

KR's leaders are still hiding from history

The Cambodia Daily

Monday, March 20, 2006

By Ra Chhayrann

I am writing in response to a statement by Nuon Chea, Brother Number Two, in Friday's story "Pailin Students: KR Atrocities Just a Myth," (page 1).

Nuon Chea was quoted as saying: "The people who organized this forum did not join the Khmer Rouge movement, so they cannot understand it. It's like the difference between the pot and the ladle. The ladle sits in the pot, but it doesn't know how the soup tastes."

It is very shameful that the leader of the regime thinks in such an unreasonable way. It's time for the low-ranking KR soldiers-especially those who were at the forum trying to defend leaders like Nuon Chea-to see that the KR leaders are still using them to hide their responsibilities before the court of law and Cambodian history.

As a young Cambodian, I write to inform Nuon Chea that to understand or study the KR regime, it is not necessary to have joined it. It can be understood through research. I am now collecting and preserving KR documents for the Documentation Center of Cambodia. I have come to understand a lot about KR history through interviewing victims and former cadres.

I have learned that the regime killed, tortured and starved many of its compatriots. This has convinced me that surviving KR leaders must be accountable for such atrocities.

KR leaders wrote their own history while in power, a history that led to the deaths of nearly 2 million Cambodians at the expense of Cambodia's so-called liberation from imperialism and feudalism. Recently, KR leaders want to create historical committees to rewrite KR history. This is a very bad idea, because the KR already produced historical textbooks while it was in power. Such publications are still around today if low-ranking KR cadres wish to read them. If Nuon Chea and other KR leaders can clarify at the Khmer Rouge tribunal how the public is wrong in its understanding that he is responsible for the crimes, a new KR history will be revealed. Nuon Chea would then become the champion of preserving that secret history.