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REPORT TO THE SUBCOMMITTEE
TO INVESTIGATE PROBLEMS
CONNECTED WITH
REFUGEES AND ESCAPEES
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
UNITED STATES SENATE

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Problems In The Khmer Republic
(Cambodia) Concerning War
Victims, Civilian Health, And
War-Related Casualties B-169832

Department of State

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BY THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL
OF THE UNITED STATES

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COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

B-169832

R. Dear Mr. Chairman:

In your letter dated July 7, 1971, you requested that we make an inquiry into problems in Cambodia concerning war victims, civilian health, and war-related casualties. This is our report on that inquiry.

In accordance with an understanding with your office, we have not followed our usual practice of submitting a draft report to the Department of State to obtain the Department's official comments. We have discussed, however, the general observations in our draft report with responsible U.S. officials in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and Washington, D.C., and have given consideration to their views where appropriate. We suggest that the lack of official agency comments on the matters included in our report be given due consideration in any use made of this report. It has been reviewed by agency officials for security classifications.

We believe that the contents of this report are of current interest to other committees and members of Congress, and, in view of public disclosures made of the substance of the report, we concurrently have made it available to other interested committees and agencies.

Sincerely yours,

Comptroller General
of the United States

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The Honorable Edward M. Kennedy, Chairman
Subcommittee to Investigate Problems Connected
with Refugees and Escapees
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate

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C o n t e n t s

	<u>Page</u>
DIGEST	1
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	5
Origin of the refugee problem	6
Map of Cambodia	8
2 POLICY CONCERNING WAR VICTIMS	9
U.S. policy concerning war victims in Cambodia	9
Cambodian Government policy toward civilian war victims	10
Functions of Cambodian Government agencies concerning war victim relief	12
3 NUMBERS OF REFUGEES AND WAR DAMAGE CLAIMS	14
Registered refugees	15
Registered war damage claims	16
4 LEVEL OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR WAR VICTIMS	17
Cambodian Government resources for civilian war victims	17
Assistance provided by foreign countries and voluntary agencies	19
5 CONDITION OF REFUGEES	22
Availability of food	22
Living conditions	23
6 FACTORS GENERATING REFUGEES	40
U.S. air support	40
Refugees resulting from activities of Armed Forces of South Vietnam	41
Refugees interviewed	42
7 CIVILIAN WAR-RELATED CASUALTIES	43
Various estimates of civilian war-related casualties	43
Public health services	45

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APPENDIX

Page

I	Letter dated July 7, 1971, from the Chairman, Subcommittee to Investigate Problems Connected With Refugees and Escapees, Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate, to the Comptroller General of the United States	55
II	Foreign country humanitarian assistance for the period March 1970 through September 1971	56
III	Number of U.S. personnel in Cambodia	59
IV	Levels of U.S. military and economic assistance to Cambodia	61

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D I G E S T

WHY THE REVIEW WAS MADE

In July 1971 the Chairman, Subcommittee to Investigate Problems Connected With Refugees and Escapees, requested that the General Accounting Office (GAO) update its prior reports on Vietnam and Laos and make an inquiry into refugees and civilian war casualty problems in Cambodia. (See app. I.)

This report deals with problems concerning war victims, civilian health, and war-related casualties in Cambodia.

The North Vietnamese Army's invasion of Cambodia on March 28, 1970, culminated a long history of sanctuary activities along the border between Cambodia and South Vietnam. On April 30, 1970, the Government of the United States, in cooperation with the Government of South Vietnam, launched military operations into the North Vietnamese-controlled territory in Cambodia. These actions resulted in at least three types of refugees: (1) persons of Vietnamese origin residing in Cambodia, most of whom have subsequently been relocated in South Vietnam, (2) Cambodians fleeing from Communist-controlled territory--the largest single source of refugees--and (3) Cambodians fleeing from combat activity and air strikes. (See p. 40.)

In this report the term "refugees" is used generally to describe those Cambodians who have fled their homes in Communist-controlled territory or who have been displaced or are war victims as a result of combat activity in that country.

In accordance with agreements made with the Subcommittee's office, GAO did not follow its usual practice of submitting a draft report to the Department of State to obtain its official comments. GAO discussed, however, the general observations in a draft report with responsible U.S. officials in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and in Washington, D.C., and has given consideration to their views where appropriate. Communications with Cambodian nationals were arranged through the facilities of the U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Policy concerning war victims

The policy of the United States has been to not become involved with the problems of civilian war victims in Cambodia. There is no specific U.S.

program for assisting refugees in that country; however, the United States is providing military and economic aid to Cambodia. (See p. 9.)

The Cambodian Government has not developed an overall program to deal effectively with the civilian war victim problem. There are, as yet, no specific programs for providing temporary relief to refugees. Relief has been granted on a case-by-case basis. (See p. 10.)

Some resettlement efforts have been made on a case-by-case basis by the Cambodian Government to assist refugees in obtaining vocational training and employment. (See pp. 10 and 11.)

The Cambodian Commissioner General for War Victims and the Ministry of Community Development are the two agencies most directly concerned with the war victim problems. There have been as many as nine Cambodian Government agencies involved, to some degree, with civilian war victims, but there is a lack of coordination among the agencies. (See p. 12.)

Numbers of refugees and war damage claims

The total number of refugees in Cambodia is largely conjectural. There is no system for enumerating refugees, and they are moving continually. It has been estimated by the Cambodian Ministry of Health that more than two million persons have been displaced by the war between March 1970 and September 1971. GAO found no basis, however, for assessing the reliability of this figure or any other overall figures. (See p. 14.)

A total of 23,030 war damage claims for the equivalent of \$130 million have been recorded by the Cambodian Government, but none have been paid. (See p. 16.)

Level of financial assistance

Cambodian Government funds for programs relating to the problem of civilian war victims have been channeled through the Commissioner General for War Victims and the Ministry of Social Action, Labor and Employment. The total budget for the Commissioner General for War Victims is the equivalent of about \$252,000 for the 18-month period ended December 31, 1971. As of March 1971, \$114,435 had been expended.

The Ministry of Social Action, Labor and Employment had expended the equivalent of \$1,292,770 as of September 1971 for repatriation and relief of war victims. This included more than \$800,000 for both military personnel and civilians killed or wounded. GAO was informed that most of these payments had been made for military casualties. (See pp. 17 to 19.)

As of September 1971 foreign countries and/or private organizations had contributed at least \$4.6 million for humanitarian assistance. About \$3.7 million of this assistance was received from the Japanese Government. The assistance consisted primarily of medical supplies and

equipment, foodstuffs, medical-purpose vehicles, and prefabricated buildings (to be used for refugee housing). (See pp. 19 and 20.)

Condition of refugees

Although living conditions varied from place to place, conditions were generally less than adequate. Lack of sufficient food rapidly was becoming serious. (See pp. 22 and 23.)

Civilian war-related casualties

There is no reliable measure of the number of civilian war-related casualties. It has been estimated by Cambodian Government officials that as many as 1,400 civilians have been killed and that as many as 20,000 combined military personnel and civilians have been injured. GAO is not in a position to comment on the reliability of these estimates. Shortages exist in all areas of health services, and certain types of pharmaceuticals are in critically short supply. GAO found that about 64 percent of the prewar health facilities were functioning. (See p. 43.)

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

At the request of the Chairman, Subcommittee to Investigate Problems Connected With Refugees and Escapees, Senate Committee on the Judiciary, in a letter dated July 7, 1971, the General Accounting Office has inquired into the handling of war-related civilian problems in Cambodia.

Our review which was performed during September and October 1971, primarily at the Department of State, Washington, D.C., and at the American Embassy, Phnom Penh, included discussions with Cambodian Government officials and with representatives of voluntary relief agencies. We made field trips to observe conditions of war victims. GAO communications with Cambodian nationals were arranged through the facilities of the U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh. Embassy officials and Cambodian Government officials were most cooperative in providing data and in making the necessary arrangements which enabled us to make direct observations of refugee conditions in the country and to develop much of the detailed information contained in this report.

The scope of our review was limited in certain areas. At the initiation of our review, Department of State officials advised us that files would be reviewed to remove (1) documents prepared separately or jointly by other agencies, (2) sensitive information requiring higher levels of review before release, (3) congressional and White House correspondence, and (4) any classified information determined not to be important to GAO's review.

Although we have no knowledge of the withholding of any data concerning the matters discussed in this report, we cannot be certain, in view of the agencies comment, that we have had access to all relevant information. Although it did not appear that these restrictions were being applied in Cambodia, our review in Cambodia, of necessity, was limited because Cambodian documents required translation and because discussions and interviews with Cambodian officials and other persons required the use of interpreters.

ORIGIN OF THE REFUGEE PROBLEM

Cambodia, which comprises an area of about 66,000 square miles, has a total population estimated at seven million. (See map, p. 8.)

The United States recognized Cambodia on February 7, 1950. Relations deteriorated in the early 1960's and were broken in May 1965 by Cambodia, following a serious incident on its border with South Vietnam. The North Vietnam military forces had been using sanctuary areas in Cambodia to direct fire at U.S. and South Vietnamese troops across the Cambodian border. According to a Department of State publication, U.S. elements would return this fire in self-protection and sometimes would inflict casualties among the Cambodians. The publication reports that such incidents at times were due to human error but more often were provoked by the North Vietnamese military forces. Diplomatic relations were restored on July 2, 1969, by mutual agreement.

A series of increasingly energetic military and political efforts were made prior to March 1970 to force a withdrawal of the North Vietnamese military forces.

Cambodia was invaded by the North Vietnamese on March 28, 1970, shortly after Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the Cambodian Chief of State, was dismissed by the Cambodian Parliament.

In April 1970 President Nixon announced that the United States would provide small arms and other material to support the defense of Cambodia against armed aggression by North Vietnamese military forces.

Prime Minister Lon Nol's government proposed negotiations looking toward a peaceful withdrawal of forces from Cambodia. The North Vietnamese, however, rejected these proposals. Initially they took measures to defend their base areas against Cambodian military pressure. Early in April 1970 the North Vietnamese began moving out of their sanctuaries and deeper into Cambodian territory in an effort to establish a solid Communist-held zone reaching to the port of Kompong Som and the sea along the nearly 600-mile-long Cambodian-South Vietnamese border. This movement

would have changed considerably the sanctuary situation which had continued over the previous 5 years.

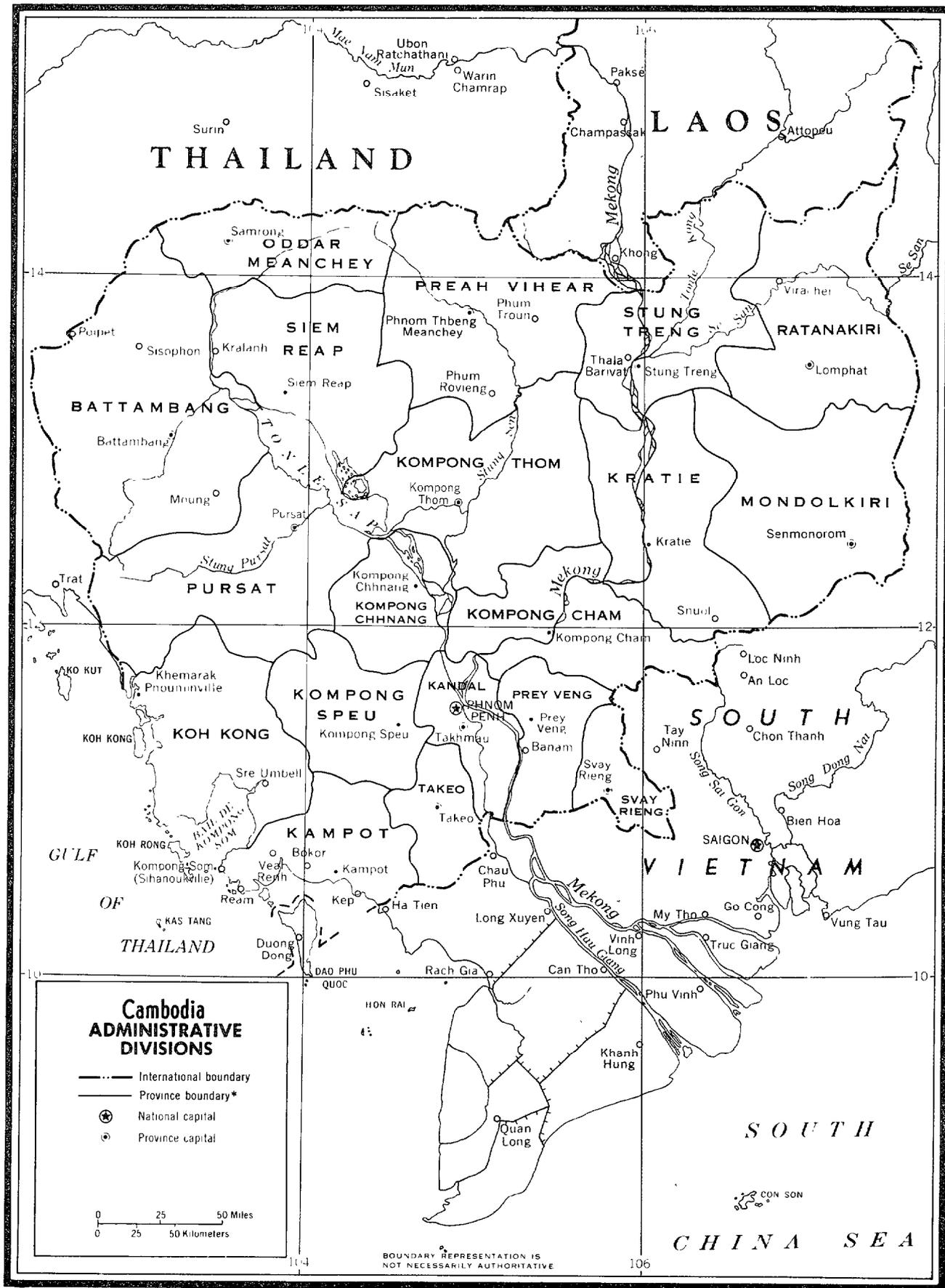
On April 30, 1970, President Nixon announced that the Government of the United States, in cooperation with the Government of the Republic of Vietnam, was launching military operations into North Vietnamese-controlled territory in Cambodia, for a period of 2 months, to protect its military forces and the process of Vietnamization in the Republic of Vietnam.

The situation with regard to refugees, occasioned by the outbreak of hostilities between the Cambodians and the North Vietnamese, has been quite different than that which has existed in neighboring Laos and South Vietnam. An early problem, after the North Vietnamese invasion occurred in force on March 28, 1970, concerned persons of Vietnamese origin residing in Cambodia at that time. Various estimates represented their number to be between 420,000 and 500,000; many of these refugees had originated from North Vietnam in a migration of 1954 and later. By the end of August 1970, some 200,000 of these persons had been relocated in South Vietnam and about 200,000 remained in Cambodia. There is no information concerning the location of others included in the estimates.

From March 28, 1970, to late summer 1970, Cambodians migrated from war-afflicted areas to Phnom Penh. By February 1971 these persons reportedly had been integrated almost totally with families or friends in Phnom Penh, although some had simply moved to Phnom Penh and were supporting themselves.

The Cambodian Ministry of Public Health has estimated that more than two million persons have been displaced by the war at one time or another since March 1970. As of September 1971 the Commissioner General for War Victims estimated that about 150,000 refugees were living in Phnom Penh and that about 70,000 were living in provincial capitals. We believe that the Commissioner General's estimates may be low, as discussed in chapter 3.

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CHAPTER 2

POLICY CONCERNING WAR VICTIMS

U.S. POLICY CONCERNING WAR VICTIMS IN CAMBODIA

According to the U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia, it has been the policy of the United States to not become involved with the problem of civilian war victims in Cambodia. At the time of our review in September 1971, the Ambassador did not consider the civilian war victim problem to be of such serious proportions as to require U.S. assistance. He said that, since the United States was providing military and economic aid to Cambodia, it was the policy of the United States to encourage other countries--which could not provide military assistance because of their own internal political situations--to assist Cambodia with its humanitarian needs.

The U.S. Ambassador told us in October 1971 that the Cambodian Government had not requested any U.S. assistance with the civilian war victim problem. We were advised that, until the Cambodian Government made such a request, there were no plans for the United States to become involved in this problem.

According to the Ambassador, it is not likely that the Cambodian Government will request humanitarian assistance from the United States even if the civilian war victim problem becomes much more severe than it has been.

There appear to be two reasons for this. First, the Cambodian Government's own policy--discussed in a subsequent section of this chapter--provides for a low-key approach to the problem. Secondly, the war effort has been given priority by the Cambodian Government. Cambodian Government officials realize that the United States is a source for necessary military assistance and desire that any assistance obtained from the United States be channeled toward the advancement of the war effort.

At the time of our review, one official from the American Embassy's Political Section had been assigned

responsibility for monitoring the civilian war victim problem in Cambodia. This responsibility was accomplished as a part of his regular duties as an Embassy political officer. In our opinion this official was cognizant of the broad aspects of the civilian war victim situation.

CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT POLICY
TOWARD CIVILIAN WAR VICTIMS

Embassy officials informed us that the Cambodian Government was aware of the civilian war victim problem; however, we were told that the Cambodian Government had not developed an overall program to effectively deal with the problem. There are no specific programs for providing temporary relief to refugees; instead, each case is handled individually.

We were unable to obtain written policy guidelines from the Cambodian Government with regard to (1) the general civilian war victim problem or (2) the specific refugee problem. We were advised by Cambodian Government officials that it was their Government's policy to provide emergency and temporary relief and, in general, to manage the problem in such a way that refugees did not become dependent on the Government. As one Cambodian official involved with the refugee problem stated, the Government did not want to make beggars out of the people.

According to American Embassy officials, the Cambodian Government's general mobilization directive, as it applies to refugees, more closely resembles written policy guidelines than does any other document. This directive, issued about September 1971, provides that, within the framework of general mobilization, (1) all refugees be counted, (2) assistance be given in finding employment for refugees, (3) lodging for refugees be found with the "generous village people" or in transit camps, and (4) refugees be encouraged to return to their villages as they become secure.

Some efforts have been made by the Cambodian Government to assist refugees in obtaining vocational training and employment in order that the refugees may be integrated into the local society and economy. There are, however, no specific programs designed to accomplish these objectives, but efforts are made on a case-by-case basis.

No program has been developed to assist refugees in resettlement either in their former villages or in new locations. We were advised by Cambodian Government officials that there were several social and cultural reasons for a low-key approach to the refugee problem.

Cambodian officials stated that, as a result of these social and cultural factors, the refugee problem in Cambodia was not as severe as it might have been in a different environment, given the same degree of destruction experienced by Cambodia. They stated that there was a high degree of national identity and unity among the Cambodians, particularly since they were faced with the task of fighting a foreign invader. The "extended family concept" is a Cambodian tradition which has helped alleviate the burden which normally would rest with the Government.

Cambodians are said to be very individualistic and attached to their land and to prefer to take care of themselves rather than to request help from the Government. We were told that, for these reasons, persons driven from their homes by the war tended to return to their homes as soon as the fighting stopped. Because of this presumed short-term displacement and the tendency of Cambodians to be self-reliant, the Cambodian Government prefers to describe the problem as a war victim or displaced-person problem rather than as a refugee problem.

In this report, we have used the term "refugees" to generally describe all Cambodians who have fled their homes in Communist-controlled territory or who have been displaced or are war victims as a result of combat activity in that country.

Although our observations confirm that the Cambodians seen to be self-reliant and do, to a great degree, depend on the family in times of need, it appears that these phenomena also could have resulted from a lack of Government programs for assistance as well as from the cultural traditions of the Cambodian society.

FUNCTIONS OF CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT AGENCIES
CONCERNING WAR VICTIM RELIEF

We found that there was no systematic approach to the total problem of civilian war victims--either for providing temporary assistance or for assisting in the resettlement of refugees. Functions and responsibilities are fragmented, and there is little or no coordination among agencies involved with the problem. We noted that there had been as many as nine Cambodian Government agencies involved, to some degree, with civilian war victims.

At the time of our review the two agencies most directly concerned with the war victims problem were (1) the Commissioner General for War Victims and (2) the Ministry of Community Development. Prior to September 1970 the Ministry of Social Action, Labor and Employment had a major role in providing assistance to civilian war victims; however, these functions were transferred to the Commissioner General for War Victims. The Commissioner General for War Victims is a civilian agency established in July 1970 that appears to be subordinate to the Minister of Social Action, Labor and Employment.

The Commissioner General for War Victims is primarily responsible for providing temporary relief to persons displaced by the war. Such relief includes the operation of refugee camps if necessary. In addition, the Commissioner General (1) coordinates the receipt and distribution of donations from private persons and organizations, (2) records claims for war damage losses, and (3) makes payments for civilian war casualties.

Although we were advised that the Ministry of Community Development was the agency primarily concerned with the long-term resettlement of refugees, we noted that, in September 1971, the Commissioner General for War Victims developed a plan designed to assist refugees wishing to return to their villages. The Commissioner General found that one of the most serious problems a refugee faced upon returning to his village was the fact that his home and property had been destroyed. The Commissioner General's plan calls for providing 45 sheets of roofing--either metal or fiber cement--to each returning refugee family whose home has been destroyed.

The Commissioner General estimates that from 100,000 to 150,000 homes have been destroyed by the war, which would require from 4.5 million to 6.75 million sheets of roofing for replacement.

The Commissioner General's plan had not been implemented as of October 1971, since no funds were available in the Cambodian Government budget for this project. The Commissioner General is hoping for donations from other countries to implement the resettlement plan.

The Ministry of Community Development also was in the process of developing a plan to assist a number of refugees to resettle on Government-owned land in the Phnom Penh area. As of October 1971, however, the plan was still in the formative stages and no specific information was available concerning the substance of the proposed program or the time when the program was to become operational.

We found that there was no coordination between the Ministry of Community Development and the Commissioner General for War Victims with respect to their resettlement assistance plans. Neither agency was aware of the resettlement plan being developed by the other agency.

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CHAPTER 3

NUMBERS OF REFUGEES AND WAR DAMAGE CLAIMS

The total number of refugees in Cambodia is largely conjectural. As of October 1971 there was no enumerating system. We were advised that the reason it was so difficult to make an accurate estimate of the number of refugees was that the situation was so fluid. Refugees continually move between the cities and their villages as security improves or deteriorates in various areas of the country. Many refugees move in with relatives or build their own thatched shacks on the periphery of Phnom Penh or provincial capitals and do not register with the Cambodian Government.

The Ministry of Public Health has estimated that more than two million persons have been displaced by the war since March 1970. GAO found no basis for assessing the reliability of this figure or any other overall figures.

As of September 1971 the Commissioner General for War Victims estimated that 150,000 refugees were living in Phnom Penh and that 70,000 refugees were living in provincial capitals.

The population of Phnom Penh reportedly has doubled from about 600,000 to 1.2 million since March 18, 1970. According to a U.S. Embassy official, this increase is attributable to the war and not to the worldwide urban drift phenomenon.

The International Committee of the Red Cross representatives in Phnom Penh estimated in September 1971 that there were 100,000 to 150,000 refugees living in the peripheral area--the so-called "Green Zone"--of Phnom Penh. These refugees are squatters who have built thatched shacks on vacant land around Phnom Penh, and the number does not include those refugees living with relatives.

There simply are no reliable population estimates for provincial capitals to indicate the validity of the Commissioner General's estimate of 70,000 displaced persons. We were informed by the Governor of Svay Rieng Province, however, that prior to March 1970 the city of Svay Rieng--the

provincial capital--had a population of about 100,000. He stated that between March 1970 and September 1971 the population of the city increased to about 250,000. Many of these persons move between the provincial capital and their homes in nearby villages; however, the Governor stated that, because of security, about 45,000 people had not returned to their villages in over a year.

We believe that these estimates indicate, to some degree, the extent of the refugee problem in Cambodia. It is apparent, however, that any realistic, quantitative assessment of refugee needs in Cambodia requires more reliable data. The figures referred to throughout this report should be considered merely as rough indicators.

REGISTERED REFUGEES

As of September 30, 1971, a total of 77,572 persons in the Phnom Penh area had registered as refugees with the Commissioner General for War Victims. About 1,500 refugees were living in four camps in Phnom Penh, and the remainder were living either with relatives or in the Green Zone.

On the basis of population estimates discussed above, it was apparent that only a small percentage of the refugees had registered with the Commissioner General for War Victims.

In an attempt to ascertain the reason so few refugees had registered, we interviewed at random 18 refugees living in the Green Zone of Phnom Penh. Of the 18 refugees, five were registered with the Commissioner General, and one was aware of the office of the Commissioner General but had not registered. The other 12 said they had never heard of the Commissioner General for War Victims but that they would have registered had they known. The five refugees who had registered stated that they had never received any assistance from the Government.

Military dependents

In addition to the civilian refugees discussed above, as of August 1971 there were 1,259 military families and dependents--5,487 persons--living in 31 centers throughout

Phnom Penh. Although families generally accompany Cambodian military personnel to the areas where fighting is taking place, this sometimes is not possible, and therefore the families live in military-provided centers for short periods of time. Although the living conditions in these 31 centers are similar to those of the civilian refugees' centers, the Cambodian Government does not consider military personnel and their dependents as refugees since the head of the household has a regular source of income.

REGISTERED WAR DAMAGE CLAIMS

As stated above, one of the functions of the Commissioner General for War Victims is to record claims for damages caused by the war. Claims were accepted from (1) public bodies, (2) religious organizations, (3) business enterprises, and (4) private individuals. As of September 1971 the Commissioner General had recorded 23,030 claims for a total value of the equivalent of \$130 million.¹

Included in the total number of claims recorded were claims for 12,076 destroyed homes and other property owned by private individuals and valued at the equivalent of about \$78.7 million. Although this aggregate value may be overstated, on the basis of our observations and interviews with both Cambodian Government officials and refugees, it appears that only a small fraction of the total number of war damage losses have been reported.

At the time of our review, none of the claims for war damages had been paid. It was apparent that funds had not been made available for liquidating claims, and we were advised that it was unlikely that any claims for war damages would be paid until after the war was over. Moreover specific procedures have not been established to offset war damage claims with any resettlement assistance that may be provided by the Commissioner General for War Victims or the Ministry of Community Development.

¹All amounts shown in equivalent dollars in this report have been converted at the official rate of 55.54 riels to \$1.

CHAPTER 4

LEVEL OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR WAR VICTIMS

CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT RESOURCES FOR CIVILIAN WAR VICTIMS

Cambodian Government funds for programs relating to the problem of civilian war victims have been channeled through two agencies--the Ministry of Social Action, Labor and Employment and the Commissioner General for War Victims. Also the Ministry of Community Development budgeted the equivalent of about \$90,025 for its refugee resettlement project; however, we could not ascertain whether any of these funds had been expended at the time of our review.

The total budget of the Commissioner General for War Victims was the equivalent of about \$324,090 for the period July 15, 1970, through December 31, 1971. Because of the higher priority afforded the military effort, however, the Commissioner General stated that the war victims' budget had been reduced to about \$252,070 for the 18-month period ended December 31, 1971.

The Commissioner General for War Victims was unable to provide us with a detailed estimate of expenditures through December 31, 1971; however, he advised us that a large percentage of the funds provided by the Cambodian Government for war victims was used to make payments for civilian casualties. The following schedule itemizes expenditures of the Commissioner General for the 9-month period from July 1970 through March 1971.

<u>Type of expenditure</u>	<u>Equivalent U.S. dollars</u>
War casualty payments for:	
Civilians killed	\$ 23,569
Civilians wounded	42,266
Missing Government employees	<u>2,855</u>
Total	<u>68,690</u>
Food purchases and other refugee relief	28,515
Administrative expenses	<u>17,230</u>
Total	<u>\$114,435</u>

If expenditures for the period April through December 1971 are made at the same rate that the \$28,515 was expended during the previous 9 months, we estimate that the Commissioner General will expend a total of about \$61,250 for refugee relief for the 18-month period ended December 31, 1971. In view of the \$72,020 reduction in the budget of the Commissioner General, however, we believe that Cambodian Government expenditures for actual refugee relief probably will be less than \$61,250 for the 18-month period ended December 31, 1971.

Prior to September 1, 1970, the Ministry of Social Action, Labor and Employment was responsible for making payments for all war casualties--civilian and military. Subsequent to September 1, 1970, responsibility for civilian casualties was assigned to the Commissioner General for War Victims and responsibility for military casualties was assigned to the Commissioner General for Veterans.

The Ministry of Social Action, Labor and Employment assisted in the repatriation of over 200,000 Vietnamese nationals from Cambodia to South Vietnam during the period April 1970 through June 1971. In addition, this Ministry contributed to the relief of refugees. An itemization of the expenditures of the Ministry from March 1970 through September 1971, as related to war victims, is shown below.

<u>Type of expenditure</u>	<u>Equivalent U.S. dollars</u>
Payments for persons killed--civilian and military	\$ 432,175
Payments to persons wounded--civilian and military	412,748
Repatriation of Vietnamese nationals	360,100
Miscellaneous	<u>87,747</u>
 Total	 <u>\$1,292,770</u>

We were unable to obtain a more detailed itemization of expenditures for civilian and for military casualties; however, we were informed that most of these payments had been made for military casualties. We also were advised

that the "miscellaneous" category included administrative costs as well as expenditures for refugee relief items.

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY FOREIGN COUNTRIES
AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES

Much of the burden of refugee relief and humanitarian assistance in Cambodia has been borne by voluntary relief agencies and foreign countries. As of September 1971, 30 foreign countries and/or private organizations had contributed at least \$4.6 million of humanitarian assistance to Cambodia. Because of the nature of the donations, however, we were unable to determine their exact values. (See app. II for a listing of humanitarian contributions as of September 1971.)

Contributions from foreign countries generally were channeled through their respective Red Cross Societies to the Cambodian Red Cross Society, either directly or through the International Committee of the Red Cross and/or the League of Red Cross Societies. Some private organizations also channeled their humanitarian assistance through the Cambodian Red Cross Society, and others contributed directly to the Commissioner General for War Victims.

The Cambodian Red Cross Society redistributed an estimated \$342,096 worth of relief material to the Commissioner General for War Victims and redistributed other humanitarian relief having an unknown value directly to hospitals, clinics, the Ministry of Public Health, refugee camps, and war victims.

The Commissioner General for War Victims reported that the following private donations had been channeled through his organization as of September 1, 1971.

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<u>Donor</u>	<u>Equivalent U.S. dollars</u>
Persons	\$ 4,783
Cambodian Red Cross Society	342,096
Catholic Relief Services	144,597
Catholic Church Committee for Mutual Aid and Assistance	110,824
Mutual Aid Committee of the Khmer Evangelical Church	<u>10,642</u>
Total	<u>\$612,942</u>

Japanese humanitarian assistance

The largest humanitarian assistance contribution to Cambodia was made by the Japanese Government. This assistance, valued at about \$3.7 million, was channeled through the Japanese Red Cross Society to the Cambodian Red Cross Society and consisted primarily of medical supplies and equipment, foodstuffs, medical-purpose vehicles, and 100 prefabricated buildings to be used for refugee housing. Many of these items were redistributed by the Cambodian Red Cross directly to the Ministry of Public Health. Other items were redistributed to the Commissioner General for War Victims, and some items were used by the Cambodian Red Cross for its humanitarian activities.

The 100 three-family prefabricated buildings arrived in June 1971. At the time of our review, none of the prefabricated buildings had been used for refugee housing. We were advised that there were no plans for using these buildings as housing for refugees because Cambodian people preferred to live in traditional Cambodian houses built on stilts rather than in the prefabricated buildings. We were advised that the prefabricated buildings were being kept in open storage and were deteriorating rapidly.

Other contributions for refugee housing

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees had donated \$50,000 and World Vision had donated \$10,000 for a refugee housing project to be constructed near Phnom Penh. This project, to be supervised by the

Cambodian Red Cross, was begun in January 1971 and consisted of three buildings, each with 16 family cubicles. In August 1971, the project was about 75-percent complete and no provision had been made for water or electricity. In addition, the building site, which was on filled land, had begun to sink.

According to the Commissioner General for War Victims, the average cost of over \$1,000 a unit for this project was outrageous in view of the fact that it costs about \$100 to construct a traditional Cambodian house.

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CHAPTER 5

CONDITION OF REFUGEES

There are two general categories of refugees in Cambodia: (1) those living in refugee camps, including about 4,670 of Vietnamese origin who are interned, and (2) those living with relatives or housed in squatter shacks in the peripheral areas of Phnom Penh and provincial capitals. During our review we visited six locations in the Phnom Penh area and nine locations in four provinces where refugees were living. These locations included four camps in the Phnom Penh area and five camps in the provinces. Our observations are presented below.

AVAILABILITY OF FOOD

Interviews with numerous persons indicated that, up to the time of our review in October 1971, the availability of an adequate food supply was considered not to be a serious problem. Representatives of the World Health Organization, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the Cambodian Red Cross and doctors from the Ministry of Public Health, however, stated that the lack of sufficient food very rapidly was becoming a serious problem among the population in general and among the refugees in particular. We were told that there were signs of malnutrition and vitamin deficiency.

We were advised that several factors were increasing the pressure on the food situation. Since March 1970, the price of basic food commodities, such as rice, has more than doubled and some items, such as meat, poultry, and pork, are nearly impossible to obtain. We were told that even fish, which was a traditional item in the Cambodian diet, had become so expensive that it could be afforded only by the wealthy. Price increases were brought about by reduced supplies and by changes in demand for food items as a result of the war-caused dislocations.

We were told that most of the refugees--particularly those in the provinces and in the Green Zone of Phnom Penh--traditionally were farmers and grew much of their own food.

In their status as refugees, it is generally not possible for them to grow their own food.

Our observations and interviews with numerous refugees living outside refugee camps generally confirmed that the lack of sufficient food rapidly was becoming a serious problem. Most of the refugees we interviewed had some type of employment; however, their family earnings ranged between an equivalent of 36 cents and \$3 a day. The number of family members ranged from four to 11 persons.

All but two of the refugees that we interviewed stated that it was very difficult to obtain sufficient food for their families. The representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross estimated that, as of September 1971, the minimum cost to adequately feed one person in the Phnom Penh area was the equivalent of about \$1.80 a day.

LIVING CONDITIONS

Condition of refugees in Phnom Penh

Tuol Kauk Camp--In September 1971 this site housed 400 Khmer Montagnards from Ratanakiri Province. This facility was a former youth camp that was converted into a refugee camp in June 1970, at which time it housed 1,970 refugees. The facility consisted of four concrete buildings divided into individual family cubicles. The buildings appeared to be in adequate condition, and the facility was not crowded. Water was supplied to the camp by the city water system, sanitary facilities were adequate, a medical station was available, and a large classroom had been established. We noted that small plots of land had been made available for growing vegetables and that a small poultry project had been started.

We were advised that every 2 weeks 69 of the 89 families in the camp received 200 kilograms of rice through the commissioner General for War Victims. The remaining 20 families had a source of income and received only free shelter from the Cambodian Government.

St. Joseph's Seminary--In September 1971 this site housed 224 Cambodian refugees, primarily from Kompong Thom

Province. We were advised that, when this Catholic seminary was converted into a refugee camp in August 1970, it housed about 20,000 refugees of Vietnamese origin and was in very poor condition. These ethnic Vietnamese were later repatriated to South Vietnam.

At the time of our visit, conditions at the camp appeared adequate. We noted that land was available for growing food and that poultry and pigs were being raised. Although no medical facilities were available at the camp, transportation to nearby medical facilities was provided, if necessary, by the Commissioner General for War Victims. Except for providing this service, the Cambodian Government did not provide assistance to refugees at this camp.

Chak Angre Camp--In September 1971 this camp housed 252 civilian refugees. The camp, which was opened in December 1970, was built specifically as a refugee camp. The camp was not crowded; however, living quarters consisted of canvas-covered platforms constructed about 12 inches above the ground. Family compartments were about 5 by 8 feet in size and had no partitions between living quarters.

We noted that showering facilities and latrines had been constructed. Water was supplied from the city water system and appeared adequate. No school facilities were available at the camp; however, we were told that children attended public schools in Phnom Penh. At the time of our visit, only 10 families were receiving food assistance through the Commissioner General for War Victims.

Cao Dai Pagoda Camp--In September 1971, 616 refugees of Vietnamese origin, primarily from Battambang Province, were housed on the grounds of the Cao Dai Pagoda near the center of Phnom Penh. This camp was guarded by the Cambodian military. Refugees of Vietnamese Origin having proper credentials were free to come and go during the day; however, they were required to be inside the camp at night. About 40 of the male refugees without proper credentials were prohibited from leaving the camp.

Families were crowded into makeshift living quarters constructed on platforms about 12 inches above the ground. Roofs and walls were constructed of any available material--

thatch, tin, cardboard, burlap, or wood. Conditions were generally unsanitary; there were pools of stagnant water around the living quarters. We noted that adequate latrines had been provided and that adequate water was available from the city water system.

We were told that this camp was supported primarily by the Cambodian Catholic Church and that some assistance had been provided by the Government of South Vietnam. The refugees also had received 600 kilograms of rice a week through the Commissioner General for War Victims.

Green Zone--We visited two locations in the peripheral area of Phnom Penh--the so-called Green Zone. Cambodian officials did not know how many refugees were living in this area; however, the estimates ranged from 100,000 to 200,000 persons. These refugees were squatters who had built shacks on vacant land--either Government-owned or privately owned. We noted that the shacks generally were constructed of thatch and were built on stilts. Both areas we visited were flooded, and the water was stagnant. No sanitary facilities were available, and all the refugees we interviewed had to purchase drinking water and transport it for some distance to their homes.

No special medical facilities for refugees had been established in these areas; however, the dispensary and hospital facilities of the Ministry of Public Health were available. These facilities were located a considerable distance from the areas we visited, and most of the refugees did not know the locations of hospitals or dispensaries. Because of the extreme shortage of medicines in Cambodia, refugees who did utilize Government medical facilities were not provided with free medicines. Rather, they were given prescriptions to buy their own medicines at local pharmacies. Because the refugees had no money, they usually went without medicines.

The refugees we interviewed had not received any Government assistance except for the assistance available at the public health facilities. Most had some type of employment; however, their earnings were very meager and generally were inadequate for providing the necessities of life. Notwithstanding our observations in the Green Zone, it appeared that the living conditions of these refugees were somewhat better than those we observed at some of the refugee camps.

Condition of refugees in the provinces

Battambang Province

We inspected three camps located in and near the city of Battambang; the camps housed a total of 4,054 refugees of Vietnamese origin from the provinces of Siem Reap and Battambang. These camps were basically internment camps, since the movements of these internees were restricted and since the camps were guarded by the Cambodian military. The adults were issued passes permitting them to leave the camps during the hours 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

There were no medical facilities at any of the camps; however, we were told that a mobile medical unit visited the camps every 2 weeks. In addition, a nearby public health hospital was available in case of an emergency. We were advised that most of the refugees of Vietnamese origin had found some menial employment in the city of Battambang and that the Government was no longer providing food assistance.

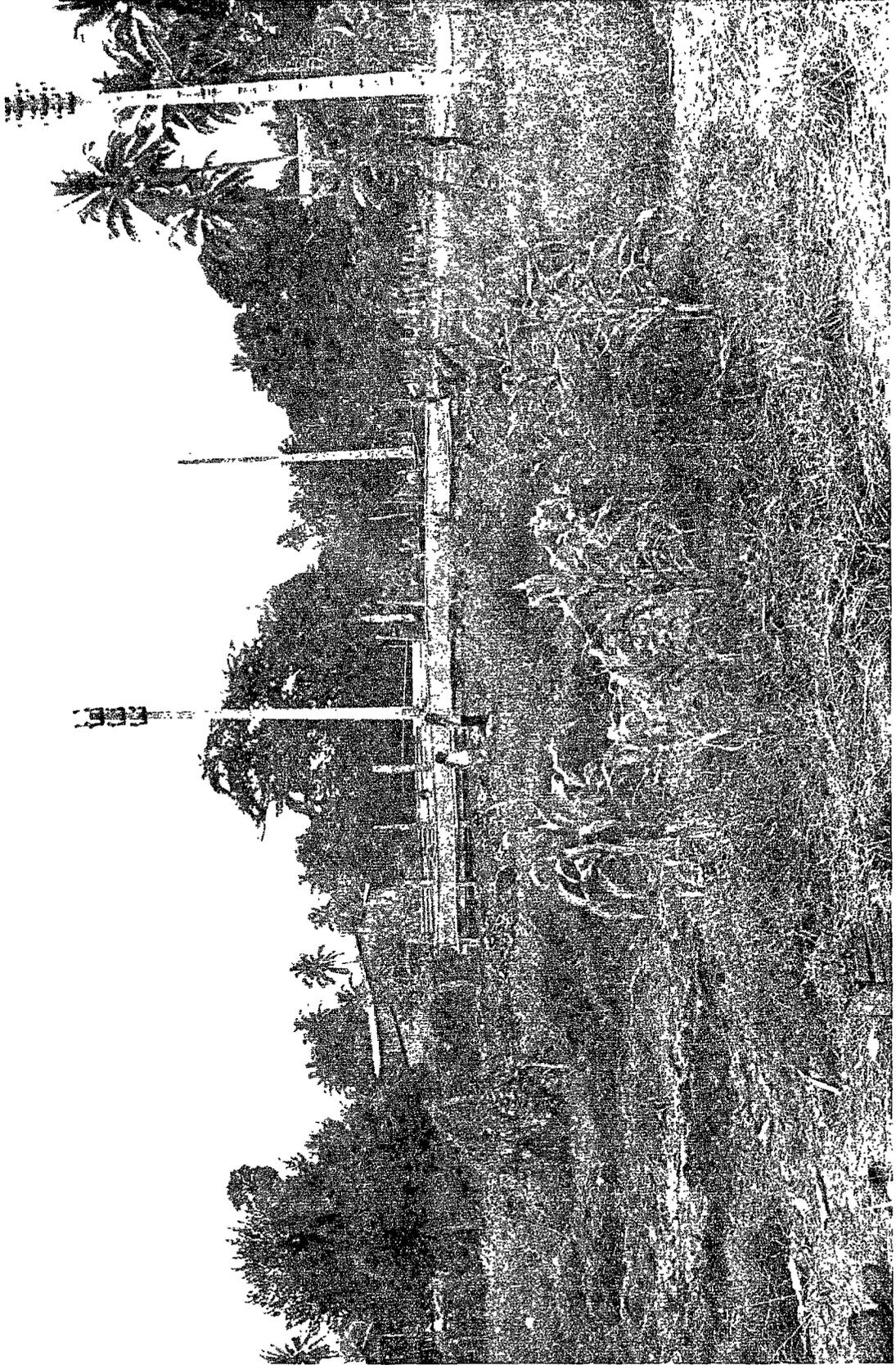
Following are examples of the conditions we observed at the three camps.

Wat Leap Camp--In September 1971 this camp housed 1,917 ethnic Vietnamese nationals in an area about the size of an average city block. The camp was exceedingly crowded. It was surrounded by a barbed-wire fence, and military guards were at the gate. The camp area was unsanitary, and stagnant water and open sewers were around the living quarters. A common latrine had been constructed. (See photo on p. 27.) Water was obtained from a city water system; however, because the water pressure was so low, the supply appeared to be inadequate for the camp.

No school facilities had been established at the camp. A Cambodian Government official advised us that the children could attend the public schools in Battambang; however, we were advised by the camp chief that none of the children had been enrolled in school.

At this camp each family of five persons or less had been allocated an area of about 10 by 16 feet on which to

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GAO Photo

Common latrines at Wat Leap Camp, Battambang, Cambodia, September 1971.

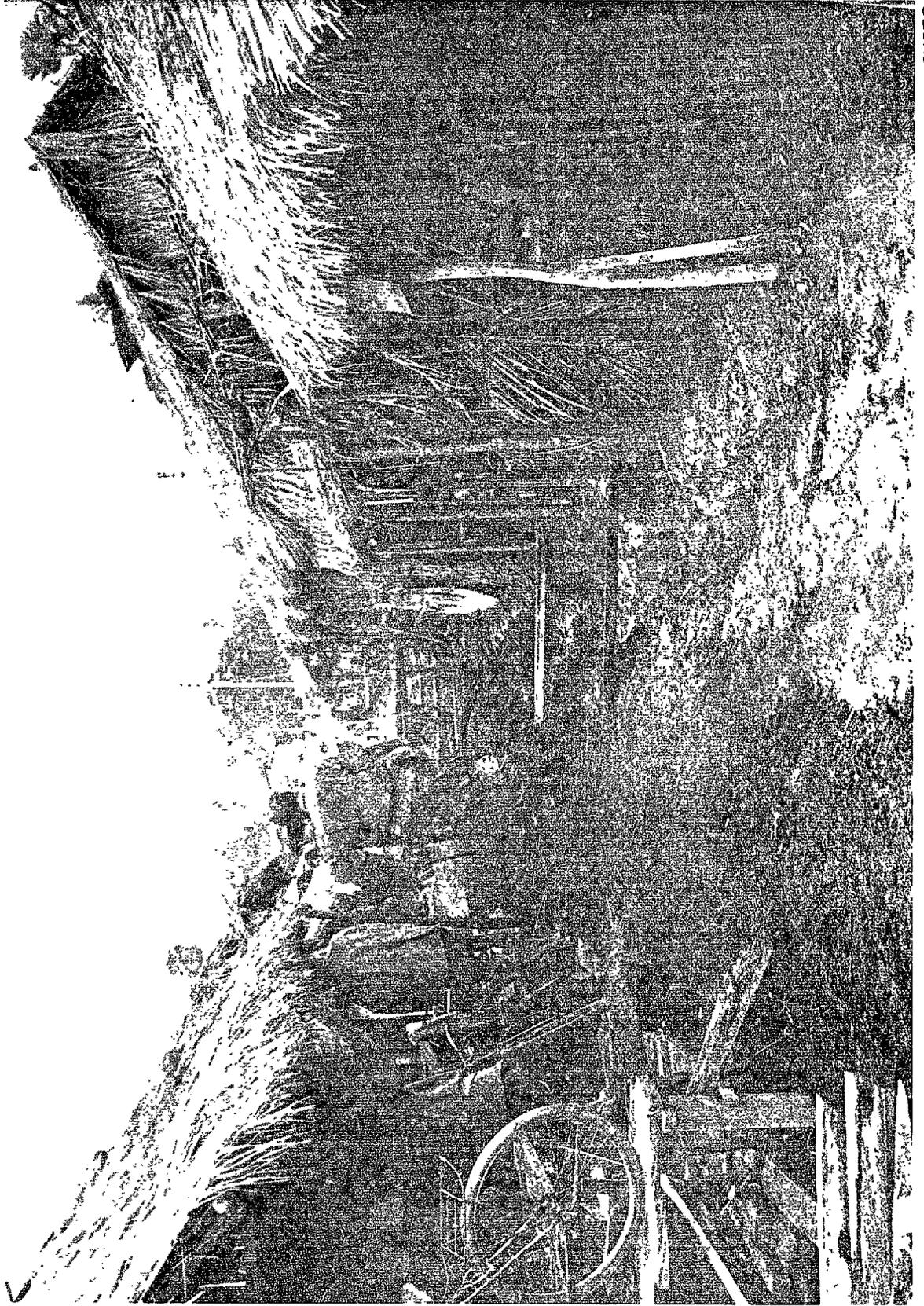
construct its own living quarters. Larger families were allocated additional space. The living quarters were constructed in rows and generally did not have partitions between individual family compartments. The quarters--constructed on low platforms--were made of thatch, tin, wood, burlap, or any scrap material which was available. (See photo on p. 29.)

Bank Agricole Camp--The camp, constructed in the courtyard of a former bank building, housed 1,179 refugees of Vietnamese origin. Sanitary conditions at this camp were somewhat better than those at the Wat Leap Camp; however, conditions were very crowded. No latrine had been constructed, and we were told that the people used a nearby river as a latrine. Water was obtained from the city water system, and the supply appeared adequate. Living quarters had been constructed of materials similar to those at Wat Leap Camp; however, we did not observe open sewers or stagnant water around the living area. (See photo on p. 30.)

Former Chinese school camp--This camp is a former school building, located in the downtown area of Battambang. It housed 958 refugees of Vietnamese origin who formerly lived in the city of Battambang. These refugees were principally mechanics and other craftsmen who were still employed at their trades during the day. Sanitary conditions at the camp appeared to be adequate; there was a sufficient water supply and adequate latrines. The camp was overcrowded. The former school building has a total of 26 rooms. Each room is about 16 by 20 feet and houses an average eight families. We were shown one room (see photo on p. 31) which officials stated housed 52 persons. It was apparent that the space was inadequate to sleep 52 persons, and we were told that the people slept in the open courtyard.

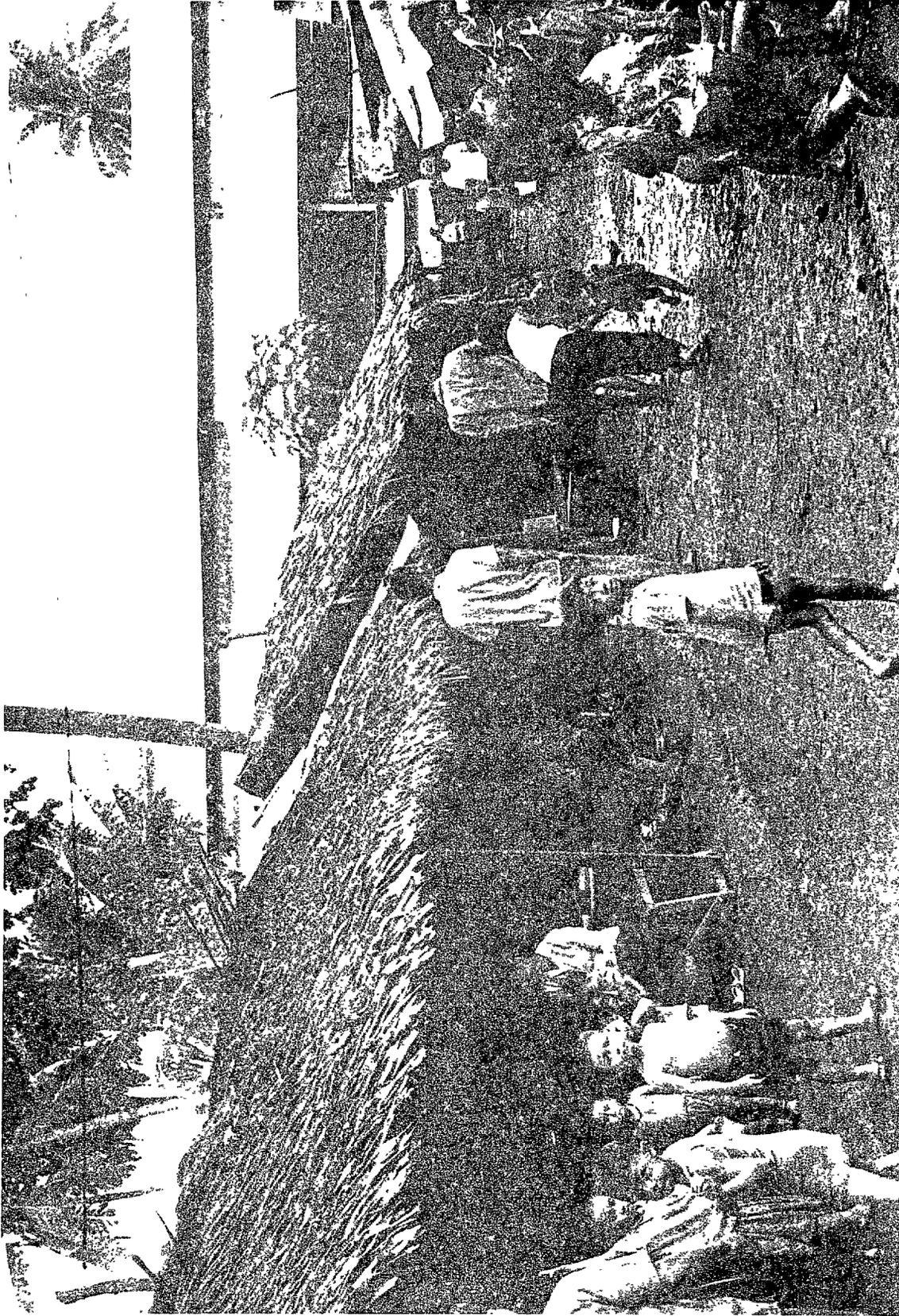
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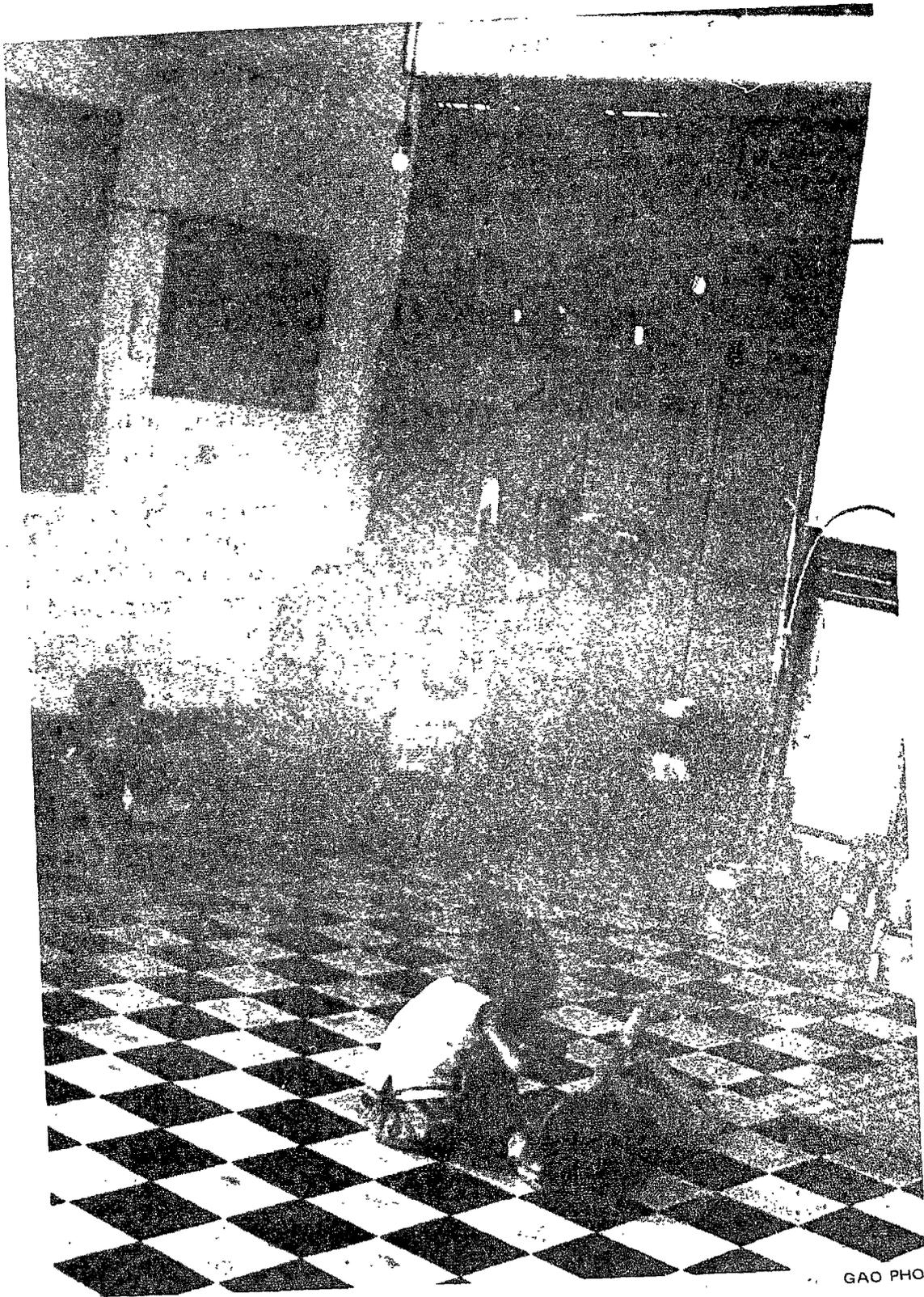
Refugee housing at Wat Leap Camp, Battambang, Cambodia, September 1971.



GAO PHOTO

Refugee housing at Bank Agricole Camp, Battambang, Cambodia, September 1971.

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Living quarters at the former Chinese school camp. This room housed 52 persons.
Battambang, Cambodia, September 1971.

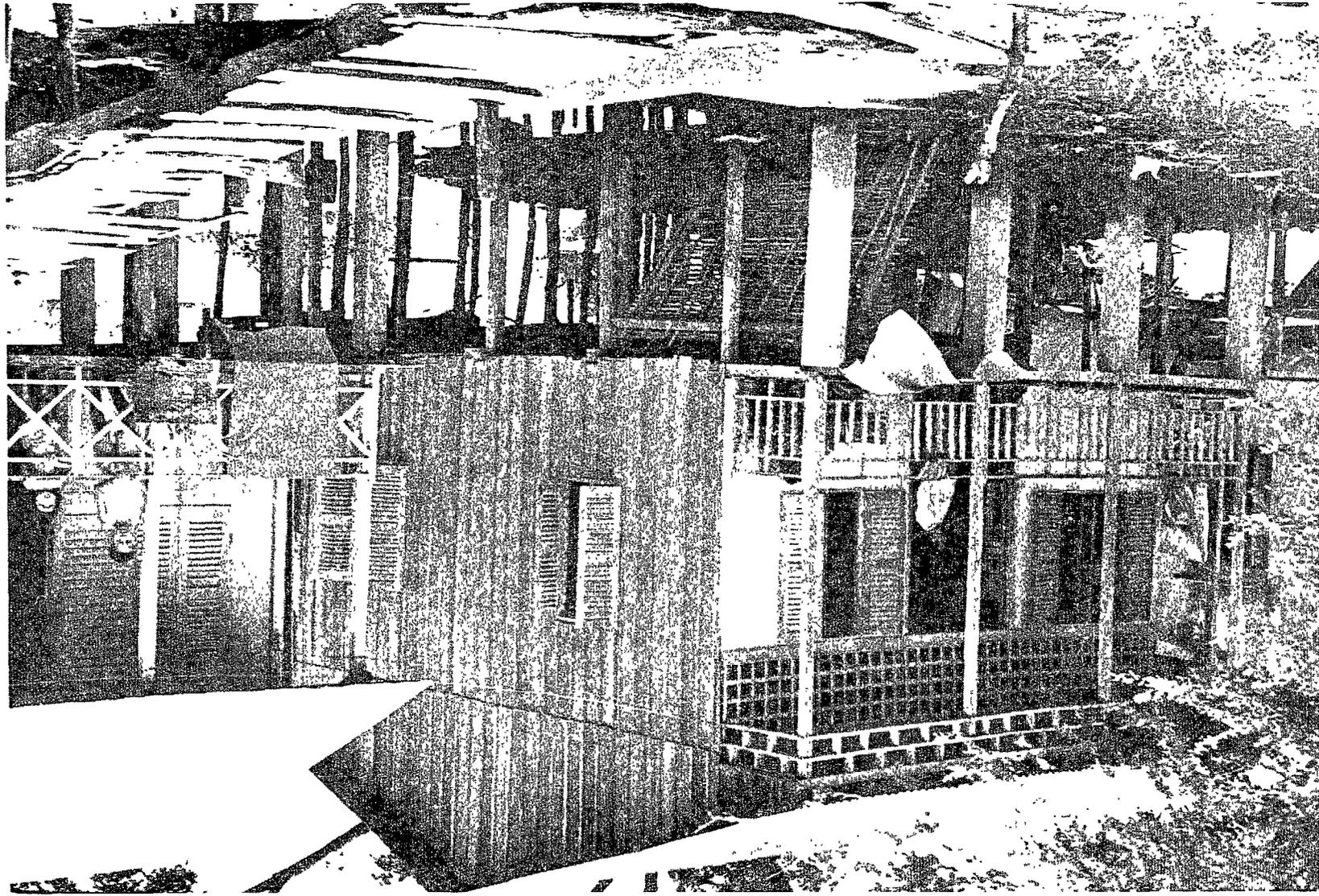
Svay Rieng Province

In the Parrot's Beak area, we inspected two camps established for Cambodian refugees and observed the general living conditions of refugees living outside the camps in the vicinity of the city of Svay Rieng and the village of Prasaut. Cambodian Government officials did not know the exact number of displaced persons living in the area because they tended to move back and forth between their homes and the city. We were told, however, that there were about 45,000 refugees in the area who had been unable to return to their homes because of security conditions. This is an area where considerable fighting has taken place that involved both Cambodian and South Vietnamese forces. (See photo on p. 33.)

Bak Ronas Camp--This camp was constructed by the Cambodian Government in November 1970 at an equivalent cost of about \$9,000. The camp, consisting of two long wooden buildings and one thatched building with concrete floors and sheet-metal roofing, housed about 500 persons in September 1971. Living conditions appeared adequate, although somewhat crowded. Water was obtained from two wells; however, we were told that the supply was inadequate and that river water was used to supplement the water supply. Sanitary conditions appeared generally adequate. We were advised that medical and school facilities were available at a nearby village. (See photo on p. 34.)

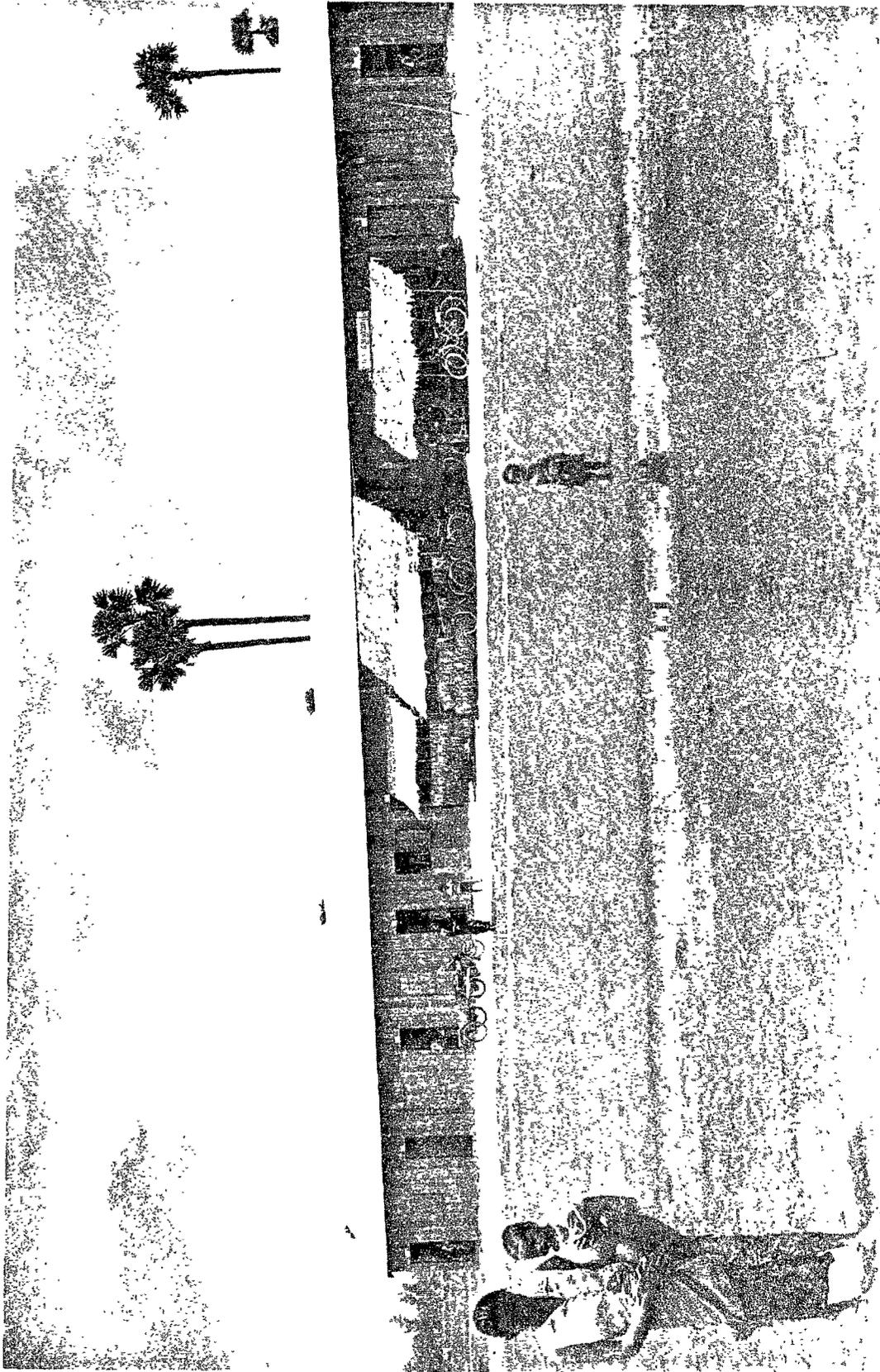
Ba Yap Camp--The camp was a former military camp which, in September 1971, housed about 5,000 civilian refugees. Living conditions at this camp were very inadequate. There were no sanitary, medical, or school facilities available, and drinking water was obtained from a nearby river. We were told that the refugees had constructed the thatched huts in which they were living and that they had not received any Government assistance. The thatched huts were constructed on the ground and were generally about 4 feet high. We noted that there was a great deal of stagnant water around the camp area. We were told that these refugees had lived in this camp from June 1970 and that, at one time, the camp had housed as many as 15,000 refugees. (See photo on p. 35.)

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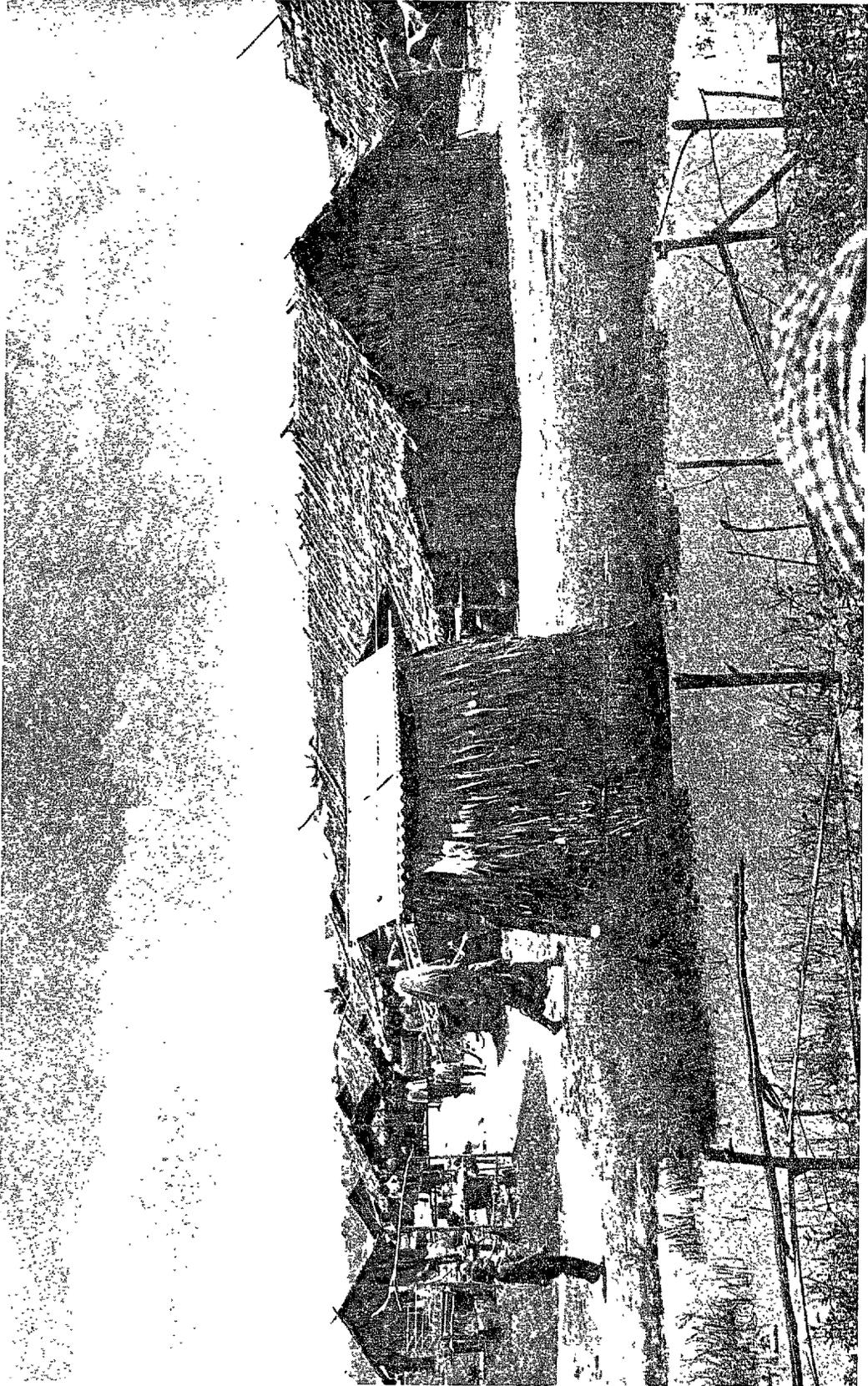
GAO PHOTO

Cambodian country home undamaged by war in the Sway Rieng area, September 1971.



GAO PHOTO

Cambodian Government-constructed Bak Ronas refugee camp, Svay Rieng Province, September 1971.



GAO PHOTO

Refugee housing at the Ba Yap Camp, Svay Rieng Province, September 1971.

Refugees living outside camp areas--One of the areas we visited was the village of Prasaut near the city of Svay Rieng. We were told that 607 refugee families living in this area were housed in thatched huts, bombed-out buildings, and other available shelters. The thatched huts were built directly on the ground, and we observed that there was a great deal of stagnant water in the area. The only medical facility available was a small military infirmary; however, we were advised that the supply of medicine had been exhausted. No school facilities were available. We were told that water was obtained from shallow wells dug by the refugees. (See photos on pp. 37 and 38.)

Kompong Chhnang Province

In the city of Kompong Chhnang--the provincial capital--there were 1,959 Cambodian refugees living in an area around the Yeay Tep Pagoda. The pagoda was used as a center for providing emergency relief; however, very few refugees lived inside the pagoda compound.

We were told that about 200 refugee families lived on boats and that the remainder lived in thatched houses near the pagoda. Some of the boats being used by the refugees were of the type normally used for living purposes; others were not and appeared to be quite crowded. We were advised that the boats had been owned by fishermen of Vietnamese origin who had been repatriated to South Vietnam. The thatched houses were constructed on stilts by the refugees in a flooded area and were generally about 10 by 12 feet in size.

We were told that the only assistance that had been provided to these refugees was from private individuals and the Cambodian Red Cross. We were told also that sufficient emergency relief material had been provided; however, the food situation was becoming serious. Notwithstanding these observations, conditions did not appear to be as bad as those we observed in Svay Rieng Province. (See photo on p. 39.)

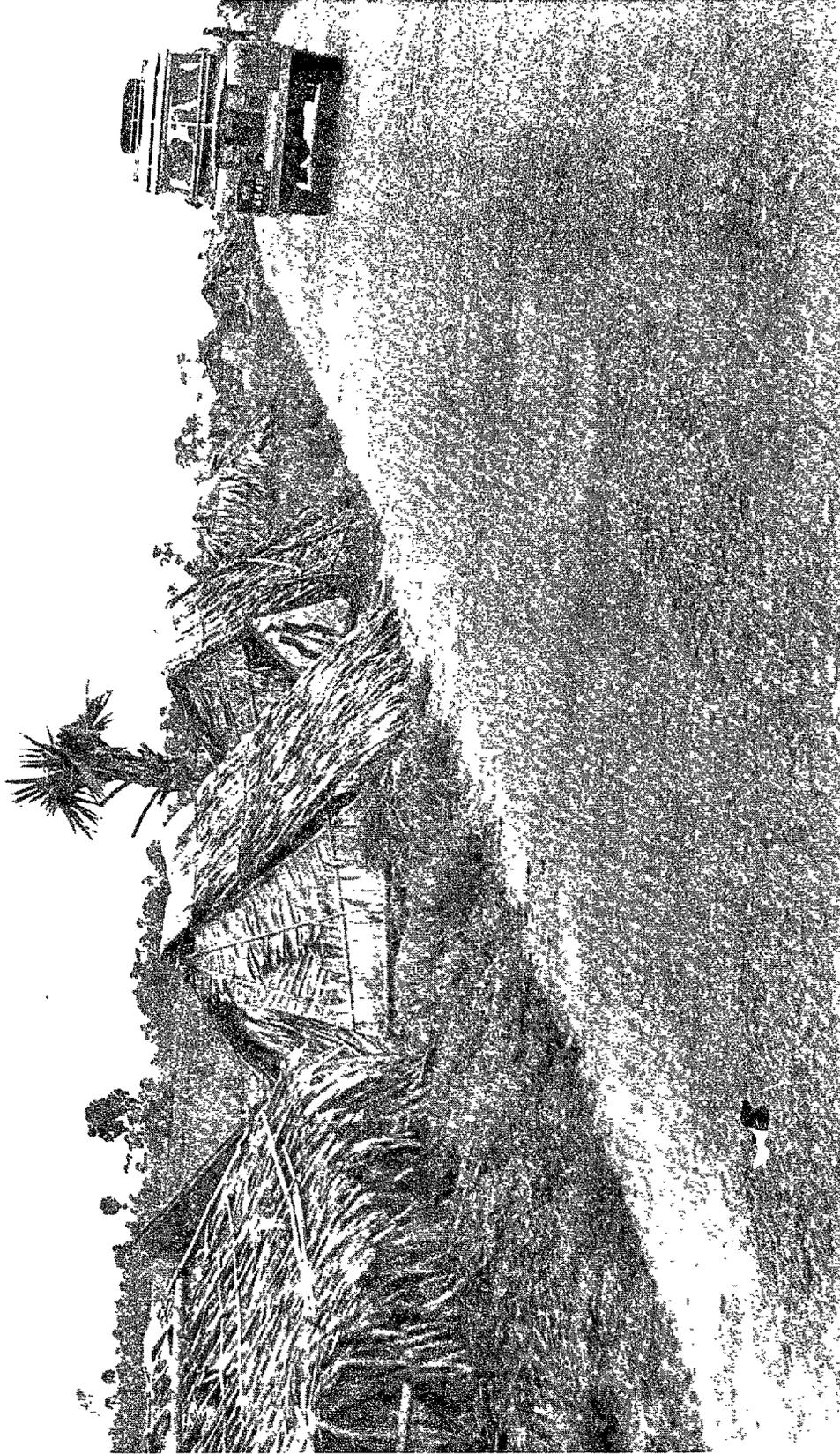
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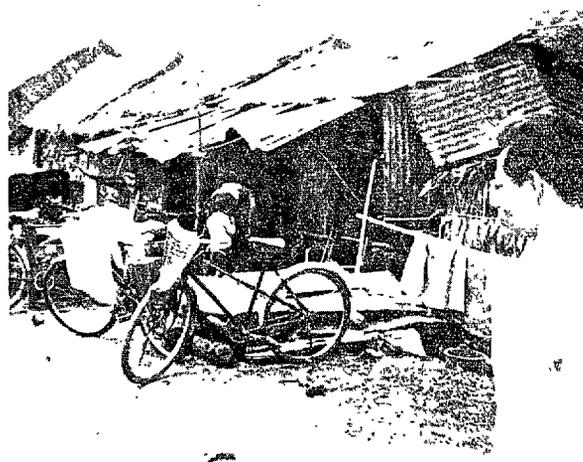
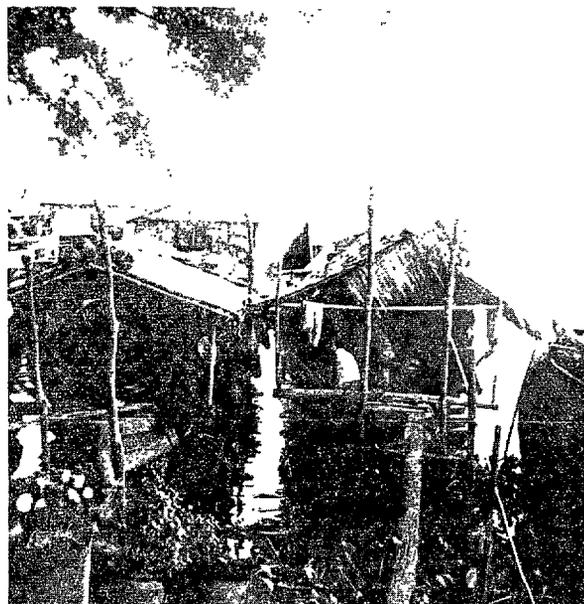
Destroyed buildings used as refugee homes in village of Prasat, Svay Rieng Province, September 1971.

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Refugee huts along the road in Svay Rieng, Cambodia, September 1971.

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Refugee homes in Kompong Chhnang, Cambodia, October 1971.

CHAPTER 6

FACTORS GENERATING REFUGEES

We were advised that a large percentage of the refugees in Cambodia were persons who had fled from their homes in Communist-controlled territory and that a lower percentage of refugees were generated as a direct result of aerial bombardment and other combat activity. Because of the lack of reliable data, we were unable to determine the percentage of refugees generated as a result of any one factor.

On the basis of our observations, it appears that the more affluent persons flee their homes when Communists take over the areas but that the less affluent persons tend to remain in their homes in Communist-controlled areas and flee only if actual fighting breaks out in the area. It appears that refugees currently are being generated as a direct result of combat activity involving Cambodian and/or South Vietnamese forces and of Allied air strikes. For example, in March 1971 the Cambodian Government estimated that a maximum 20 percent of property damage was a result of Cambodian and Allied air operations.

U.S. AIR SUPPORT

After the withdrawal of U.S. ground forces from intervention areas in Cambodia on June 30, 1970, the U.S. Air Force was authorized to continue air interdiction--strikes at enemy troop and supply concentrations and lines of communication. The air role of the U.S. Air Force subsequently has expanded in Cambodia and, at the present time, includes direct close air support of combat operations conducted by Cambodian and South Vietnamese forces in Cambodia. The U.S. air war in Cambodia is controlled by the Commander, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam.

We were advised that there are no free-fire zones in Cambodia similar to those in Vietnam. Saturation-bombing missions are carried out, however, by high-altitude B-52 aircraft over the Communist-controlled eastern and north-eastern areas of Cambodia. We were advised that, although

these areas represented about 26 percent of Cambodia's territory, they contained only 5 percent of the population.

U.S. Air Force close-air-support activities are conducted at the request of the Cambodian military and are controlled by forward air control aircraft operating over Cambodia. We have been advised that close-air-support strikes are coordinated through Cambodian military unit commanders and are provided in any area of Cambodia where combat action is taking place. Air support is also provided by the South Vietnamese Air Force and the Cambodian Air Force.

Information concerning the number and types of U.S. Air Force strikes in Cambodia, the types of bombs used, general target locations, and rules of engagement governing air activity is classified "Secret." Consequently, in the interest of providing an unclassified document, we have not included this data in the report.

REFUGEES RESULTING FROM ACTIVITIES OF ARMED FORCES OF SOUTH VIETNAM

In accordance with an agreement between the Governments of Cambodia and South Vietnam, South Vietnamese troops conduct combat operations against Communist forces in Cambodia, primarily in those provinces bordering South Vietnam. Numerous atrocities by South Vietnamese troops in Cambodia were reported during the months of February through September 1971. The Governor of Svay Rieng Province told us that over 50,000 persons in his province had fled from their homes because of South Vietnamese forces' depredations.

Cambodian refugees stated that both the Viet Cong and the South Vietnamese forces looted property; destroyed what they could not carry; burned villages; and raped, beat, and murdered the villagers.

In March 1971 there were other reports showing indiscriminate shelling, murder, pillage, rape, and theft. The only pattern in the incidents seems to be that they occurred generally in the border regions, for example in Prey Veng Province and in Svay Rieng Province.

Early in 1971 a Cambodian-Vietnamese Mixed Committee was established to investigate the alleged depredations by South Vietnamese troops. The Mixed Committee, however, appears to have been ineffective. In September 1971 the Commissioner General for War Victims advised us that over 300 cases had been investigated by the Mixed Committee but that compensation had been paid in only two cases--one woman received the equivalent of \$90 for rape and one family received the equivalent of \$180 for the murder of a family member.

REFUGEES INTERVIEWED

We interviewed 22 refugees in Phnom Penh and Kompong Chhnang concerning the reasons why they had fled from their homes. Nine refugees stated that they had fled their homes either because they had feared aerial bombardment or because their homes had been destroyed by aerial bombardment.

One of these refugees, who had fled from Kompong Speu Province, stated that her entire village had been destroyed by aerial bombardment; however, this refugee did not know what types of aircraft were used or whether they were U.S. Air Force, South Vietnamese Air Force, or Cambodian Air Force aircraft. This refugee stated also that she had never seen North Vietnamese or Viet Cong troops in her village.

Three of these refugees at Kompong Chhnang stated that their homes had been burned as a result of aerial bombardment. One of the three described the bombs as large canisters of liquid fire. The refugees did not know the identity of the aircraft.

In March 1971 the Commissioner General estimated that a maximum of 20 percent of the 100,000 to 150,000 homes destroyed and other property damage were a result of Cambodian and Allied air operations.

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CIVILIAN WAR-RELATED CASUALTIES

There is no reliable measure of the number of civilian war-related casualties. It has been estimated that as many as 1,400 civilians have been killed. It has been estimated further that possibly 20,000 military personnel and civilians have been injured. We are not in a position to comment on the reliability of these estimates.

Shortages exist in all areas of health services, and certain types of pharmaceuticals are in critically short supply. Conditions at four public health hospitals which we visited were critical. Although Embassy officials were generally knowledgeable of refugee problems, they were not fully aware of the seriousness of the shortages in the areas of health services, particularly in pharmaceuticals.

VARIOUS ESTIMATES OF
CIVILIAN WAR-RELATED CASUALTIES

The Cambodian Armed Forces reported 355 civilians killed and 648 wounded during the period March 18, 1970, through March 6, 1971, and 53 additional civilians killed during the period June 18 through October 13, 1971. On the basis of our discussions with Embassy employees, a Cambodian Government official, and refugees from areas where the fighting took place, it is apparent that the casualty figures reported by the Cambodian Armed Forces are incomplete. Civilians wounded as a result of the war generally are treated at Ministry of Public Health hospitals; however, the Ministry apparently does not have a system for reporting the number of wounded civilians treated.

Since September 1, 1970, the Commissioner General for War Victims has been responsible for making payments for civilian war casualties. Each hospitalized wounded person receives a weekly allowance equivalent to 90 cents and, upon release from the hospital, receives a one-time allowance equivalent to \$18. As of March 31, 1971, the Commissioner General for War Victims had paid allowances equivalent to about \$42,266 to wounded civilians; however, the Commissioner General was unable to provide us with the specific number of civilians paid.

The family of each civilian killed as a result of the war receives the equivalent of \$90 in a death benefit. As of March 31, 1971, the Commissioner General for War Victims had paid an equivalent of about \$23,569 to the families of 262 civilians killed.

The foregoing payments do not include payments made by the Ministry of Social Action, Labor and Employment prior to September 1, 1970, for civilian war-related casualties.

At the time of our review, the Commissioner General for War Victims was unable to provide us with more current information concerning the total amount paid or the number of casualties. The Commissioner General estimated, however, that as many as 1,400 civilians had been killed between March 1970 and September 1971.

In addition, the Ministry of Health estimated that 20,000 persons had been injured. We were unable, however, to determine how many of these were civilians.

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PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

In an attempt to get some understanding of the extent of treatment facilities for civilian war-related casualties, we obtained information from the Ministry of Public Health concerning the number of available facilities, personnel, and medicines and visited four public health hospitals and one military hospital to observe their conditions.

Although public health programs received considerable support during the period 1962 through 1969 from both the Government and the public in general, there was still a shortage of facilities and medical personnel when war broke out in March 1970. As a result of the war, shortages in all areas of health services have become severe and some items, such as certain types of pharmaceuticals, are in critically short supply.

The following table shows the number of health facilities, both public and private, available in March 1970 and at September 30, 1971; the number in areas outside Government control; and the number in Cambodian Government-controlled areas that had been destroyed or were in need of repair.

<u>Type</u>	<u>Number in March 1970</u>	<u>Number in areas outside Government control (note a)</u>	<u>Government control</u>	
			<u>Destroyed or damaged (note a)</u>	<u>In need of repair (note a)</u>
Hospitals	40	6	10	5
Health centers	29	5	10	4
Clinics and maternity centers	42	-	-	-
Dispensaries	19	-	1	1
Infirmaries	<u>568</u>	<u>49</u>	<u>93</u>	<u>51</u>
Total	<u>698</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>61</u>

^aAs of September 30, 1971.

These facilities contained a total of 7,433 beds, of which 6,186 were in hospitals.

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The following table shows the number of health facilities noted above that were under the control of the Ministry of Public Health as of March 1970.

<u>Type</u>	<u>Number</u>
General hospitals	2
Specialized hospitals	3
Provincial hospitals	23
Health centers	25
Health subcenters	6
Dispensaries	17
Specialized dispensaries	2
Infirmaries	<u>295</u>
Total	<u><u>373</u></u>

We were unable to determine the exact number of health facilities currently functioning; however, the Ministry of Public Health estimated that about 64 percent of Cambodian health facilities were functioning and that \$16 million was needed to repair and reequip health facilities. (See photo below.)

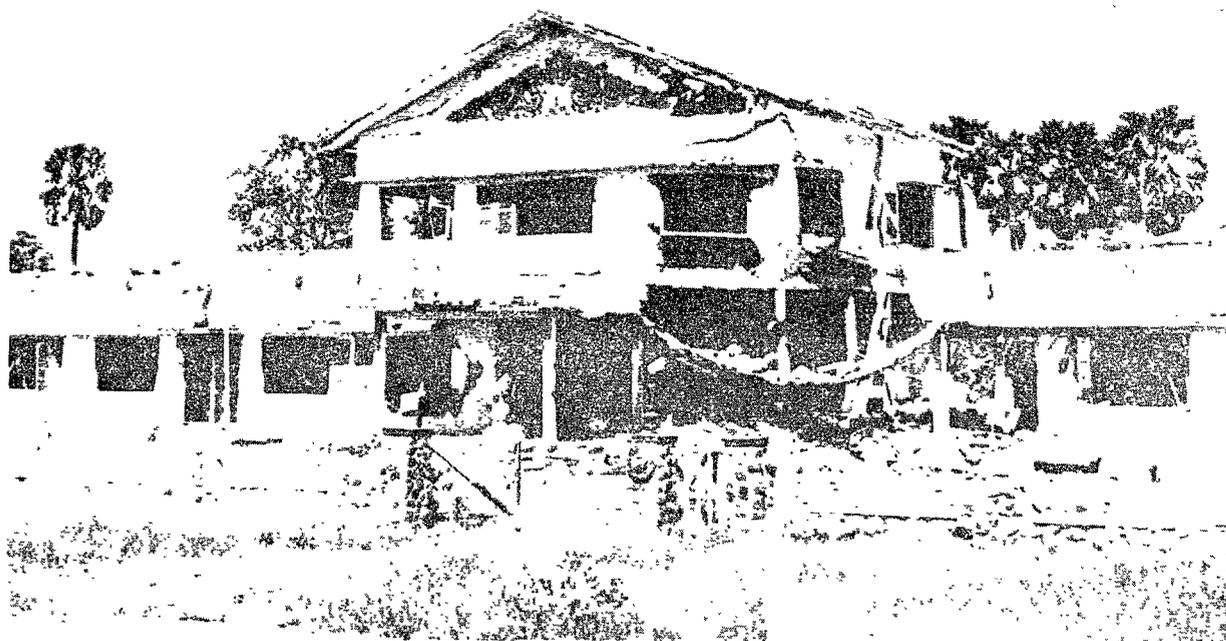


Photo furnished by Cambodian Ministry of Health

Destroyed Cambodian Health Facility

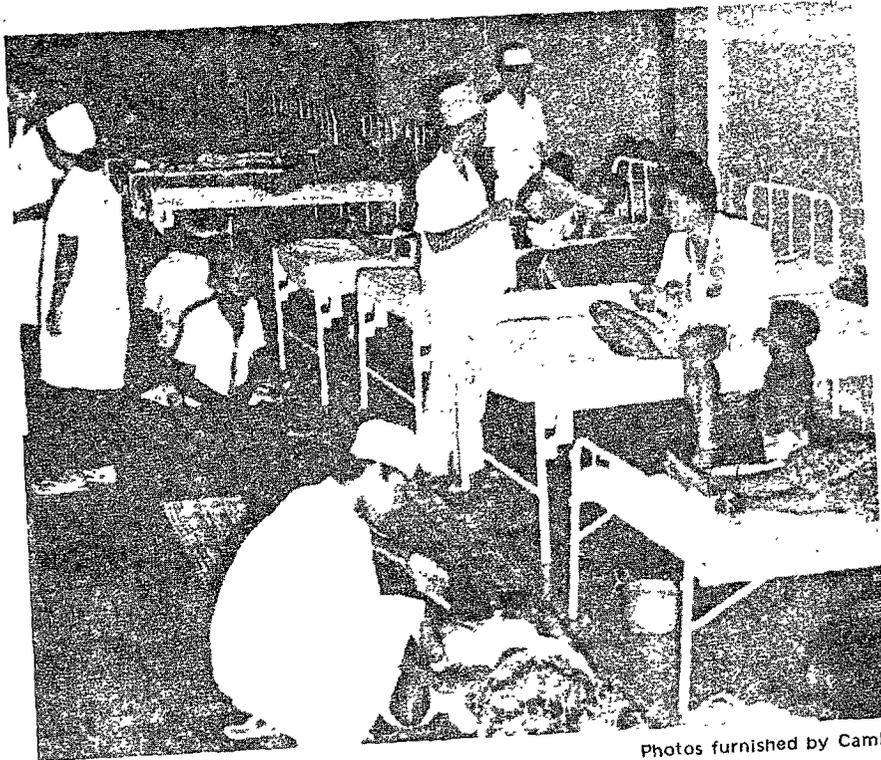
We were advised that, as a result of the war in Cambodia, the shortages of medical facilities, equipment, supplies, pharmaceuticals, and personnel became severe. In Phnom Penh there are two major public health hospitals with a normal total capacity of 1,510 beds. Since March 1970, the number of beds has increased to about 4,000 but there has been no increase in facilities. These facilities were extremely crowded and understaffed. Admissions increased from 31,000 in 1969 to about 39,000 in 1970, and the Ministry of Public Health estimated that, at the current rate, admissions would reach 50,000 for 1971. We noted that hospital conditions in the provinces did not appear to be as severe as those in Phnom Penh.

<u>Medical personnel</u>	<u>As of March 1970</u>	<u>As of September 1971</u>
Physicians and health officers	462	367
Pharmacists	81	63
Dentists	57	43
Nurses	2,929	1,670
Auxiliary nurses	573	868
Midwives	332	395
Rural midwives	933	933
Laboratory technicians	-	59
Sanitary agents	<u>476</u>	<u>476</u>
Total	<u>5,843</u>	<u>4,874</u>

We were advised that the reductions in the number of public health employees after March 1970 were primarily the result of medical employees joining the military.

The budget of the Ministry of Public Health has also suffered as a result of the military effort in Cambodia. On July 7, 1971, the fiscal year 1971 national budget was approved at an equivalent of about \$335.8 million. The Ministry of Public Health was allocated the equivalent of about \$8.7 million, representing 2.6 percent of the national budget. This is the lowest percent of the total budget in the last few years.

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Over burdened and over-crowded hospitals due to the influx of the injured.

Photos furnished by Cambodian Ministry of Public Health

Shortages of pharmaceuticals

We were advised by the Minister of Public Health and several public health doctors that there was a very serious shortage of all types of pharmaceutical products in Cambodia. The total annual input of pharmaceuticals into Cambodia from all sources amounts to the equivalent of about \$14.4 million. This amounts to the equivalent of about \$2 a year for medicines for each individual.

The Minister of Public Health stated that he had requested, through the Minister of Finance, that \$3 million worth of pharmaceuticals be included in the fiscal year 1972 U.S. Commodity Import Program. At the time of our review, a final decision had not been made with regard to this request; however, Embassy officials advised us that the Agency for International Development was reluctant to include pharmaceuticals in the program. We were advised that there were significant inadequacies in the Cambodian Government's control system for pharmaceuticals, and U.S. officials fear diversion of commodities to North Vietnamese or Viet Cong forces.

At one of the public health hospitals we visited in Phnom Penh, we observed an example of the critical need for medicines. The hospital director advised us that, in the preceding 2 months, they had experienced an alarming mortality rate among small children. We were informed that this resulted from a gastric disorder which, if not treated, caused dehydration and, in some cases, death. The hospital director stated that the disorder could easily be treated; however, no medicines for treatment were available.

At the time of our visit, there were 69 children in the hospital, most of whom were suffering from the same gastric disorder. The hospital director advised us that, at that time, the mortality rate was about 15 percent.

Condition of hospital facilities

During our review we visited four public health hospitals and one military hospital to observe their conditions. Three hospitals were located in the Phnom Penh area, and two

of the public health hospitals were located in the provincial capitals of Battambang and Kompong Chhnang.

Hospitals in the Phnom Penh area

In the Phnom Penh area we visited two public health hospitals--the Khmer-Soviet Friendship Hospital and the Sonn Mam Hospital--and one military hospital. Public health hospitals in Cambodia treat military, as well as civilian, patients. We were advised that all hospitals in Phnom Penh were very crowded and that conditions varied from hospital to hospital. Following are examples of our observations.

Khmer-Soviet Friendship Hospital--This hospital was constructed about 12 years ago under the Soviet aid program. The hospital facility appeared rather impressive, and we were told that at one time the hospital had been well equipped. Because of age and lack of repair capability, however, most of the equipment was no longer operable. At the time of our visit in October 1971, this hospital was extremely crowded, poorly equipped, unsanitary, and understaffed.

The hospital initially was designed for a capacity of 500 beds. We were advised that in March and April 1971 the hospital had a peak load of 1,200 patients. At the time of our visit, the hospital had a staff of 27 doctors and a total of 1,009 patients. The hospital director stated that at least 80 doctors were needed. The categories of patients were as follows:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Number</u>
Civilian war wounded	342
Military war wounded	248
Ordinary sicknesses requiring hospitalization	266
Pediatrics	69
Maternity	<u>84</u>
Total	<u>1,009</u>

We observed that the hospital was extremely crowded. Staff offices had been converted into the

emergency unit. Some rooms in this unit had nearly wall-to-wall beds; folding cots were used because of a shortage of beds. We noted patients lying on wooden benches and on grass mats on the floor. The surgical wards--where the wounded civilian and military patients were kept--were extremely crowded. Patients were in the hallways and the lobby, and rooms which normally would contain three beds contained from six to eight beds.

Conditions in the maternity ward were also crowded. Mothers and newborn babies--some less than 12 hours old--were lying on folding cots in the hallways. Because of the shortage of beds and nursery baskets, the newborn babies were sleeping with the mothers on folding cots without sheets or other bedcovers. The hospital director commented that the whole situation was pitiful but that there was nothing he could do to alleviate the situation because adequate facilities, equipment, and supplies simply were not available.

We observed that the hospital was very poorly equipped. The laboratory contained virtually no equipment. The only operable X-ray units available were two small portable units, and there was a shortage of sterilization equipment.

Sonn Mam Hospital--This facility is the Ministry of Public Health mental hospital which was built for a capacity of 300 patients. At the time of our visit in October 1971, the hospital had about 1,100 patients and was staffed by six doctors, 22 nurses, one midwife, 54 administrative employees, and 89 guards. None of the professional staff had received specialized training in mental illness.

Conditions at the hospital were appalling. We observed one "ward" which contained about 200 patients. The ward consisted of two areas--one was an outside walled area where about 100 patients stayed day and night (the ground was used for sleeping) and the other was a large room about 20 by 80 feet which contained about 100 more patients. The room was dark and had no ventilation. Concrete benches about 4 feet in width ran the length of each side of the room and were used

for sleeping purposes. Sanitary conditions were very poor.

Preah Monivong Hospital--This is the major military hospital in Phnom Penh. Military hospitals are not under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Public Health and normally do not treat civilian war-related casualties. We visited this hospital to observe conditions, however, because civilian hospitals treat military patients, which increases the pressure on civilian facilities.

The hospital originally was designed for a maximum of 200 beds; however, since March 1970 there have been as many as 600 beds in the hospital. On the day of our visit, 370 beds were occupied. The hospital director stated that the patient load was low because of the reduced level of military activity during the rainy season. We noted that patients were quartered in the hallways and that two wards, which normally contained 20 beds each, contained 60 beds each.

We observed that the hospital generally was in poor condition and that there were shortages of medical instruments and equipment. At this hospital, however, the director advised us that there were no serious shortages of medicines or of medical employees.

Provincial hospitals

Kompong Chhnang Hospital--The hospital at Kompong Chhnang appeared generally inadequate to the need. The hospital had a total of 177 beds, 96 of which were occupied at the time of our visit. We were advised that 15 of the patients were military war casualties and that three of the patients were civilian war casualties. The hospital director, the only doctor at the hospital, advised us that, because of inadequate facilities, all serious casualties were evacuated to Phnom Penh. We noted shortages of all types of medical supplies, equipment, and medicines, as well as shortages of staff. The building in which civilian war casualties were maintained was dirty and generally in poor condition.

This ward contained about 17 other patients, in addition to the civilian casualties.

Battambang Hospital--Conditions at the hospital appeared generally adequate. Facilities were relatively modern, clean, and not crowded. The hospital had a total capacity of 250 beds, of which 161 were occupied at the time of our visit. The hospital contained two surgical units, two delivery rooms, an X-ray room, and a laboratory, all of which appeared clean and well equipped. The hospital director advised us that there was a shortage of pharmaceuticals--primarily antibiotics and various types of serums. We were advised that there were six doctors assigned to the hospital but that the hospital needed five additional doctors. At the time of our visit, this hospital contained 25 civilian war-related casualties. We were advised that these casualties had occurred as the result of a terrorist attack in the city of Battambang and of the ambush of a train near Battambang.

Medical items included in the military assistance program

We noted that, as of September 8, 1971, a total of \$742,967 had been included in the fiscal years 1970 and 1971 Military Assistance Program for Cambodia for medical supplies, equipment, drugs, and chemicals. Included in this amount in the fiscal year 1971 program were funds for five hospitals--one 400-bed field hospital and four 100-bed station hospitals. We were advised that these field hospitals were scheduled to arrive in Cambodia in October or November 1971. We believe that the operation of these hospitals should alleviate, to some extent, the pressure currently felt by civilian hospitals.

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EDWARD M. KENNEDY
MASSACHUSETTS

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

July 7, 1971

The Honorable Elmer B. Staats
Comptroller General of the United States
General Accounting Office
441 "G" Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20548

Dear Mr. Staats:

As you know, since 1965 war-related civilian problems in Indochina have been a major concern of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Refugees. On three occasions the Subcommittee requested the General Accounting Office to investigate the handling of these problems and related matters, and reports were subsequently filed with the Subcommittee.

In light of continuing Congressional and public interest, I would like to request a continuing inquiry into the situation in both Vietnam and Laos, and request as well that the inquiry now include Cambodia. Additionally, in view of growing interest in long-term programs of rehabilitation and reconstruction, I would also like to request that a separate inquiry be made into United States policy, projection, and planning in this area of concern.

To facilitate these requests it would be helpful if you would designate a representative of the General Accounting Office to get in touch with Mr. Dale de Haan, Counsel to the Subcommittee, for additional information.

Many thanks for your consideration and best wishes.

Sincerely,



Edward M. Kennedy, Chairman
Subcommittee on Refugees

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APPENDIX II

FOREIGN COUNTRY HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

FOR THE PERIOD MARCH 1970 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 1971

Assistance to the Cambodian Red Cross via
the International Committee of the Red Cross from
various national Red Cross societies

<u>Donor</u>	<u>Type of assistance</u>	Estimated value (note a)
Japan	Medical supplies and equipment, foodstuffs medical-purpose vehicles, and prefabricated buildings for refugee housing	\$3,700,000
International Com- mittee of the Red Cross	Medical supplies and equipment	45,000
League of Red Cross Societies/Inter- national Committee of the Red Cross	Medical supplies and equipment, foodstuffs, mosquito nets, and other relief material	30,000 ^b
United States	Two Red Cross delegates sent to assist in setting up a storage and distribution system--remained in Cambodia for 2 months	10,000
Thailand	Medical team of 14 persons and 8 tons of equipment and supplies for the period August 1970 to March 1971	(c)
Italy	Medicines (amount unknown)	(c)
Sweden	16 cases of medicine, one case of surgical instruments, and 326 cases of used clothing	(c)
France	228 cases of condensed milk and 500 blankets	(c)
Republic of Vietnam	196 cases of medicines	(c)
Philippines	Four cases of medicines	(c)
Singapore	Medicines (amount unknown)	(c)
World Vision	22 cases of medicines, 1,298 units of plasma, and 100 crutches	(c)
Philippines Kiwanis	10 cases of medicine	(c)
Association of Khmer Doctors and Students in Europe	Four cases of medicine	(c)
Magen David Adom (Israel: Red Cross)	Eight cases of medicine	(c)
Total		<u>\$3,785,000</u>

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Bilateral assistance to the Cambodian Red Cross

<u>Donor</u>	<u>Type of assistance</u>	<u>Estimated value (note a)</u>
West Germany	Four ambulances, X-ray unit, other medical equipment (crutches and wheelchairs), and antibiotics	\$ 152,439 ^d
Republic of China	Various medical supplies	50,000
New Zealand	Medical supplies, including Hartman's solution, dextrose, plasma, and sterile bandages	114,640
Korea	Medical supplies	90,000
U.S. Veterans of Foreign Wars	Cash grant to purchase equipment for the manufacture of prosthetic devices	50,000
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Grant for refugee housing	50,000
World Vision	Grant for refugee housing	10,000
Denmark	13 cartons of streptomycin	1,602
Australia	400 bed sheets, 100 flasks of plasma, and 19 cases of medicine	(c)
Republic of Vietnam	Foodstuffs and medicine	(c)
Switzerland	100 flasks of plasma	(c)
Canada	35 cartons of clothing	(c)
Total		<u>\$ 518,681</u>

Assistance provided directly to the Commissioner General for War Victims

<u>Donor</u>	<u>Type of assistance</u>	<u>Estimated value (note a)</u>
Catholic Relief Service	Foodstuffs, clothing, drugs, and shelter for refugees	\$ 144,597
Catholic Church's Committee for Mutual Aid and Assistance	Foodstuffs, clothing, and drugs	110,824
Mutual Aid Committee of the Khmer Evangelical Church	Foodstuffs and clothing	10,642
Cambodian Red Cross Society	Foodstuffs, medicines, clothing, and transportation equipment	342,096 ^e
Private individuals	Cash grants and pharmaceuticals	<u>4,783</u>
Total		<u>\$ 612,942</u>

APPENDIX II

^aEstimated value based on Cambodian riels exchange rate of 55.54 riels equals \$1.

^bThe amount of about \$30,000 was donated in cash by National Red Cross Societies of Belgium, Australia, Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, New Zealand, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Sweden, and Switzerland, in response to a joint League of Red Cross Societies-International Committee of the Red Cross appeal for aid in June 1970.

^cThe estimated value of the donations was not available.

^dWest Germany donated humanitarian assistance valued at 500,000 deutsche marks. The estimated U.S. dollar equivalent is based on the October 8, 1971, exchange rate of 3.28 deutsche marks equals \$1.

^eThe amount provided by the Cambodian Red Cross to the Commissioner General for War Victims represents a redistribution of donations received by the Cambodian Red Cross from other Red Cross societies.

SOURCE: The data shown in this appendix were derived from records of the American Embassy, Phnom Penh; the Cambodian Government Commissioner General for War Victims; the International Committee of the Red Cross; and the Cambodian Red Cross. Because of the variety of contributions and methods of donation, we cannot be sure that we have accounted for all the humanitarian assistance provided to Cambodia.

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NUMBER OF U.S. PERSONNEL IN CAMBODIA

The magnitude of U.S. programs has resulted in an increase in the number of U.S. personnel. When U.S. assistance resumed in April 1970, there were 11 persons on the Embassy staff. In March 1971 there was a total of 91 persons assigned to the Embassy, and on October 1, 1971, there was a total of 137 persons assigned. The increase in Embassy staff was due primarily to increased military assistance to Cambodia.

The following schedule shows a detailed comparison of Embassy personnel strengths as of April 1970 and March and October 1971.

<u>Section</u>	<u>April 22, 1970</u>	<u>March 4, 1971 (note a)</u>	<u>October 1, 1971 (note a)</u>
Executive	2	4	4
Political- military (note b)	-	22	61
Political	-	4	4
Economic	2 ^c	6	14
Consular	-	1	1
Defense attache	3	24	22
U.S. Information Service	-	3	3
Administrative (note d)	<u>4</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>
	<u>11</u>	<u>91</u>	<u>137</u>

^a Includes 17 persons and 23 persons on temporary duty as of March 4 and October 1, 1971, respectively. Temporary duty employees are used in Cambodia to fill permanent positions.

^b Includes 16 military personnel and 54 military personnel as of March 4 and October 1, 1971, respectively, assigned to the Military Equipment Delivery Team and one U.S. Navy Officer in Charge of Construction assigned to supervise a military assistance program construction project as of October 1, 1971.

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APPENDIX III

^cTwo persons are responsible for the political, economic, and consular functions.

^dIncludes Embassy Marine Corps guards.

NOTE: This table does not include foreign national employees.

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LEVELS OF U.S. MILITARY
AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO CAMBODIA

The United States recognized Cambodia on February 7, 1950. Relations deteriorated in the early 1960's and were broken in May 1965 by Cambodia, following a serious incident on its border with South Vietnam. During the years 1955 through 1963, the United States provided about \$309.6 million in economic aid and about \$83.7 million in military aid. Diplomatic relations were restored on July 2, 1969, by mutual agreement.

In accordance with the "low profile" policy of the United States, military hardware and training and economic assistance have been provided since April 1970 to the Cambodian Government; however, technical assistance and advisors have not been provided.

Level of military assistance

The fiscal year 1970 military assistance program was designed to provide emergency support to the Cambodian Armed Forces. The primary U.S. military assistance objectives were (1) to provide the Cambodian Armed Forces with the capability to sustain national independence and neutrality and (2) to develop sufficient capability to disrupt North Vietnamese or Viet Cong base areas and lines of communications in Cambodia, as a corollary objective of facilitating Vietnamization of the war in South Vietnam. Vietnamization continued to be the top priority of U.S. aims in Southeast Asia.

As a result of a series of Presidential determinations and congressional authorizations, the total authorized program for fiscal years 1970 and 1971 amounted to \$8.9 million and \$185 million, respectively, for a total authorization of \$193.9 million. Sophisticated military items were excluded from the programs; ammunition accounted for about 52 percent of the programmed amount.

The United States has supported the Cambodian military forces in a variety of ways in addition to military assistance program funding. We have not determined the total

APPENDIX IV

value of this additional assistance which has included such items as (1) U.S. air support of combat operations in Cambodia, (2) communications facilities, (3) captured war materials, and (4) support of psychological-warfare operations in Cambodia.

Level of economic assistance

The two primary objectives of U.S. economic assistance to Cambodia are to (1) enable the country to withstand abnormal economic dislocations caused by the war by providing imports at approximately prewar levels and (2) complement U.S. support of Cambodian military efforts through application of local currency generated by the U.S. economic programs.

The United States has entered into agreements with the Cambodian Government to finance \$70 million worth of commodities under the Commodity Import Program and \$8.9 million worth of agricultural commodities under Title I, Public Law 480, for a total of \$78.9 million in economic assistance for fiscal year 1971. Both of these programs generate local currency. It is anticipated that about \$75 million in equivalent local currency will be used for military personnel costs in support of the Cambodian Government national defense budget for calendar year 1971. The equivalent of about \$2 million in local currency will be used for U.S. administrative and other expenses in Cambodia.

The \$70 million Commodity Import Program was implemented in three phases. Phase 1, a \$10 million agreement signed March 2, 1971, and phase 2, a second \$10 million agreement implemented by a March 27, 1971, amendment to the original agreement provided for the importation of numerous commodities, a considerable part of which was allocated for petroleum products. As of September 1971 petroleum and petroleum products valued at about \$1.16 million had been delivered to Cambodia under the first \$20 million part of the program. The following schedule shows the breakdown of eligible commodities and deliveries as of September 1971 under the first \$20 million part of this program.

APPENDIX IV

<u>Commodity</u>	<u>Amount eligible</u>	<u>Amount delivered</u>
	(000 omitted)	
Petroleum and petroleum products	\$ 7,800	\$1,163
Chemicals, dyeing and tanning materials, and plastic materials	4,590	-
Machinery other than electrical	2,700	-
Manufactured paper products	1,220	-
Manufactured rubber products	1,100	-
Manufactured nonmetallic minerals	1,100	-
Electrical machinery	720	-
Transportation equipment	270	-
Gas, natural and manufactured	90	-
Nonferrous metals	90	-
Manufactured metal hoes	90	-
Polishing and cleaning preparation	80	-
Sanitary, plumbing, heating, and lighting fixtures	50	-
Cotton blankets	40	-
Miscellaneous books and other read- ing material	40	-
Mineral tar, tar oil, and crude chemicals	20	-
	<u>\$20,000</u>	<u>\$1,163</u>

On May 31, 1971, the United States entered phase 3 of the Commodity Import Program with the signing of a \$50 million agreement. According to the agreement any commodities determined eligible under Agency for International Development criteria may be imported into Cambodia. As of October 6, 1971, provisional importation licenses valued at about \$7.45 million had been issued; however, no commodities had been delivered to Cambodia under the \$50 million agreement.

The Title I, Public Law 480, agreement was entered into on March 2, 1971, and authorized the importation of \$8.5 million worth of agricultural commodities. This agreement was increased to \$8.9 million by an amendment dated September 7, 1971. As of October 1, 1971, \$1.9 million worth of commodities had been shipped and \$825,000 worth of wheat flour and vegetable oil had arrived in Cambodia. The following

APPENDIX IV

schedule shows the breakdown of commodities authorized, shipped, and delivered as of October 1, 1971.

<u>Commodity</u>	<u>Authorized</u>	<u>Shipped</u>	<u>Delivered</u>
	—————(000 omitted)—————		
Wheat flour	\$1,381	\$ 921	\$712
Vegetable oil	350	175	113
Cotton fiber	2,016	-	-
Cotton yarn	3,175	481	-
Tobacco	<u>1,984</u>	<u>360</u>	<u>-</u>
Total	<u>\$8,906</u>	<u>\$1,937</u>	<u>\$825</u>

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