

NYT

Killing of 100 Vietnamese By Cambodians Reported

By HENRY KAMM

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TAKEO, Cambodia, April 17—About 100 Vietnamese civilians, including perhaps 30 children, were shot to death by Cambodian soldiers last night in a grade school where they were under detention, survivors said today at the scene of the slayings.

"Take us away or we will all die tonight," an old man pleaded with this correspondent.

The smell of death hung over the roofed but unwallled school building, where about 150 Vietnamese residents of this provincial capital 50 miles south of Pnompenh were herded together under detention four days ago.

Three bodies—of a man, a boy and a woman—lay under fiber mats at the edge of the pavilion. Four men who would not live until morning lay unattended, eyes vacant, flies crawling on their wounds.

Three groups of men, totaling 40 or 50, sat or lay in terror and pain, awaiting the worst. At least half were

wounded and all wore blood-stained clothing.

The small building offered little space for 150 men to live and die, and the dead touched those who survived.

Takeo, like the rest of the region on the frontier with Vietnam, is threatened by Vietcong and North Vietnamese invaders. Throughout the region, Vietnamese residents are being arrested. The purpose, according to the authorities, is to weed out those who help the Vietcong and to save the others from the hostile Cambodian population.

Women and children, who had been gathered up with the men earlier, are being released, but teen-age boys are not considered children by all jailers. Many died here last night.

The survivors said they had given no provocation and did not know what had caused the slayings. The tenor of remarks by soldiers on guard here indicated that they were a reprisal for a Vietcong attack Wednesday night.

Two days ago there were about 150 men under detention according to visitors who were here before and after the killings. Their accounts supported the testimony of the survivors that 100 were killed last night.

Today hundreds of bullet holes scarred the walls, roofs and latticework of the build-

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APPREHENSIVE SURVIVORS of the shootings at Takeo, Cambodia, under detention yesterday. The man in the foreground was motionless and many others had apparently lesser wounds. All are Vietnamese, and some told of the shootings, saying Cambodians slew 100.

Associated Press

New Killings in Cambodia Are Reported

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ing, and hundreds of spent cartridges littered the ground outside.

The Cambodian soldiers who milled about offered no contradiction of the survivors' account. "The others did it," a young soldier said, grinning. "They are back in town."

Like an Armed Camp

Takeo is like an armed camp. No civilians are seen about; they are probably hiding in their houses. The town is nervously girding for battle between the Cambodian Army and the Vietnamese Communists, who have grown bolder since the fall of the neutralist Chief of State, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, on March 18.

There was no fighting in Takeo last night, according to official sources, only the shooting of the Vietnamese prisoners. The night before, Vietcong raiders struck Takeo about 10 o'clock. The military spokesmen in Pnompenh said the raiders opened fire in the center of town, wounded some civilians and left six of their men dead.

The witnesses who survived the shooting last night gave their accounts in good French, indicative of their middle-class backgrounds. They spoke with in earshot of Cambodian soldiers, who glowered but neither interfered nor contradicted.

In the evening, they said, while the 150 detainees were huddled together, some children were allowed to come from home to bring the prisoners food that their women had prepared at about 4:30 P.M. A group of soldiers approached.

At point-blank range, according to the survivors, they opened fire into the exposed area that is used for outdoor classes.

Three times after the first salvo, they said, the soldiers came back and fired on the wounded and the dead. After the fourth assault a truck drove up and the dead were loaded onto it. Perhaps all on the truck were dead, the survivors said.

Chinese Rifles Used

The shooting was done with Chinese automatic rifles, one survivor said in a whisper. Pain from a wound in the lower part of his body made his voice barely audible. The spent cartridge cases lying about were from Chinese AK-47 automatic rifles, which most

of the Cambodian soldiers could be seen carrying.

The wounded lay amid those who had not been hurt, some covering their wounds with rags, others too weak to help themselves. Small mounds of stained clothing and sandals were scattered about, and there were pools on the floor and stains on the low walls.

The living, cowering, raised their hands, palms touching, in the Buddhist greeting. "Get a truck to take us to Pnompenh," one said, and the wish was echoed in the eyes of others.

A high security official in Pnompenh said later that he would do all he could to save those still living. But he said the telephone line to Takeo had been cut in the Vietcong raid. The road from Pnompenh is unsafe after dark.

Frightened of Soldiers

One of the badly wounded, with two bullets in his leg, was taken to a hospital in Pnompenh by Robert Anson, a correspondent of Time magazine.

Though the soldiers ignored the surviving prisoners, the prisoners watched the soldiers with fright. Even those who could still speak in normal tones lowered their voices and turned the other way when the soldiers seemed to be looking in their direction.

Meanwhile, bodies described by local residents and officials as those of Vietnameses continued to float down the Mekong River from a point below Pnompenh.

A military spokesman said that about 50 old men, women and children were drowned last

Saturday when a riverboat sank. But he said that the sinking did not explain the large number of dead who were floating down the river tied to one another in groups or with their hands tied.

'Blacklist' of Vietnamese

A suspicion is growing in Pnompenh that the dead — estimated to number at least 1,000 according to people living close to the river — may be Vietcong suspects rounded up in Pnompenh. A "blacklist" of Vietnamese is known to exist in the capital, many Vietnamese have disappeared and the large number of dead in the river seems to preclude the possibility of an execution in a locality smaller than Pnompenh.

A ferry that crossed the Mekong yesterday afternoon encountered five male bodies tied together with lengths of rattan at the legs. One also had his hands tied behind his back. Four additional bodies were seen floating separately or were washed ashore.

Bodies washed ashore are being pushed back into the river, a river pilot said.

Terror is mounting among the Vietnamese residents of the capital, estimated at 200,000. Reports have reached Pnompenh through reliable sources of massacres in the nearby village of Samrong Thom and Chruai Changver. Vietnamese women are said to be raped by Cambodian soldiers, even in daylight. Pillaging of Vietnamese property is said to be rampant.