their complaints concerned broken locks and seals on ballot boxes, discrepancies in numbers of ballots counted compared to numbers of persons who had voted, and loss of ballots. They said that if their complaints were rejected, they would refuse to accept the results of the election. They also complained about bias on UNTAC’s radio, with deputy minister in the Prime Minister’s Department, Khieu Kanharith, saying that ‘in any future UN elections they must be more careful about the personnel of this component’, that is, the Information and Education Component.

UNTAC rejected CPP demands for new partial elections, although they could not but acknowledge that seals and locks had been broken and some ballots had been misplaced. Such defects were disgraceful enough given the funds and expertise available to UNTAC, but they probably did not effect the outcome of the election.33

There was reason to complain about UNTAC radio, and Khieu Kanharith’s jibe about the personnel of the UNTAC Information Component which runs UNTAC radio, was apposite. That component was loaded with Cambodia expertise, including its director, US State Department officer Timothy Carney, and the deputy director, Stephen Heder, both with long anti-PRK/SOC records, and who knew precisely what effect their work would have on the Cambodian public.34

The specific complaint about them was that their broadcasts showed anti-CPP bias just before the election and during the vote counting. They began broadcasting partial results at 7pm, on Saturday evening, 29 May (voting ended 28 May). The first announcements enthusiastically said FUNCINPEC was ahead in four places (Phnom Penh, Kompong Som, Kratie, and Pursat), but no figures or percentages were provided, nor was there information about places
where the CPP might have been ahead. This was, moreover, contrary to a policy announced by UNTAC to publish the result in each province when its count was completed. The broadcast was repeated several times that night, and later the same evening they broadcast the totals counted for all parties in Phnom Penh. At that time CPP had received 4,336 votes, FUNCINPEC 7,518, and all other parties only 2–3 figure results, all such results being so small as to be insignificant. Election Component chief Reginald Austin was interviewed, possibly unaware of what UNTAC radio was broadcasting in Khmer, and he said that they had some very preliminary results in twelve provinces. As UNTAC Information chief Carney cautioned in a broadcast the following morning, that was only 2 per cent of the total vote. Thereafter every day UNTAC radio reported the total vote of each major party and emphasiszied the number of provinces ‘won’ by each, but rarely noted the proportional process which would determine the number of seats.35

Further UNTAC radio hanky-panky has recently been charged by a Phnom Penh newspaper, which said that during the election period UNTAC radio jammed the Khmer Rouge transmitter and broadcast FUNCINPEC programs on its frequency. That would have been totally illegal, and one wonders if some of the ‘racist and inflammatory broadcasts’ about which Akashi complained originated with UNTAC 12.36

The new regime

After the election, UNTAC seemed to be faced with a surprisingly united Cambodian people who rejected the election and the UNTAC intervention itself. Sihanouk may have pulled off a coup as dramatic as the coup which deposed him in 1970, and which is constantly in his mind as he manoeuvres around UNTAC and domestic opponents. One might imagine him directing events from behind the scenes, but some of the incidents which gave him his advantage were fortuitous.

Fortuitous was the lack of predicted Khmer Rouge violence to disrupt the election. One journalist who regularly writes about Khmer Rouge affairs, and who claims to have special contacts with them, said it was because Sihanouk made a deal with them. On the other hand, Stephen Heder said there was no change in the level of hostile Khmer Rouge activity during the election.
According to him they failed because they did not know where the polling stations were, and because of a good defence by SOC. The good defence was true enough, but the rest of Heder's explanation is peculiar. The Khmer Rouge must have known where polling stations were; and reports from most of the country said the level of hostile activity was indeed lower. Not all province dwellers had been worried. On 25 June 1993 Joanne Healy, who had spent two years on an Australian project in Battambang, told me that they did not at all believe the Khmer Rouge in that area would try to disrupt the election with violence. There were reports from the northwest that on election days some Khmer Rouge actually came and voted, which means that they had registered to vote earlier, and suggests that there had never been a plan to attack polling places.

The second fortuitous circumstance was the poor showing of the CPP. Had the CPP taken first place, there would have been no complaints from them and no instigation of popular unrest, and they could have made their own deal with Sihanouk on much stronger ground. They had already recognized him as chief of state in 1991, and he would have had to choose between acting in that role alongside a CPP with legitimate power, or leaving in a sulk against an internationally recognized election.

Of course, had the CPP won, FUNCINPEC might have rejected the result, and have been supported in their rejection by the US. This could have taken Cambodia from the 'Nicaragua solution' to the 'Angola ploy' (in which the US delayed recognition of the 'wrong' victor in an internationally supervised free and fair election until the US-favoured loser was able to crank up the civil war again; see Herman and Brodhead 1984).

Sihanouk's sudden return to Phnom Penh just before the election, after a long absence, may have turned the vote for FUNCINPEC. He himself claimed in a moment of pique that FUNCINPEC won only because of his arrival. In any case his role as political arbitrator was saved by CPP's loss, which opened the door for his so-far very skilful coup.

His first move was to form a coalition government of the two large parties, FUNCINPEC and the CPP. On 3 June, at 5 pm, Khieu Kanharith announced at a press conference that a new government had been formed under Prince Sihanouk, and that the State of Cambodia government was dissolved. The new government would be a coalition of FUNCINPEC and CPP, with Prince
Ranariddh of FUNCINPEC and CPP Prime Minister Hun Sen as deputy prime ministers. Kanharith added that a condition of SOC for consenting to the coalition was that the Khmer Rouge be excluded, which Sihanouk promised; Kanharith said, 'We hope he keeps his promise'. Each ministry would also have co-ministers, one from each party, and, in true Sihanouk fashion, a guarantee of ministerial instability.

Prince Sihanouk's solution to the impasse of a victorious party which was incapable of governing and a losing party which refused to give up power was outside and contrary to the Paris Agreement, and was in fact a negation of the election. It was nevertheless a positive move, because it averted conflict between the two parties, and the danger of a new civil war, and it insured the collaboration of the two larger parties, without which Cambodia cannot at present be governed.

The US objected strongly, Akashi's remarks were not encouraging, and Ranariddh asked for some changes before agreeing to participate. The following day, 4 June, Sihanouk, offended, renounced his project.

If Sihanouk's announcement and dissolution of a government within 24 hours was reminiscent of his 1960s style, the next act in this theatrical production showed that the same techniques were being revived. In the 1960s, in the face of a political crisis, when his desires were blocked by opposing factions within his own Sangkum, Sihanouk would threaten to resign and leave the Cambodian people to their fate in the hands of corrupt politicians. Soon thereafter 'spontaneous' popular demonstrations would be held and petitions sent to the palace by the 'people', imploring Sihanouk to remain as head of the government or chief of state. The demonstrations sometimes turned into violence against the offenders, such as the attacks on the US and British embassies in 1964.

On 5 June it was announced that a similar demonstration of the people's will would be held in front of the palace; then it was cancelled and people were told to return on Monday, 7 June. Without further announcement, on Sunday, 6 June truckloads of people were brought to the palace to listen to an extremely emotional speech by Sihanouk, accompanied by Prince Chakrapong, which was later broadcast several times. His main points were as follows.40

Before 1970, before I was overthrown by the Lon Nol coup, Cambodia was not only the equal of many countries in development, but ahead of
many of the Third World in Asia. Then we were left behind because of war.

A few days ago I agreed to head a government uniting all parties except the Khmer Rouge, 'who do not agree', including BLDP and Mouinaka. All would have been included in the ministries. My objective was to make it just like the Sangkum of the 1960s.

Do not consider the Khmer Rouge as enemies. Talk to them, use a policy of patience, solidarity, brotherhood; the policy of the two head monks of the Sangha; to save the poor and indigent.

Hun Sen and Chea Sim begged me to take over the government. I didn't dare refuse this request which came from the people [emphasis added— MV]. But there were obstacles; from certain foreign circles which have an imperialist and coloniialist policy. They say that if Sihanouk gets power as before, he must be overthrown as in 1970. Because if he is allowed to pursue the policy of independence, neutrality, territorial integrity, etc., colonialism and imperialism cannot win, they cannot drink the blood of Kampuchea and the Khmer people, cannot pursue a policy of oppression. Sihanouk must be overthrown.

Now those foreign circles are giving a lot of money to some political parties which [long hesitation] do not follow Sihanouk. Whoever will oppose Sihanouk, keep him from forming a government, they will give those people a big budget, to cause Sihanouk's defeat.

Some do not follow me. They set conditions. they say that they follow Sihanouk, but they don't accept my formula, don't agree with certain conditions. So I can't form a government.

Some Khmer politicians have told foreign ambassadors, 'We must resist, and not let feudalism return'. I never made feudalism in the Sangkum time; ask the daun chi, ask the achar. We had Peoples Congresses every six months so that the people could say what they liked and didn't like. There was full freedom to speak. There were free elections for representatives. And the throne was shade for the people, just like my arrival now is shade, that's all. I have no wish for power....

What should we do, if we can't have my coalition government? Let all four parties run their own areas. The Khmer Rouge area is 15 per cent or 12 per cent of Cambodia, FUNCINPEC has a smaller area, and Son San an even smaller area etc.; SOC is biggest with over 80 per cent. I ask them all to protect the people in their areas. Don't make war, raise the standard of living of the people, especially the poor.

I will remain as shade for my 'children'. I will stay. I won't leave now. But the government can't be formed. The SNC asked me to be
president, to unite, but I cannot unite, cannot form all into a single strand. So let each faction take responsibility toward the people, for history, for the monks, and for the international community who came to rule us, especially UNTAC [emphasis added—MV].

An election is very good. Some parties don’t accept the results; I wasn’t given power by anyone to organize the election for the people, because the international community, UN, UNTAC took that power. I have no power, I am only the shade. UNTAC has total responsibility for the election. I had nothing to do with it; let them take responsibility.

Can we guarantee peace in the future? UNTAC says they will rule us until August; at the end of August UNTAC will turn power over to the Khmer.

Let SOC run their provinces [lists names]; and other factions theirs. Wait for September. I won’t go anywhere. We will meet again. We are not yet independent, not until September.

Thus, in this speech Sihanouk accused UNTAC of trying to impose a colonial, imperialist rule over Cambodia. He disavowed the election, and finally he encouraged the four factions to divide and govern Cambodia on their own.

The 6 June speech, in the context of Cambodian politics, was inflammatory, of the type which in the 1960s incited the people to violent action, stoning embassies, and attacking personal enemies. Also inflammatory was another Sihanouk broadcast on the evening of 9 June. While advising all parties to accept the election results, and to take their places in the new Assembly on 14 June as allocated by UNTAC, Sihanouk noted that ‘UNTAC did not conduct the election in an entirely correct manner’.

The ‘secession’ movement

The violence which Sihanouk incited did not occur in Phnom Penh, and not immediately, no doubt because of the strength of SOC police, and the apparent, if illusory, strength of UNTAC. It occurred when, on 10 June, Chakrapong led some dissatisfied CPP leaders, in particular State Security Minister Sin Song, to Prey Veng and declared an autonomous zone, loyal to Sihanouk, in Prey Veng, Svay Rieng and Kompong Cham, in protest against the ‘unfair election’. Interestingly, Khmer-language newspapers reported that Chakrapong visited his father on 9 June before setting off for Prey Veng. It is probable that Sihanouk encouraged, or at least acquiesced in, the move, which would later give him the
opportunity to save the country from partition. When demonstrators in the ‘autonomous’ provinces threatened violence Sihanouk, in a broadcast on 12 June emotionally begged them not to hurt any UNTAC personnel, and said he had urged Akashi to withdraw all UNTAC personnel from those areas. In the same speech he virtually agreed with the secessionists that the election was dishonest, and said he did not condemn their actions.

There were also vague reports that the northeastern provinces of Ratanakiri, Mondulkiri, and Stung Treng would join the autonomous zone, under the influence of General Bou Thang, former chief of the PRK army, and a member of one of the local ethnic groups in Ratanakiri.

The secession occurred just one day before the official UNTAC announcement of election results, which showed some surprises among the CPP winners. Thirty-two CPP candidates whose listings should have put them into the Assembly had resigned leaving their places open for lower-ranking CPP candidates.

An ‘analysis’ of this secession, prepared for UNTAC by Stephen Heder of the Information and Education Component, alleged that persons who headed the lists of CPP candidates in several provinces but were passed over (formally they resigned) as deputies in the new Assembly were in fact ‘assigned to participate in the “illegal struggle” or at least to be prepared to move into such activities if the situation should deteriorate further’, perhaps as the nucleus of an alternative power structure should the CPP be defeated in the Assembly.

The reported plan ... was to rely on the parts of Cambodia east of the Mekong as a “fall-back base area” ... in which to regroup and concentrate forces; and ‘it has been decided to attempt to establish in Cambodia east of the Mekong an area which ... is free of “enemy” influence ... UNTAC, FUNCINPEC and eventually the PDK [Khmer Rouge].

According to Heder the ‘original planning process reportedly also included negotiations and arrangements with Viet Nam for the provision of support for the fall-back base’. The CPP would not have been that stupid. Reliance on Vietnam in such a situation would have been the kiss of death politically.

Heder linked the secession with the changes in CPP candidates chosen to enter the elected assembly. According to him, faced with unexpected defeat, the CPP withdrew some ‘CPP members and assign[ed] them to if not “illegal” then “semi-legal” or the possibility of “illegal” work’. This is seen from an ‘examination of the composition both of the group who stayed or were brought in and
of the group that withdrew'. A number of top CPP leaders, were kept in the Assembly. 'Also kept in the Assembly were almost all the intellectuals and others who could be described as the CPP's "econocrats" and "technocrats", the Party's propagandists and educational and cultural workers, and its legal experts. Moreover, the ranks of these groups were expanded by CPP members from these categories [i.e. technocrats etc.] to replace more senior CPP members [who did not have such qualifications] who resigned their candidacy'. Likewise, 'another group kept in or brought into the Assembly were low-ranking CPP members from its structures in [the provinces]', while 'their superiors resigned'. Heder says, 'they seem to be in the Assembly in order to 'hold the fort' for their superiors, who are now assigned to ... maintaining and building up CPP strength in the most important provinces'.

The inferences about types of persons included in the Assembly are true; it will be seen below that those put in the Assembly are more appropriate than the superiors who resigned, in terms of building a democratic regime in cooperation with other parties. They are also precisely the types of person who would be chosen by any rational party in a Western democracy.

The two actions, resignation of some CPP candidates and formation of the autonomous zone, are much better explained as quite unconnected manoeuvres. The autonomous zone, moreover, is better explained as an unexpected, *ad hoc* action by a few hotheads in protest against the election, perhaps also in protest at being dropped from the Assembly, and it was probably approved tacitly by Sihanouk both in protest against UNTAC, and to create an opportunity to gain credit by exerting his moral authority to put down the autonomy movement. The timing, the association of Chakrapong with Sihanouk between 6 June and 9 June, and its quick end, show that the 'secession movement' was not part of a long-term plan, and was not related to the choice of CPP candidates for the Assembly. Perhaps Hun Sen stole some of the credit by absenting himself from the 15 June meeting of the Assembly in the palace throne room to rush off to Kompong Cham to put the 'rebels' in their place. It remains to be seen how this will affect his future relations with Sihanouk.

The final choice of deputies by the CPP to fill their 51 Assembly seats is not at all sinister, but it reveals an interesting pattern and undoubtedly signals their strategy in the newly-formed coalition government and Constituent Assembly.
As part of the registration procedure all parties gave UNTAC lists of their proposed candidates for each province they were contesting. In general the parties listed far more candidates in every province than there were seats to win. For example, the CPP listed ten candidates for the six seats of Banteay Meanchey, and twenty-six candidate for the twelve seats of Phnom Penh. This was obviously to make certain that there would be enough registered candidates left if some resigned, switched sides, or met an untimely end.

Whatever number of seats a party won in a province, the deputies to occupy those seats were to be appointed automatically in accordance with the official listings of candidates submitted to UNTAC (remember that voters did not choose candidates, but only parties, and it was left to the parties to pick the successful candidates). This was the procedure followed by FUNCINPEC, and each of the 10 BLDP winners was first on his respective provincial list.

As described above, the CPP proceeded differently; 32 of their winners resigned, opening the way for others farther down the lists to assume places in the Assembly.

In Banteay Meanchey the CPP got two seats, and they chose the first two names on that list, which is thus uncontroversial. It should nevertheless be noted that the two are General Ke Kimyan (aged 38), first vice-minister of National Defence, whom Heder characterized as a 'military intellectual', and Phet Phanour (55), a former teacher and Ministry of Education official who became supreme public prosecutor, with a prewar university degree in Cambodia and further studies in France.

In Battambang, for their three seats the CPP picked numbers 1, 5, and 6 of their list, respectively the important minister of the Interior, Sar Kheng (aged 42), Nam Tum (46), and Chuon Bunthol (56), deputy governor and deputy provincial party chief, over General Hui Savoeun, Ouch Bunchoeun, one of the hardest of old ex-Khmer Rouge hardliners, and Oum Samy, the governor of Battambang who gave UNTAC so much trouble.

In Kompong Cham, following Hun Sen (42) who headed the list and the omitted Chakrapong, they picked number 3 Mat Ly (63), an old party stalwart, but perhaps more importantly an ethnic Cham; numbers 4 and 5, Chhuor Leanghoat (52), who has a law degree, was a judge before 1975, and is now in the Ministry of Justice, and Keat Chhon (59), a respected engineer with
advanced technical studies in France before 1970, who worked under both Sihanouk and Lon Nol. Then they jumped over Commerce minister Nhlm Vanda, whom Heder classes among the military with the rank of lieutenant-general, and the little respected Health minister, Yim Chhay Ly, to take number 8, SNC delegate Dit Munty (52), an obviously desirable figure, with a law degree and experience as a judge before 1975; and number 11, a young intellectual and one of Hun Sen’s advisers, Im Setthy (46). The omitted numbers 9 and 10 were the governor, Hun Neng, and Men Kuon, a Party Central Committee member, considered by some as a Chea Sim man.51

In Kompong Chhnang, Kong Samol (57), an American-educated agriculture specialist who headed the list, got in while numbers 2 and 3, Governor So Rin and Vice Admiral Nuon Sokh, were skipped in favour of Uk Rabun (42), deputy minister of Commerce, a former teacher, who was studying law and economics just before 1975.

Kompong Speu and Svay Rieng are uncontroversial. The first three on each list also became the 3 CPP deputies for those provinces. They also include obvious choices. Party stalwarts Deputy Prime Minister Say Chhum (48) and Governor Hem Khan (42) (Kompong Speu) and Ms Men Sam An (40) (Svay Rieng), and in Svay Rieng the respected deputy minister of Justice, Chem Snguon (67), who had legal studies and experience as a diplomat before 1975, and Him Chhem (54), deputy minister of Information, and a former teacher. The third Kompong Speu deputy, Samrit Pech (51), is deputy minister of Agriculture, who studied in France in 1970-75.

The three Kompong Thom deputies are number 1, Agriculture Minister Nguon Nhel (51), before 1975 a teacher and provincial administrator; number 3, Deputy Governor Un Ning (51), a former teacher with a pre-1975 university degree, who was praised by a European electoral officer for his cooperation during the election; and number 4 on the list, technocrat Chea Chanto (42) of the Ministry of Plan, with number 2, Governor Cheang Am, losing out.

Similarly in Kampot, number 3, Governor Tit Ream, was skipped for number 4, Ms Som Kimsovar (44), director of the CPP newspaper Pracheachun, to make up the province’s three winning candidates. The other two were numbers 1 and 2, Nay Pena (45) of the Politburo and General Chay Saingyoun (40), a former governor, deputy minister of Defence, and, according to Heder, another ‘military intellectual’. 

28
Kandal is more interesting in comparison with Heder's analysis. For the CPP's 3 deputies, number 1, Heng Samrin (aged 59), and number 3, Chea Soth (65), are obvious choices from the old guard, but number 2 of equivalent party and government status, Say Phouthang, was passed over, the most reasonable explanation being his virtual retirement due to age and ill health. Certainly there is no way to link him with an 'autonomous zone' in the east. His own area is the Thai southwest. The third member from Kandal is deputy minister of Education Mom Chim Huy (52), in place of adviser to the prime minister, medical doctor Kev San. The reason for the choice is not apparent, but it cannot be linked to a secession plot, and may be because Kev San spent the past twenty years in France, while Mom Chim Huy remained in the country.52

Another interesting case is Phnom Penh where number 1, Chea Sim (61), and number 3, Im Chhun Lim (51), minister of Education and an SNC member, were obvious choices for two of the four seats. Im Chhun Lim, moreover, has a prewar university degree. Number 4, Thor Penglart (58), is an adviser to the government who studied law and economics before 1975 and spent 1979-93 in France. Omitted were number 2, old party member and Phnom Penh mayor Sim Ka and numbers 5, 6, and 7, respectively: Sin Sen, deputy minister of Security; Chann Sok, the very old president of the Supreme Court; and Dr My Samedy, also aged, to permit the appointment of a leading CPP intellectual and spokesman, number 8, Khieu Kanharit (42).

In Prey Veng the first three, Minister of Security Sin Song, Governor Yuth Phouthang, and Deputy Governor Toch Sakk, were skipped in favour of numbers 4 to 7: Tourism Minister Chheam Yeap (aged 47), Deputy Minister of Education Ek Samol (49), veterinarian and Deputy Minister of Agriculture Pen Panha (52), Vann Sunheng (49) of the National Radio and Beaux-Arts School; and numbers 10 to 11 Bin Chhin (44) and Min Sean (48), deputy governors, skipping Chey Sapphon of the Party Central Inspectorate and Mam Heng, another deputy governor. All of those chosen, except Min Sean, had some kind of tertiary education before 1975, and five of them are under fifty years old.

In Pursat, Governor Ros Sreng, first on the list, was dropped, leaving Suy Sem (46), the young minister of Social Action, and Deputy Minister of Education Sar Kapun (55), a well-known writer and educationist since before 1970.
The successful candidates in Siemreap were Minister of Defence Tea Banh (48), and number 4, Long Hib (48), of the province organizing committee, dropping Governor Neou Sam, disliked by UNTAC, and Leng Vy, a deputy governor.

Takeo is interesting in that number 1, General Pol Saroeun, was skipped, as was number 2, Governor So Phearun, and number 4, Finance Minister Chhay Than. Those chosen are Minister of Transport So Khun (4), the well-known government spokesman Sok An (43), and Nin Saphon (45), deputy party chief of the province.

In the single-member provinces, the CPP maintained the governors as deputies in Koh Kong, where it is Rung Phlamkesan (61), an ethnic Thai in a Thai area; in Mondulkiri Boey Keuk (54), probably also of a local minority (at least he is a local native), in Preah Vihear Suk Sameng (39), a local native, and in Ratanakiri the old revolutionary and local minority group member Bou Thang (55). The Stung Treng governor, and candidate number 1, Sorm Sophra, was dropped, and replaced with his deputy Van Vuth (39). The same thing happened in Kratie where Governor Thik Kroeungvuttha was replaced by Deputy Minister of Health Chhea Thaing (58), a medical doctor since before 1970, who had his own private clinic, and who is now deputy minister of Health.

The shift in Kratie was at the last minute, and it is a single case which I would accept as having been related to the secession effort, but not in the direction imagined by Heder. The formal UNTAC announcement of winning candidates on 11 June named Thoek Kroeungvuttha, the governor of Kratie Province, and number 1 on the pre-election list of candidates for that province. By 14 June, for the opening of the Assembly, he had been replaced by number 2 on the list, Dr Chhea Thaing. All other resignations and replacements had been effected before the official UNTAC announcements were drawn up. In the newspaper Reaksmei kampuchea of 18 June, Thoek Kroeungvuttha was reported as stating that he resigned from the Assembly because of pressing administrative duties. We should recall that Kratie was rumoured to have joined the autonomous zone, but apparently did not; and perhaps the CPP and SOC decided the governor should stay on in that position because of his loyalty to Phnom Penh against potential secessionists. FUNCINPEC, incidentally, classed him among the Hun Sen men.33
Another interesting detail is the position of Bou Thang, the deputy for Ratanakiri. He was not dropped from the final list, although he did not attend the opening of the Assembly on 14 June, and a few days later Sihanouk included him in the request for Chakrapong and Sin Song to return to Phnom Penh. He was reported to have cooperated with Chakrapong at first, and to have brought Ratanakiri, Mondulkiri, and Stung Treng into the autonomous zone. In the end, however, it appears that those northeastern provinces did not declare autonomy.

Bou Thang’s moves and non-moves argue more for a spontaneous response to the political manoeuvres of the moment than for a CCP plan; and ‘reportedly’ (that is, according to the rumour mill), Bou Thang has been acting with some pretensions to autonomy, spending much time in Ratanakiri, ever since he was moved unwillingly in 1986 from the posts of Defence minister and deputy prime minister to simply member of the Standing Committee of the Central Committee.

The choice of CPP deputies certainly appears purposeful, and the purposes are in general transparent. Certain persons, however mediocre their parliamentary capabilities, had to be included because of their current party and government roles, but several others with equally long party service were omitted. Eleven provincial governors, a group generally considered as veteran, or hardline, politicians, were passed over, and only five (in Kompong Speu, Koh Kong, Mondulkiri, Preah Vihear, and Ratanakiri) were included as deputies. In all but the first of these cases the governors are natives in ethnic minority areas on the Vietnamese or Thai borders, which is explanation enough for their importance. The Kompong Speu governor, although not in a remote or minority area, like his Preah Vihear colleague, is also one of the young CPP generation, aged 42, and he studied medicine during 1970–75.

Also excluded were most of the candidates with a military or security service background, while those included are two ‘military intellectuals’, according to Heder, and the Defence minister, who is of the young generation (aged 48) and is an ethnic Thai from the southwest.

The CPP was obviously trying to include the maximum number of younger, more intellectual members among their deputies in the Assembly. At least 33 are former teachers, or current members of the Ministry of Education, or doctors, or have had some university level education. The average age of the deputies is 49.7; there are twenty-four under 50 years old; and three more under 40.
To the extent the new deputies can be identified with one or another of the hypothesized CPP factions, Chea Sim’s group appears weakened in favour of Hun Sen’s. Eight of the persons identified by FUNCINPEC as part of the ‘Chea Sim Clan’ were skipped, with seven still among the CPP deputies, while fifteen of those whom the same source identified as in the ‘Hun Sen Clan’ are among the deputies, with only eight dropped. Six of the ‘Hun Sen group’ who were dropped are provincial governors, and My Samed, another Hun Sen man, although respected, was probably considered too old. The fifteen Hun Sen men who made it are among those whom I classed above as intellectuals or professionally competent. Only one such person who was among FUNCINPEC’S list of the ‘Hun Sen clan’, Chhay Than of the Finance Ministry, was among those dropped.56

All of this probably indicates sincerity on the part of the CPP to cooperate with FUNCINPEC in the drafting of a constitution and the future governance of Cambodia. In this light the omission of Chakrapong, number 2 in their Kompong Chan list, and Sin Song, who headed the CPP list in Prey Veng, rather than a plot to establish an alternative power base, suggests removal of a bitter opponent of FUNCINPEC’s Ranariddh, and a general avoidance of military and police personnel, which is also in line with a desire to work constructively within the new political environment.

The pattern of resignations and replacements suggests that the CPP really expected to win approximately a two-thirds majority in the Assembly. In general the old CPP political leadership were among the top of the lists of provincial candidates, and the younger technocrats and intellectuals, who ranked lower politically, were further down the lists. Since in the final choice the latter replaced their political superiors, it is clear that the CPP had always expected that most of them would get in. If the lowest replacement in each province is taken as the bottom line of what they had expected to win without any resignations, the total is 81 seats, or 67 per cent.57

The FUNCINPEC group in the Assembly is much less impressive. There are a few stars from the old Cambodian elite who are also well educated, such as the princes Ranariddh and Sirivudh, a half-brother of Sihanouk, Ranariddh’s brother-in-law, Roland Eng, Sam Raingsy, son of a famous Sihanouk enemy of the 1950s who disappeared in mysterious circumstances, and Chau Sen Chumno, son of a prominent businessman and politician of the 1950s-60s.58 A few more are highly qualified technically (Ing Keat, Pou Sothirak, and the CPP defectors
Ung Phan and Kann Man, who owe their qualifications to their opportunities under the PRK/SOC during 1979-1989). In spite of their class and education, however, the FUNCINPEC elite have spent little or no time in Cambodia since before 1975, are without administrative or political experience, and may for those reasons be outclassed by the CPP.59

Most of the rest, however, perhaps more than forty, have no more than primary education, and no professional or administrative experience (other than primary school teachers before 1975); they were ordinary farmers under DK, and since 1979 either ordinary citizens within Cambodia in a few cases, or already anti-PRK activists in border military formations or guerrillas and agents inside the country.60

Son Sann’s BLDP fielded a number of potentially capable people. One who stands out, though not elected, is Hem Krisna, first on their Kompong Chhnang list of candidates, who in 1980, in one of the few PRK trials which was given publicity, was sentenced to twenty years in prison for active subversion in the service of the non-communist anti-PRK forces on the Thai border. It seems that all such political prisoners, whether tried for specific offences or not, had been released. One of the small parties, the Khmer Nationalist, was largely made up of them.61

End of ‘secession’, opening of the Assembly

On the evening of 9 June 1993, just when Chakrapong had set off to lead the ‘secession’, another Sihanouk broadcast advised all parties to accept the election results, even though ‘UNTAC did not conduct them in an entirely correct manner’, and to take their places in the new Assembly on 14 June as allocated by UNTAC according to the election results.

When the Assembly first met on 14 June, Ranariddh proposed that Sihanouk be declared chief of state with tenure unbroken from before March 1970 (meaning, with the same powers as he had enjoyed before being deposed). This was voted by the Assembly by a show of hands. Sihanouk accepted, made remarks about the need to get away from foreign domination, and suggested that the Assembly should meet in the throne room of the Palace, where they could be away from journalists and foreigners, and could discuss without keeping a written record.62
On 15 June the Assembly met in the throne room, and the session was televised. Hun Sen was not present, having rushed off to Kompong Cham to terminate the so-called autonomous zone. Heng Samrin, Chea Sim, Ranariddh, and Son Sann sat in the first row. The two latter assumed traditional obsequious poses, with bowed faces, hunched shoulders, and hands raised, palms together, in the traditional gesture of respect. Chea Sim sat upright with hands clasped halfway into that gesture. Heng Samrin sat still with a stony face and hands in his lap. Most of the deputies, like Heng Samrin, were expressionless, some taking detailed notes, not showing any signs of obsequious respect. Perhaps this indicates that few deputies in either party like Sihanouk's manoeuvres, but feel unable to reach a solution without him.

In the televised session Sihanouk said the Khmer must make the constitution, not foreigners; in 1947 the French made a constitution, and then the Democrat Party objected and changed it: 'Didn't they, Samdech Son Sann?'

'They say we are still a Protectorate of the UN. Only Khmer can cook Khmer food so that it is good. The Barang [Westerners] don't know how.'

Following the 16 June TV broadcast of the 15 June meeting, there were announcements that the provinces involved in the secessionist autonomous zone had renounced that project. On the morning of 17 June Sihanouk's request to Chakrapong, Sin Song, and Bou Thang to return to Phnom Penh was broadcast, and at 11:30 on the same day a meeting of Sihanouk with Hun Sen, Sin Song, and Chakrapong to discuss the new coalition government was broadcast and televised. Forgiveness for the rebels was immediate.

A piquant question is: who gets credit for ending autonomy — Hun Sen or Sihanouk? If, as I believe, the plot was to some extent a Sihanouk manoeuvre, one purpose, after stirring up trouble and putting pressure on UNTAC and the CPP, would have been for Sihanouk to gain charismatic credit for terminating the threat to national unity. Hun Sen would seem to have preempted that by ignoring the Assembly meeting in the palace and flying off to Kompong Cham, after which the autonomous zone collapsed. Did Hun Sen spoil Sihanouk's plan? Is Hun Sen showing open rivalry? If so, it will not be forgiven.

Hun Sen may be in danger, not only as the leader of a party hated by FUNCINPEC, but as an orator who can compete with Sihanouk and Ranariddh on an election platform or on TV. It must be doubly galling to the princes because Hun Sen is from a poor family background, with little formal education.
In the broadcast of the meeting of Sihanouk, Chakrapong, Sin Song, and Hun Sen the formula for the new government was announced. There would be co-prime ministers, Ranariddh and Hun Sen, and ministries would be apportioned equally between the two major parties, with fewer ministries for the BLDP, and perhaps one for Moulinaka. An interesting detail was Hun Sen’s insistence that the new government should be approved by a two-thirds majority vote, not a simple majority, as is usual for votes of confidence. There seemed to be evidence here of the possible Hun Sen-Sihanouk tension. Hun Sen could be heard on television prompting Sihanouk when the latter described the proposal. Sihanouk said that although he had been given full power, he did want to use it, and he would not object if Hun Sen’s proposal for a two-thirds vote was accepted by the Assembly, as it later was. It was clear, however, that Sihanouk would have preferred a simple majority on this question. Hun Sen insisted on entrenching the principle of a two-thirds majority from the beginning, to prevent the ejection of his party from the government by a coalition of FUNCINPEC and BLDP.

By 16 June it seemed that all Khmer factions had in fact rejected the work of UNTAC. First the Khmer Rouge rejected them in advance. Then CPP rejected the election results as partly dishonest, and Sihanouk made remarks in support of their position. Then, Sihanouk, by totally ignoring the election, and calling UNTAC ‘imperialist’ and ‘colonialist’, also disavowed the election. The only faction to firmly support the election results was FUNCINPEC, but in the opening of the Constituent Assembly Ranariddh proposed that Sihanouk be declared chief of state without a break since before 1970, which partly negated the election by preempting part of the constitution-drafting process, and Ranariddh has acceded to Sihanouk’s request to cooperate in the coalition which negates the election.

The government

The composition of the ‘Provisional National Government’ was announced on 2 July. The guiding principle in its formation was that each of the two major parties should have equal representation on the whole, and at all levels, in each ministry. In fact, of the 65 members of the government, 32 are CPP and 29 FUNCINPEC, but the equality of the latter has been maintained by giving two ministries, Energy
and Public Works, to Ing Kiet who is also a minister of State. Ing Kiet’s accumulation of functions illustrates the very shallow depth of FUNCINPEC’s talent pool, which has forced them, as ‘victors’ to allow a formal majority to CPP in government personnel. Four positions are held by Son Sann’s BLDP and one by Moulinaka.

Another function of a bloated government was to give the maximum number of persons a chance at ministerial prestige, and thus coopt as many potentially influential persons as possible. This was clear in Sihanouk’s post-election discussions with party leaders, and fits well with his traditional governing style — to include as many mutually inimical figures as possible to facilitate his rule by playing them against one another.

There were 28 ministries, in addition to co-presidents, vice presidents, ‘ministers of state’, and ministers and vice ministers in the ‘cabinet of the president’, altogether eleven persons. Indeed two more (for a total of four) vice-ministers in the presidential cabinet were added between the issuance of a document entitled ‘Structure of the Provisional National Government’ on 2 July, and publication of the list in Phnom Penh Post (2[4], 2-15 July 1993). This is considerably more than in previous governments under any regime, and there was even a proposal to expand the number of ministries to 34. PRK governments kept ministerial portfolios below twenty, and Sangkum governments in the 1960s were constitutionally limited to sixteen portfolios. A draft constitution which was unofficially circulated in Phnom Penh in September 1993 provided a limit of twenty members in the Council of Ministers, but in the final constitution no limit was imposed.

The new government was headed by co-presidents Norodom Ranariddh and Hun Sen, with co-vice-presidents Ung Phan and Keat Chhon. Keat Chhon is a highly qualified engineer whose own political history runs from Sihanouk’s pre-1970 Sangkum through Lon Nol’s Republic, with some time as a DK supporter before joining SOC. Ung Phan has also moved around; until arrested for attempting to form a new political party in 1989, he was a ministerial-level official of the PRK.

Two of the three ministers of state were also returnees who were already well known in their fields before 1970. Ing Kieth of FUNCINPEC is another engineer and Van Molyvann, who is listed as a CPP representative, is an architect. Ing Kieth also heads two ministries, Energy and Public Works,
apparently because his qualifications were so much superior to those of anyone else. The third minister of state was Hor Namhong, last foreign minister of SOC, who also has a background of Sihanoukist and then DK support before 1979. Thirty-seven of the 65 members of the government, fourteen from FUNCINPEC, nineteen from CPP, the three from BLDP and Moulinaka’s minister of Veterans’ Affairs, were chosen from outside the elected members of the Assembly, which is in conformity with previous Cambodian practice before 1975.

Only two of the CPP nominees from outside the Assembly were among the candidates who resigned just after the election. They are Sin Sen, number 5 on the Phnom Penh list, who was then deputy minister of Security, the position which he was given in the new government, and Chhay Than, number 4 on the Takeo list, who was then minister of Finance, and is now deputy minister of Veterans’ Affairs. Among the other non-parliamentary CPP members of the government at least twelve are persons with special technical qualifications or experience in PRK/SOC administration at ministerial level. The CPP is still pursuing the policy which influenced their choice of assembly members, to bring in as many technically and administratively qualified persons as possible.

Equally interesting is that fifteen of the CPP members of government were once listed by FUNCINPEC as members of the ‘Hun Sen Clan’, while only four were called ‘Chea Sim Clan’ by the same source; and none of the old politicians among CPP Assembly members, or alleged high-level Chea Sim stalwarts (Chea Sim, Chea Soth, Heng Samrin, Say Chhum, Sar Kheng, Math Ly, Nay Pena, Men Sam An), are in the government. The remaining ten CPP members of the government were not listed in FUNCINPEC’s 1993 Realités cambodiennes analysis. Like the choice of Assembly members, the composition of the government signals a decline in the Chea Sim faction in favour of the more intellectual and technically qualified followers of Hun Sen. Although this becomes more speculative, it also seems that since it was obviously necessary to give a few ministerial spots to Chea Sim men, the CPP leadership, guided by Hun Sen, tried to keep them in posts which have little political clout. Three of the four identifiable Chea Sim men are Deputy Minister of Tourism Sam Prum Monea, So Khun as minister of Transport, and Tram Eav Tek as deputy minister of Public Works, who are all carrying on in posts requiring some technical expertise, such as they held under SOC, but which are not of major political importance. The only reputed Chea Sim man in a politically powerful position
in the new government is Sin Sen, one of four deputy ministers of Interior and Public Security, precisely the position he already held under SOC.

Given these 'numbers', analyses which continue to characterize Chea Sim as the dominant figure in the CPP seem eccentric. An example is David Chandler's description of the CPP as '...divided into supporters of Chea Sim, the party's strongman...and those who support...Hun Sen' (Chandler 1993:7-8, italics added). Chandler also says: 'Unfortunately, the major parties contesting the election offered the voters a replay of earlier times...Sihanouk (FUNCINPEC) and Chea Sim (PPC [CPP]) were known political quantities...'. This suggests that the election was a contest between old generations. Yet, during the election Chea Sim was very nearly invisible, while Hun Sen vigorously led the CPP campaign. There was a suggestion of 'replay' — a certain parallel between Hun Sen in 1993 and Son Ngoc Thanh in the 1950s who then could challenge Sihanouk as an orator on equal terms, as Hun Sen has proved capable of doing now.⁶⁷ If there has been a generational split in the Cambodian parties (FUNCINPEC, CPP, and BLDP), as Chandler suggests, power within the CPP seems effectively to have passed from Chea Sim's group to that of Hun Sen (Chandler 1993:7).⁶⁸

Chandler's analysis, in a disconcerting way, reflects Stephen Heder's disparaging treatment of Hun Sen in comparison to Chea Sim, as seen through the eyes of disgruntled old Khmer Rouge (Heder 1990a,b). Now, however, Heder (1993) has implicitly disavowed his earlier analysis, holding that there is no significant factional division within the CPP.⁶⁹

Three ministers from the BLDP, Keat Sokun in Youth and Sports, Thach Reng in Rural Development, and Say Bory in Relations with Parliament, were candidates in the election, but not high enough on the lists to win seats in the Assembly. Keat Sokun spent 1980-1992 in Australia; and Thach Reng spent several years in the US following the end of the war in 1975.⁷⁰ Since, in addition to Son Sann who became deputy president of the Assembly, at least three of the BLDP Assembly members, Son Soubert, Ieng Mouly, and Pen Thol, have equivalent paper qualifications, BLDP may have taken advantage of the opening of ministries to persons outside the Assembly to increase their numbers within the state apparatus, but the choices may also reflect intra-party tensions which burst into public view between Son Sann and Ieng Mouly just before the election.
The Khmer Rouge

One of the ostensible purposes of the Paris Accord, to neutralize the Khmer Rouge by disarming them and bringing them into the electoral process, was unsuccessful. The Khmer Rouge refused to disarm, or to allow UNTAC inspection of their territory, and they denounced the election.

When the election was over, however, they loudly accepted the results, showing which had been their favourite party. For a few weeks it appeared that they might succeed in their goal of getting into the new government without having disarmed or faced the voters, because Sihanouk continued to speak of reconciliation with them, and FUNCINPEC policy had always been reconciliation, in contrast to Hun Sen who said that after his party won they would proceed to destroy the Khmer Rouge on the battlefield.

Because of this background, the sudden, and apparently very successful, offensive of the new combined army against Khmer Rouge strongholds which began in mid August, even though preceded by warnings from Ranariddh, was a surprise.  

This may mean that Ranariddh has on this question acceded to Hun Sen’s policy, and that together they may finally succeed in ending the ‘Khmer Rouge problem’, at least in its present form. The military successes, now reportedly followed by numerous desertions by the Khmer Rouge rank and file, demonstrate how much the Khmer rouge depended on foreign support. This will not, however, end the threat of radical insurgence if the new government continues a policy which favours the wealthy urban population over the countryside.

The joint offensive against the Khmer Rouge is also a direct threat to Sihanouk, who was counting on using them in his manoeuvres for personal power. Sihanouk’s manoeuvres since the election indicate that, as in the 1960s, he has no respect for constitutional regularities, and will not hesitate to subvert the constitutional process to achieve his goal of near absolute power. His traditional political technique is to build as large a coalition as possible from incompatible elements, for the more contesting parties in his coalition, the easier it is for him to manipulate them. The two-party coalition which he proposed on 3 June was hardly sufficient for his needs, and he probably intended from the beginning to dissolve it on the slightest excuse, in order to confuse public opinion and make possible a wider coalition giving him greater authority. One
of the purposes behind the 'secession' would have been to multiply the factions and create tension among them which only he could control. It is likely that henceforth it will be Sihanouk who will persist in including the Khmer Rouge, if they survive the unexpected onslaught recently launched by the coalition of FUNCINPEC, the CPP, and the BLPD (see Thion 1993, and forthcoming).

The constitution and the reorganized Royal Government

The constitution was drafted by a commission consisting of thirteen members, eight substitute members, four experts, and the minister for Relations with Parliament. It was presided by the president of the Constituent Assembly, Son Sann or his vice-president, Chea Sim. Of 24 members, besides the presiding officers, whom I can identify, ten were CPP, ten were FUNCINPEC, and four were BLPD. Fifteen were ministers or deputy ministers; and nineteen were elected members of the Assembly.

None of the old generation of politicians from the CPP, or from any party for that matter, was included except Son Sann, and Chea Sim, potentially, in his capacity as deputy presiding officer, because he is vice-president of the Assembly. The commission’s vice-president was Minister of Justice Chem Snguon, and the secretary (rapporteur as a more precise translation) was FUNCINPEC’s Tao Seng Huor, deputy minister for the Environment. Most of them are from the groups I identified above as intellectuals or professionals; and the shrill objections from certain NGOs in Phnom Penh that the constitution was being written in secret by irresponsible politicians seem to have been misplaced. It seems to me that they are a generally non-Sihanoukist group.

After some indecision, as to whether Cambodia would have a 'chief of state' or a king, the decision was made for monarchy. The reason for indecision, or for suggesting return to monarchy at all, which is certainly not the popular choice among the urban educated who dominate Assembly and government, is the Sihanouk problem. All parties are on record as considering that Sihanouk must occupy a leading position, if only ceremonial. Probably most, even within FUNCINPEC, want his role to be only ceremonial, not that of a powerful executive.

Even if, however, as I believe, most of the leaders of all the political parties would like to see Sihanouk remain in Pyongyang without any input into domestic politics, the opportunistic political culture of Cambodia prevents any
of them from saying this. If anyone should suggest that Sihanouk be kept out, all the others, even if they agreed, would pounce on him with accusations of treason, or some equally serious offence. They are all mesmerized too by the belief that the 'people', especially the rural people, are devoted to Sihanouk, and that a reputation as anti-Sihanouklist would destroy whatever popular support they enjoy.

On the one hand, given Sihanouk’s propensities, the decision for monarchy may be good for Cambodia, for the country’s history during the 1940s-60s shows that in Cambodia it has been easier to draft a constitution depriving a king of real power than to limit the role of chief of state. On the other hand, Sihanouk probably has such a short time left to live that he could not do much damage as chief of state, while a monarchical constitution leaves the succession problem as a perennial source of conflict. Perhaps there was fear that even in a brief term as chief of state Sihanouk would make a new deal with the Khmer Rouge just when the three other main factions had agreed to destroy the Khmer Rouge, and had the ability to do so.

If monarchy is taken seriously as the long-term structure of Cambodia’s government, rather than perhaps limited to Sihanouk’s lifetime, succession conflicts will be inevitable, probably not between Norodoms and Sisowaths as before 1975, but among Norodom factions. At least four potential competitors may be identified among current players: Ranariddh; Chakrapong; the sons of Monique; and Sihanouk’s half-siblings, children of King Suramarit, of whom FUNCINPEC’s Norodom Sirivudh, the new minister of Foreign Affairs, is the most prominent.

The new constitution has made Cambodia a monarchy again, with Sihanouk as king. In contrast to the old monarchical constitution, the king’s power is very limited; this is so specific that it must mean there was significant opposition to restoring the monarchy. Article 7 says that the king occupies the throne, but does not hold power, and this is repeated in Article 17 which insists that this limitation ‘absolutely cannot be amended’. Vastly different from the old monarchical constitution, according to which the constitution was ‘granted’ by the king, Articles 135-138 of the new charter make it clear that the constitution and parliament exist before the king and that he is chosen by them.

The monarchy is elective. The king may not choose his successor. That task is given to the Royal Council of the Throne, consisting of the president of the National Assembly, who in the absence of a king becomes head of state; the
prime minister; the supreme monks of both Buddhist orders; and the first and second vice-presidents of the National Assembly. They must choose a new king from among the descendants, aged at least 30, of former kings 'Ang Duong, or Norodom, or Sisowath', a redundant formulation, since the latter two were sons of Ang Duong, Sihanouk's great-great grandfather, through both his father and his mother.

The wife of the reigning king shall be given the title Preah Mohesei. This is not 'queen'. According to Adhémard Leclère, that title was for the second royal consort of a king, whereas rules established by King Ang Duong do not include that title at all, and give the consort in question a quite different title. Of course, the wife of the now reigning king is not a princess by birth, and according to the traditional rules not entitled to such a high title at all (Bitard 1957:563-80).

The legislative body is the 120-member Assembly chosen in the May election, which, after promulgation of the constitution, has become the 'National Assembly', with a mandate for five years. The legislature is unicameral, like that of the PRK, but in contrast to the pre-1970 constitution and that of the Khmer Republic, both of which had partly appointed upper houses.

The government consists of a prime minister chosen from among the elected deputies of the winning party. The other ministers, whose numbers are not limited, do not have to be members of the Assembly, but they may not be civil servants, businessmen, or industrialists, and they must be members of political parties represented in parliament (Article 100).

The last stipulation, together with the very large number of articles setting out social, medical, and educational services which the state must provide, reflects the socialist ideals of the PRK, which must seem attractive to some members of the other parties too, in spite of the articles of the constitution which stress that Cambodia is to follow a market economic system. Indeed, to support the social welfare provisions of the constitution, which are far more extensive and detailed than in any previous Cambodian constitution, and, if implemented, would make Cambodia a true 'welfare state', the free market economy will have to be tightly supervised and subjected to heavy taxation, after western European, not US or Thai models.

Provincial and lower level administration remains unchanged, and 'shall be administered in accordance with conditions set in an organizational law', which means that the PRK/SOC administrative structure is left in place (Articles 126-
27). Apparently FUNCINPEC, realized the impossibility of changing that, either in form or personnel, at the present time.

The Provisional Government established following the elections has been greatly reorganized in the new ‘Royal Government of Cambodia’ created on 29 October 1993 (Phnom Penh Post No. 23 5–18 November 1993). Near equality between the two large parties has been maintained, but some ministries have been combined; the total number of personnel has decreased from 65 to 51, of whom nine were still to be appointed, and the changes in structure and personnel reflect jockeying both among the parties, and between the two apparent factions of the CPP. Twenty-nine members of the Provisional Government, twelve CPP, fifteen FUNCINPEC, and one each from BLDP and Moulinaka, were not kept on in the Royal Government, which has eight new faces: four CPP, three FUNCINPEC, and the new secretary of state for religious affairs who is listed without party affiliation. Of the nine to be appointed, at least five will be deputies to CPP figures, and thus presumably from FUNCINPEC. Probably a tenth, deputy to CPP’s Chea Chanto, secretary of state for plan, will also be appointed from FUNCINPEC, although this was not mentioned in the local press.

The new line-up shows some gain for the Chea Sim group within the CPP. Chea Sim himself has moved up from vice-president of the National Assembly to president, displacing Son Sann, whose son Son Soubert is second vice-president, with a FUNCINPEC man as first vice-president. A presumed protegé of Chea Sim, Sar Kheng, has been brought into the government as a deputy prime minister and minister of the Interior, but he may be balanced there by Im Chhun Lim of the Hun Sen group, a historian by training, an SOC ideologue, and a former member of the Supreme National Council.

In Defence, however, the CPP side is represented by two of the youngest generals, Tea Banh and Chay Saing Yun, who were not listed in FUNCINPEC’s analysis of ‘clans’, but who are probably closer to Hun Sen than to Chea Sim. Of the twelve CPP members of the Provisional Government dropped from the Royal Government, six were of the Hun Sen group and three Chea Sim men.

Still, of twenty-four CPP members of the government, eleven are considered of the Hun Sen group, with only two certain Chea Sim followers, while ten were not classified as to ‘clan’ in the FUNCINPEC analysis. Most of them, however, because of their relative youth or intellectual background, may be presumed closer to Hun Sen than to Chea Sim.
The first report of the Assembly debate on formation of the new government indicated that observers should in the future pay as much attention to FUNCINPEC factions as to those within the CPP. Ranariddh complained that not all FUNCINPEC members voted for his proposals, and some of the disagreement concerned support for BLDP candidates, whose entry into the government was decided by horse-trading between the two big parties. There is certainly a faction within FUNCINPEC which is lukewarm toward monarchy, especially of the Sihanouk variety, and this faction is probably headed by Sam Ralngsy, one of their brightest young stars.

Contrary to anti-PRK/CPP prognoses over the past years, a FUNCINPEC-BLDP alliance is not a foregone conclusion, and younger, educated BLDP persons may find more congenial colleagues among the new CPP elite.

When the new regime is shaken out, it would not be surprising to see a new alignment opposing a group of technocrats and intellectuals, mostly of the younger generation from all three parties, and in general non-royalist, to old CPP party stalwarts, royalists and opportunists.

Notes

1 'Peoples Republic of Kampuchea' (PRK) is the official English-language name from 1979 to 1989 when it was changed to 'State of Cambodia' (SOC). According to the new constitution, the official name is 'Cambodia' or 'Kingdom of Cambodia'.

2 On the pertinence of 'contra' in this connection see Vickery (1988a).

3 As I recall, when in 1988 the Australian government detached a foreign service officer to supervise Australian aid programs in Cambodia, it was assumed by many that she was intended as a sort of unofficial consul. Unfortunately, that was not true. The term 'Western' here, although awkward, is used in a conventional political, not geographical, sense.

4 The change in US policy toward recognition of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea in the UN in 1990 was mainly window-dressing, and to head off domestic criticism of US policy.


6 *Bangkok Post* 12 August 1991, 'Outlook' section, p.29 shows a picture of a seven-person group at a party 'recently hosted' by Foreign Minister Arsa Sarasin, and including, besides the foreign minister and SiChan Siv, the permanent secretary of the Foreign Affairs Ministry, Vittaya Vejjajiva; director-general of the Foreign Ministry's Information Department, Saktip Krairiksh; and 'US Minister's counsellor', Victor Tomseth. On SiChan Siv, see Vickery (1989:57, n.65). In 1985 SiChan Siv identified himself as 'KPNLF Representative to the United Nations'.

7 'Moves made to patch up rift within Cambodian faction', *Bangkok Post* 5 September 1991: 'In an attempt to patch up long-standing differences, the military arm of the [KPNLF]... asked to be represented in the Cambodian Supreme National Council'; General Sak Sutsakhan's memorandum 'said reconciliation within the KPNLF could occur' in that way.

8 Such elections are 'demonstration elections', as analyzed by Herman and Brodhead (1984).

9 This and the following three paragraphs were first published in Vickery (1989:55).

10 This was first stated explicitly by Hun Sen in a report of the latest discussions in Jakarta and Paris, broadcast in Phnom Penh during the week of 20-27 November 1988, and printed for distribution by the PRK authorities. It was also summarized in *Pracheachon*, the newspaper of the Peoples Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea, No. 325, 25 November 1988.

11 The Australian paper is: *Cambodia: an Australian Peace Proposal*, Working Papers prepared for the Informal Meeting on Cambodia, Jakarta, 26-28 February 1990, Canberra, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, February 1990. In recompense Solarz recommended Australian Foreign Affairs Minister Gareth Evans for the Nobel Peace Prize, however strange it may seem that a peace plan designed to force the Khmer Rouge back into the Cambodian government should qualify its author for that honour. (But one recalls the devaluation of the Nobel Prize when it was given to Henry Kissinger.)

12 'Proposed Structure for the Agreements on a Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodia Conflict', draft (this was not a UN document).

13 According to Professor Reginald Austin, during a visit to the Australian National University, on 4 November 1993, the transliterations for the lists of candidates had been generated by computer.

14 An amusing result was that several leaders of the anti-SOC parties, notably Son Sann, were excluded from the ranks of Cambodian persons by virtue of having been born in the Khmer-populated areas of southern Vietnam, until UNTAC made a special dispensation for them.


16 AFP [Sheri Prasso], 'Pen Sovan's return may result in instability', *New Straits Times* (Kuala Lumpur) 10 February 1992.

17 For some of these low estimates (8-10,000), see Klintworth (1993:122).
18 On the UNTAC Information and Education Component (UNTAC 12), see below.

19 Raphael Pura, ‘Former Refugee From Cambodia Returns in Bid to Lead Country’, Asian Wall Street Journal 2 November 1992. The leader's name was Kethavy Kim, and his party the Republic Democracy Party. Another Cambodian Bush activist who returned to found a party was Ted Ngoy.

20 One original Democrat still active is Son Sann, who tacitly acknowledged that party's popularity by taking its old logo, a three-headed elephant, as an element in the logo of his BLDP. There was thus possible confusion for unsophisticated voters between the Democrats, who used that party's traditional symbols, and the BLDP.

21 The two institutes were the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), affiliated with the American parties, and funded in Cambodia mainly by USAID. In Cambodia they were involved in election monitoring, educating in campaign techniques, party organizing etc., but among the experts brought by IRI was Raul Garcia Prieto, vice-president of the El Salvadoran ARENA Party, long identified (and now confirmed by an UN Truth Commission) as mainly responsible for the death squads and massacres in El Salvador during the civil war.

22 'KR has "upped ante" ahead of elections', The Nation 17 May 1993. Evans was both predicting a CPP win, and indicating his distaste for it, with a hint of blackmail — vote for the CPP and the Khmer Rouge will attack.

23 Details from their press conference in Phnom Penh, 19 May 1993.

24 This analysis, which was anonymous, bore the inimitable literary style of Stephen Hedera. See below for his post-election analysis. The employment of Christine Alfons Norodom was one of the grosser manifestations of UNTAC’s version of neutrality.

25 Including In Tam, Chak Saroeun, both among the founders of FUNCINPEC, Sak Sutsakhan, Cheng Heng, Buor Hell, a cousin of Sihanouk, and even Son Sann, whose party was expected to do much better than the ten seats they received.

26 Observers of Cambodian affairs should not be misled by the participation of Son Sann’s faction (then KPNL but in the election divided between his own BLDP and Sak Sutsakhan’s LDP) alongside FUNCINPEC in the tripartite Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea. The BLDP and LDP, in ideology and personnel, and quite different from FUNCINPEC, and foreign backers hoping for a coalition of these two non-communist groups may be disappointed.

27 In 1963, as governor of Takeo, In Tam had been involved in the treacherous arrest, which led to execution, of Preap In, a former Democrat and Son Ngoc Thanh activist. See Chandler (1991:133–34).

28 Such a result would have deviated even more from the total popular vote, according to which FUNCINPEC would have rated 54 seats, the CPP 45, BLDP 5, and the rest going to several small parties.
29 It is not certain they wanted too strong a showing by FUNCINPEC either. The US did not want a dominant Sihanouk, and might have preferred a strong bloc of the former KPNLF parties, with support from FUNCINPEC and the emigre parties.

30 At Hun Sen's insistence, the assembly adopted a two-thirds rule for confirmation of the government.

31 This seems to have been what the Americans had in mind. Raoul Jenner, both in a public meeting in Phnom Penh and in print, quoted someone whom he identified as a 'senior American UNTAC official', and whose identity was transparent in Phnom Penh, as saying: 'We can do without Sihanouk; we can do without the CPP; we have 90 million dollars to keep the officials and soldiers of SOC and to buy the CPP deputies necessary to get a 2/3 majority and put in place the coalition of our choice' (Jennar, 'Cambodian Chronicles' X, European Far Eastern Research Centre, Jodoigne, Belgium, 29 June 1993).

32 These two parties, and the parent organization KPNLF, are led by supporters of the Khmer Republic in 1975.

33 There were also accusations of prejudicial behaviour by election personnel working for UNTAC, but unfortunately these were undocumented and anecdotal. Now, however, it appears that a person directly involved in election work has provided written testimony, which will be cited in a forthcoming publication by an author who at present wishes to remain anonymous. Depending on the details, and whether similar testimony is encouraged from others, UNTAC may retrospectively face embarrassment.

34 Carney was among the State Department officers active on the Thai-Cambodian border when the US was involved in setting up the Khmer Rouge again after their debacle in 1978–79, and Heder, since 1980, has been active in anti-Phnom Penh propaganda — in particular, from the shelter of the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights and Amnesty International, unloading reports which would not have withstood criticism if presented as journalism or academic studies (see Vickers 1988b:108–116; 1987/1990).

35 This, and further references below to radio and television broadcasts, are based on my own listening and recordings.


37 Heder's remarks were in an informal conversation with myself and two other persons on 1 June 1993. Possibly Heder had been responsible for convincing UNTAC of a Khmer Rouge threat, and for the analysis of increased Khmer Rouge capability quoted by Akashi in May (see above, p. 12), which with hindsight seems so peculiar (he wished to maintain that his reporting had been accurate).

38 Research should be undertaken to determine whether other experienced observers had similar impressions in other provinces.

39 This was on 4 June when he dropped his first proposal to establish a FUNCINPEC-CPP coalition, and blamed his son Ranariddh for lack of enthusiasm (see below).
The following is a summarized paraphrase, not an exact translation, although I have kept closely to Sihanouk's language.

His remark that the Khmer Rouge 'do not agree' is an interesting reflection on his attitude toward them. If they had agreed, would he have brought them in? Incidentally, his original proposal did not include BLDP or Moulinaka.

The long hesitation here is because he was on the point of a serious slip of the tongue. The party which was rumoured to be receiving such foreign, American, aid and encouragement was his own son's FUNCINPEC.

This is apparently a reference to Ranariddh.

It is not certain to whom Sihanouk was referring. It sounds like someone from BLDP, or even non-royalist members of FUNCINPEC like Sam Raingsy.

Daun chi are the old ladies who shave their heads, dress in white, and take religious vows; achar are lay religious men who take care of temples and ceremonies. Referring to them as authorities on politics is typical of Sihanouk demagoguery.

The Congresses were totally stage-managed; and elections under Sihanouk were mostly single-party, single-candidate.

In his speeches Sihanouk habitually addressed the Cambodian public as his 'children'.

At a seminar at the Australian National University on 4 November 1993, Professor Reginald Austin, who headed the UNTAC Election Component, informed us that all but one of those who resigned sent identical letters saying they 'had too much work at the office'. The exception complained of ill health. Heder's analysis was a confidential UNTAC document entitled 'CPP Seccession, Resignations from the Assembly and Intimidation of UNTAC: Background and Theories', dated 13 June 1993, by UNTAC 12 'Deputy Director (Analysis) Stephen Heder'.

This, interestingly, is the line of the pro-Khmer Rouge newspaper, Oudomkati Khmer ('Khmer ideal'), which on the front page of its issue of 22 June published a map-cartoon showing UNTAC in cooperation with the Khmer Rouge 'pulling' the affected provinces back from a Vietnamese magnet.

'Governor' is more precisely chairman of the Provincial Peoples Committee.

Hun Neng is Hun Sen's brother, and is said to be corrupt and unpopular. Some people blamed the CPP loss in Kompong Cham on his unpopularity.

Heder, incidentally, put a question mark after Keo San's name and classed him among the 'throw-aways'. My information about his background came from a chance social meeting in the company of mutual friends.

The FUNCINPEC analysis is in 'La nomenclatura communiste cambodgienne', Réalités cambodgiennes, No. 2, (Phnom Penh), Mars 1993. See further below.

The remaining governors were either not on the lists of candidates, or too far down to be relevant to the discussion, or in the single-member Sihanoukville which CPP lost to FUNCINPEC.
55. In the short biographical sketches of the CPP deputies in the CPP newspaper Prachachon, No. 23 (1373), 20 June 1993, no military titles at all are included.

56. The FUNCINPEC analysis is in Reaaltés cambodiennes, No. 2, March 1993. I am not considering others listed in that source who were too far down the lists to have been in the running at all. Heder did not classify those dropped by 'clan', and one of his new messages is that there is no such serious split in the CPP, in contrast to what he was writing three years ago (see Heder 1990a,b; Vickery 1991). Among those chosen by the CPP as deputies, however, Heder called Sar Kheng, Say Chhum and Mat Ly 'Chea Sim Stalwarts', while assigning none to Hun Sen, a clear piece of obfuscation. Besides those three, Samrith Pich, Men Sam An, Him Chhem, So Khun, Nay Pena, and Chea Sim himself are Assembly members who were listed by FUNCINPEC as 'Chea Sim Clan'. Since, at the time, both categorizations, for FUNCINPEC, were considered equally derogatory, we may assume that they were serious and involved careful examination of the associations of the persons involved. Of course, the very idea of factional rivalry within the CPP, which has certainly been exaggerated by their foreign enemies, is of uncertain validity.

57. This type of analysis shows that they expected to do badly — that is, win only half or less of the seats (and their prognosis was accurate) — in Banteay Meanchey (33 per cent), Kompong Speu (50 per cent), and Kandal (45 per cent); and expected no more than 60 per cent in Svay Rieng, where their three seats are 56 per cent of the total.

58. Norodom Sirivudh is son of Sihanouk's father, King Suramarit, by the second wife, not Queen Kossamak. There were at least three such offspring. Just over a month after Sihanouk's abdication in March 1955 in favour of his father, Suramarit, the Journal Officiel published Kret (decree) 48 PR, dated 21 April 1955, granting monthly allowances 'to our children Their Royal Highnesses Norodom Vachearh (princess), Sirivudh, and Preyaasophon (probably princess)'.

For details on Sam Raingjay's father Sam Sary, see Chandler (1991:77, 92, 99-100); Chandler, however, is mistaken about thipodei, which means 'power', not 'democracy'.

59. Ranariddh hardly ever lived in Cambodia since adolescence. In the early 1960s he was already in France for education, returning once or twice a year for well-publicized family visits.

60. In his article (see Far Eastern Economic Review 8 July 1993), Nate Thayer said that about 40 of FUNCINPEC's 58 assembly members were of this type. In the last week of June 1993 I was able to obtain 38 CVs from the FUNCINPEC office in Phnom Penh (they said the rest had not been compiled), including those of Ing Keat, Pou Sothirak, Ung Phan and Kann Man, and found that over 30 of them were of insignificant background.

61. The trial was reported in Kong tap padiwat ('revolutionary army'), No. 7, June 1980; see Vickery (1986:119).

62. This information is from persons who were among the guests at the opening ceremony. They also reported that the show of hands for Sihanouk as chief of state since 1970 was not unanimous, but were unable to identify the abstainers.

63. This was an amusing jibe at Son Sann, which showed Sihanouk's elephantine memory for slights. In 1946 Son Sann was a member of the Democrat Party which had won that Constituent Assembly election, and they indeed revised the constitutional draft proposed by the French.
The latter would have been more favourable to Sihanouk, while the Democrats’ draft, which was, with a few modifications, accepted, diminished his authority.

The first draft proposed by the French (by a ‘Franco-Khmer’ commission) was distinctly conservative. Universal suffrage was rejected; the National Assembly was to be elected by provincial councillors, themselves elected by communal councillors directly elected only at that low level. Legislative power rested with the king, and the monarchy was to be hereditary in descent from Sihanouk.

The Assembly, or perhaps really its Democrat Party majority, prepared another draft incorporating direct election of the National Assembly, which would have legislative powers, and this was the constitution which was adopted. Succession to the throne was vested in the descendants of King Ang Duong, Sihanouk’s great-great grandfather, leaving the way open for all of Sihanouk’s royal rivals. The contemporary (1946) press does not support David Chandler’s interpretation in The Tragedy of Cambodian History (1991:29), that the democratic modifications to the French draft were proposed by Sihanouk.

64 Constitution du Royaume du Cambodge, Article 79 (later amended to Article 96).

65 Among his works are the theatre between the Floating and Cambodiana hotels and the Olympic Stadium.

66 These are the ones known to me at the time of writing. I have no knowledge of the background of Sum Manith in the Cabinet of the President, Heng Vong Bunchhat, deputy minister of Higher Education, Chhum Eam, deputy minister of Religion, Var Huot, minister of Commerce, or Nouth Narang, minister of Fine Arts. Nevertheless, Nouth Narang has published a book, Angkor silencieux, in France, which suggests competence in his field. Heng Vong Bunchhat, deputy minister of Higher Education, was trained in law before 1975, and was in the Liberal Democratic Party of Sak Sutsakhan, an offshoot of Son Sann’s Khmer Peoples National Liberation Front, until he joined the CPP following the election. In December 1993 I was informed that he had moved again, to FUNCINPEC.

67 Having written a book with a large selection on the 1950s (Chandler 1991: chapters 2,3), Chandler should have been more sensitive to this replay.

68 Chandler (ibid.) would seem to have been mistaken in suggesting that there was a ‘lack of mechanisms, and perhaps also the inclination, to transfer power from one generation to the next’.

69 Parallel to Heder’s treatment is Chandler’s: ‘among many foreign observers, and urban Khmer, Hun Sen is thought to represent a more liberal and open-minded segment of the party, but evidence for this is hard to find in his recent speeches and in his behavior in the aftermath of the PFC’s recent defeat .... The dynamics of the Chea Sim–Hun Sen rivalry are concealed from view, and papered over in public .... What is certain is that Chea Sim has spent at least forty years in the Cambodian Communist movement, while Hun Sen, at least twenty-five years Chea Sim’s junior, joined the Khmer Rouge as a teenager in 1970 or shortly before’.

This, at least, should be one good reason for Hun Sen to appear more attractive to foreign observers, and urban Khmer’, although apparently not to the Heder–Chandler school of Cambodia analysis. See Heder (1990a,b, 1993) and Vickery (1991).
Keat Sokun’s background was reported in Bangkok Post 28 September 1993 (‘Inside Indochina’, p.4).

This has been reported in detail in the Bangkok Post and The Nation (Bangkok), during August–December 1993.

The prediction made here, in October 1993, seems to be coming true: see ‘Ranariddh ready for constitution revamp talks’, New Straits Times 7 December 1993, reporting that Ranariddh and Sihanouk are trying to find a constitutional way to include the Khmer Rouge in the government and at the same time marginalize Hun Sen.

The others, with party affiliation, in order of their official listing, were: Kan Man (F), Keat Chhon (C), Chhuor Leang Huot (C), Thau PengLeat (C), Sam Rangey (F), Siowath Sirirat (F), Son soubert (B), Som Chanbot (F), Un Ning (C), Loy Sim chheang (F), Cheam Yeap (F), Pol Ham (B), Pou Sothirak (F), Sar Sa-at (B), Ing Keat (F), Ouk Rabun (C), Ung Phon (C), Ek Samol (C), Say Bory (B), Chan Sokh (?), ChhonIem (C), Heng Vong Bunchhat (C), Khieu Rada (F).

The provision for the president of the National Assembly to become head of state in the absence of a king is taken over from the pre-1970 constitution.

The pre-1970 constitution merely stipulated that descendants of Ang Duong were eligible. I suspect that the new formulation is designed with certain specific princes in mind, but I am unable to understand who they might be.

As reported in Phnom Penh Post, the new government has 42 members, but the Khmer newspaper Reaksmei Kampuchea of 30 October reported that nine more state secretaries and deputy state secretaries remain to be appointed. The delay no doubt reflects intra- or inter-party rivalry. The ministries of Education and Higher Education of the Provisional Government have been recombined, as they were under the PRK/SOC in a Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport; Transportation has been merged with Public Works; Veterans Affairs is merged with Social Action; the Civil Service Ministry has been abolished; and the ministries of Industry and Mines, and Energy have been combined in the Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy, relieving Ing Kiet of one of his portfolios.

References


## APPENDIX

**Government personnel, July-November 1993**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provisional gov't, July 1993</th>
<th>Royal gov't, 29 October 1993</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presidents:</td>
<td>Prime ministers:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norodom Ranariddh* (F)</td>
<td>Norodom Ranariddh*, first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hun Sen* (C)</td>
<td>Hun Sen* (C) second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice-presidents:</td>
<td>Deputy prime ministers:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ung Phan* (F)</td>
<td>Norodom Sirivuddh* (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keat Chon* (C)</td>
<td>Sar Kheng* (C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabinet of the president:</td>
<td>Ministry of Council of Ministers:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veng Sereyvuth* (F)</td>
<td>Veng Sereyvuth* (F), Min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nou Kanan (F)</td>
<td>Sok An* (C), Min.</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Sum Manith (C)</td>
<td>Nou Kanan (F), Sec. State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretariat under Council of Ministers:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mok Mareth (C), Sec. State, Environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Sun Huot (F), Sec. State, Rural Dev't.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Say Bory (B), Sec. State, Rel. w/ Assembly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keat Sokum (B), Sec. State, Women’s Affairs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provisional gov’t, July 1993</th>
<th>Royal gov’t, 29 October 1993</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ministers of State:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ministers of State:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ing Kiet* (F)</td>
<td>Ing Kiet* (F)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hor Nam Hong† (C)</td>
<td>Keat Chhon* (C)</td>
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<td>Van Molyvann (C)</td>
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<td>Chem Snguon* (C)</td>
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<td>Sam Raingsy* (F)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thor Pen Leat* (C), Pres.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tioulong Somura* (F), Vice-</td>
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<td>Pres.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Ministries:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Defense:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Defence:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nor Ranariddh* (F)</td>
<td>Tea Banh* (C), Min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Tea Chamrath (F), Min.</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
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<td><strong>Interior:</strong></td>
</tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Im Chhun Lim**, Sec. State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Sin Sent† (C)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Provisional government
2. Royal government
### Appendix (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provisional govt, July 1993&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Royal govt, 29 October 1993&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foreign Affairs:</strong></td>
<td>For. Affairs Internat'l Cooperation:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Norodom Sirivudh* (F), Min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Uch Kim An (C)&lt;sup&gt;h&lt;/sup&gt;, Sec. State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Industry, Mines, Energy</td>
</tr>
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<td>Hul Lim† (C)&lt;sup&gt;h&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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Appendix (continued)

Notes:
1 Source: Phnom Penh Post 2-15 July 1993.
2 Source: Phnom Penh Post 5-18 November 1993.

Key to symbols used:
* = Assembly member
C/F/B = party affiliation:
   C = CPP; F = FUNCINPEC; B = BLDP
   (C)c = Chea Sim bloc
   (C)b = Hun Sen bloc
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