

Read copy -

TESTIMONY OF DR. KENNETH M. QUINN
AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE TO CAMBODIA

(A8)

BEFORE THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Sen. McCain - I can think of no greater honor I could have received to day than to be introduced to the Committee by Sen. McCain.

I wanted my children to be here today so they could meet in person a man who

I am of course extremely honored that the President and the ^{displeased} Secretary of State have chosen me to represent our country in ^{such incredible} the Kingdom of Cambodia.

- my wife Le Son, children Davis, Shannon & Kelly here today - They shared risks in Manila, given me support throughout my career & my life

My involvement with Cambodia began on a hot and humid Mekong Delta afternoon in June 1973, when I climbed to the top of Nui Sam Mountain along the Vietnamese-Cambodian border and witnessed a spectacle that would forever change Cambodia and reorient my professional career.

From that vantage point at the top of Nui Sam, as far as the eye could see, every single one of the dozens of hamlets that dotted the lush green Cambodian plain was ablaze. Thick black smoke billowed from every cluster of thatched dwellings in which thousands and thousands of Cambodian rice farmers and their families lived.

I was stunned. In my six years as an adviser in Indo-China, I had never seen a similar sight. I was at a loss to explain it, but intensely interested in knowing what had occurred.

The explanation was not long coming.

Great privilege to travel with

Sen. McCain with Gen. Vessey - also to see in effort to account for our missing men. McCain great leadership

My greatest privilege in life - married to my wife & father of these wonderful kids - women & trade that for anything.

For on that June day, the Khmer Rouge had changed from being the most well behaved revolutionaries in Asia to the most radical. What they had done was force every Cambodian family to abandon its home and belongings and march to new sites in which they all would begin new communal lives under some of the most draconian conditions ever perpetrated by a communist regime. All of their houses and possessions were burned to the ground to symbolize the finality of this change and to ensure they had nothing to which to return. In short, it was a preview of the cataclysm that was to befall all of Cambodia with the Khmer Rouge victory nearly two years later.

Since that day in June 1973, my career has not ventured too far from Cambodia for very long;

--I was enormously intrigued by the questions posed by the dreadful policies of the Khmer Rouge; i.e., who was Pol Pot and why was he killing all these people. And so I dedicated a significant part of my private life to answering these questions in my doctoral dissertation at the University of Maryland entitled, "The Origins of Radical Cambodian Communism."

--I was part of the White House crisis management team dealing with the rescue of the Mayaguez in May of 1975.

--In 1979, while on assignment in the Office of Governor Robert Ray of Iowa, I served as Executive Director of Iowa Shares, a fund-raising effort which provided life sustaining assistance to starving Cambodian refugees.

--Between 1976 and 1993 I published a number of articles on Cambodia and the Khmer Rouge in various books and journals.

--From 1990 to 1991, while serving as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, I participated in negotiating and implementing the Paris Agreement on Cambodia which was at the time the largest and most successful UN Peacekeeping effort ever undertaken and which led to the release of over 2,000 political prisoners, the return of King Sihanouk and the establishment of democracy in a country which had gone through unimaginable horror.

-- In 1991 I personally gained approval for the first U.S. POW/MIA search teams to enter Cambodia.

--In both 1992 and 1993, I led U.S. delegations to preparatory meetings of the International Committee on the Reconstruction of Cambodia, which laid out the strategy for the economic recovery of the country which was subsequently

approved by the Foreign Ministers of the donor countries.

It is a matter of great credit and a tribute to the bi-partisan efforts of the Congress and the Executive that the United States can point to its actions over the past fifteen years to support Cambodian refugees, nurture democratic forces, relieve human misery, and help preserve and restore the Cambodian culture. The American people can take enormous satisfaction in knowing that the approximately \$1 billion that Congress provided to aid in this process has helped produce a new chance for Cambodia. But this work is not finished and a safe and prosperous future for the Cambodian people is not yet a certainty. Should the Senate confirm me, Mr. Chairman, I would view it as my most essential mission to do all that is appropriate to help the new democratic government succeed thus ensuring that Cambodia never again endures a Khmer Rouge nightmare.

I will be pleased to answer any questions which members of the Committee may have.

Drafted: EAP:KQuinn

SEVLC 14479 x73133 6/28/95

Cleared: EAP:KWiedemann

EAP/VLC:DHarter

H:KMcCormick