

direct actions of OHR and Sfor. The international community, itself, may alter its perception of how to structure the relationship between the entities and Bosnia-Herzegovina itself and this will affect post-conflict media policy. And in the best of worlds, professionalism, the building of an independent media sector, and the growth of a comprehensive, increasingly autonomous public service broadcasting sector will combine to hasten the likelihood of a mature and stable democratic state.

CAMBODIA

A. Lin Neumann

Nearly ten years after the 1991 Paris Peace Accords brought an end to communist rule in Cambodia and the beginning of a free press, the country's media institutions still have a lot to learn. Despite millions of dollars spent by the international community to train journalists and encourage free expression, sadly, professionalism is still rare in the Khmer language press and many journalists are in despair at the state of their profession. Radio and television are essentially under the control of the state and there is no functioning independent journalists' association to promote independence and ethical guidelines. "In some ways our press is too free," said Kher Muntit, a leading Cambodian journalist who works for the Associated Press in Phnom Penh. "There is no code of ethics, no professional standards. It is a big problem for those of us who care about our profession."

Journalists, educators and others interviewed in Phnom Penh recently were almost unanimous in citing the failure of most training programmes undertaken by international organisations in the last several years. Dr. Lao Mun Hay of the Khmer

Institute for Democracy said, "I think the way we have trained our journalists has not been very effective in inculcating professionalism. Seminars are opened and closed and that's it. There is no test, no follow-up, the courses didn't last long enough. Without a real program, it is a waste of resources."

Michael Hayes, the American publisher and editor of the biweekly English language *Phnom Penh Post* has informally trained a number of Khmer journalists at his paper, most of whom have gone on to work at wire services or left the country. As a former official with the Asia Foundation, before founding his paper in 1993, he is another harsh critic of existing training models: "Per dollar, the results are low but you can rest assured that every final report of every seminar documented successes. NGOs don't report failures. I know. I used to write those reports."

If the international community had considered more carefully the dire condition of the Cambodian media, the strategies might have been more long-term and realistic, according to Hayes. "It is very difficult here," he said. "Maybe it takes a generation to achieve real results." Hayes points to a very real problem: Given the genocide of the Pol Pot regime and almost continuous warfare in the country prior to the late 1998 collapse of the Khmer Rouge, the problems infecting the Cambodian body politic may have been very nearly insoluble. Certainly the media, with its emphasis on violence, retribution and political power has reflected the broader realities of the society in the transitional period.

More than seven years have passed since the UN-sponsored 1993 elections and the pullout of the United Nations Transitional Authority for Cambodia, the

body charged with keeping the peace after the Paris Accords and administering the first democratic elections under the agreement. Also included in UNTAC's ambitious mandate was the establishment of a free press. This was a formidable challenge for a country that had suffered constant tragedy since 1975. First, the Khmer Rouge killed most of the nation's intellectuals. Then after 1979 the country struggled through 12 years of Leninist rule and civil war under the communist regime led by Hun Sen following the Vietnamese invasion that ousted Pol Pot. "Cambodians do not have a common set of moral and ethical values," said Dr. Lao. "The Khmer Rouge destroyed all that."

GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE

Bad taste and ethical lapses aren't the only manifestation of dire media problems. Khieu Khanarith, a former communist-era newspaper editor who is the Secretary of State for Information under the ruling Cambodian People's Party ("CPP"), threatened to suspend the publication of two newspapers identified with the opposition Sam Rainsy Party for alleged violations of the country's tough press law. Khanarith, who is technically the number two person in the Information Ministry but in practice is the government's media czar, determined on his own authority that the comments by the papers insulted the government and the King and could incite race riots. It was the first time since 1998 that the government had issued such threats against the press. Local observers became worried that the government would pursue further sanctions as the CPP consolidated its hold on power.

Historically, the threats are quite real. In 1994, the editor of *Samlong Yuvachon Khmer*, Nun Chan, was killed by still-unidentified gunmen following a series of

official threats. In 1995 the paper was suspended from publication for several weeks, and its editor arrested when Khanarith acted following the publication of articles critical of then-Second Prime Minister Hun Sen. In the intervening years, four other journalists have been killed in Cambodia and numerous others attacked; newspapers have frequently been shut down by official action. Hun Sen's July 1997 coup dissolved the results of the UN-brokered 1993 elections and his uneasy partnership with the winner of a plurality in that election, Prince Norodom Ranariddh and his National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia ("FUNCINPEC") party. After the coup, dozens of opposition-oriented journalists fled the country. Cambodia's most widely recognised journalists' organisation, the Khmer Journalists Association, effectively ceased to exist when its chairman, Pin Samkhon, fled into exile at the same time.

A related and wider problem is the lack of effective redress for libel and other civil offences in the Cambodian court system, which leads to a lack of professional restraint on the part of the media. While a free press is guaranteed by the 1993 constitution, it functions under a legal framework that allows the media to impugn reputations at will in the absence of professional ethics and standards. Thus the media on the one hand is left to its own sometimes crude devices and on the other is vulnerable to arbitrary government sanctions. This leaves journalists frequently feeling that there are no rules of the road to navigate, other than the protection of powerful individuals.

The legal environment and formal and informal government pressures are a further reflection of the broader problem of

impunity in Cambodia, in which many crimes go unpunished and corrupt courts and judges have been widely blamed for allowing a sense of lawlessness to pervade the country. In relation to the media, no one has ever been brought to justice in Cambodia for killing a journalist, for example, and many reporters live with the fear of being attacked for what they write.

The fractionalised political environment has made most newspapers hostage to one political patron or another and also distorted the economics of the newspaper business. Norbert Klein of Open Forum Cambodia, an NGO that monitors the local press, estimates that 99% of local advertising revenue goes to just ten newspapers—out of some thirty publishing regularly in Phnom Penh and 200 existing press licenses; *Rasmei Kampuchea* alone accounts for 23% of advertising revenue. His conclusion is that most newspapers are dependent for their existence on a web of patronage that has inextricably enmeshed political interests with the Cambodian media.

Michael Hayes of the *Phnom Penh Post* put it more bluntly, "No Khmer paper makes money so everything is subsidised by somebody." As a result, headlines often point accusing fingers at opponents, with opposition papers calling CPP politicians crooks and tools of the Vietnamese and CPP papers accusing opposition leaders of being stupid and corrupt. Most observers believe that wild headlines and unsourced stories—especially in the years of coalition government from 1993 to 1997—contributed to the political tension and fractionalisation that very nearly kept Cambodia from emerging from the darkness of its political past.

With Hun Sen finally having reached an accommodation with the former opposition FUNCINPEC party following his coup and the disputed 1998 elections, things seem to have calmed down somewhat in the press. In part this helps to explain a shift in the media away from FUNCINPEC and toward the CPP since the 1997 coup. With the CPP again the most powerful party in the country, it is able to set the tone for the media under its sway. FUNCINPEC is no longer fuelling heated headlines, according to local observers. Ranariddh, currently president of the National Assembly and a potential successor to the throne of his ailing father, King Norodom Sihanouk, has reached a personal compromise with Hun Sen. Also, the collapse of the Khmer Rouge in late 1998 following the death of Pol Pot means that the country is at peace for the first time in more than 30 years. "I hope the peace lasts," said Kher Muntit. "I am so tired of reporting on the Khmer Rouge."

INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIES

In many ways the international community was unprepared for the depths of the problems facing the Cambodian media in a country that has only had a chance at real peace since the collapse of the Khmer Rouge. "Post conflict? We have only had peace for a few months," said Sek Bariso of the Cambodian Communications Institute. "Maybe now we are in a post-conflict situation." In the years following the Paris Peace Accords, armed conflict continued in many parts of the country, occasionally flaring into open warfare, either between the Khmer Rouge and the central government or between FUNCINPEC and the CPP, as happened for several months following the 1997 coup.

Stripped of a base of professional journalists by years of civil war and

emerging from the shadows of one of history's darkest regimes, Cambodia's media was in as desperate a state as the rest of the nation in 1991. The few practising journalists had worked for the state media under the strict guidance of the communist government while others had been part of the partisan opposition press, much of it located abroad or in refugee camps along the border with Thailand and supporting various armed factions opposed to the CPP. Pin Samkohn, then-president of the Khmer Journalists Association, said in 1995 that the Khmer Rouge era so decimated the ranks of journalists that he knew of only ten Cambodians working as journalists at the time who were working as journalists before 1975, the year Pol Pot seized power.

Into this environment, UNTAC decreed that the press would be free as a precondition for elections but there was no infrastructure for a press. New newspapers had to be printed in Thailand and shipped into Phnom Penh. (Now there are a number of printing presses, however.) A communist culture of obedience and control had to be reformed almost overnight, since the clock was ticking on UNTAC from the moment it was established. A free press provision was eventually included in the 1993 constitution after the election and private newspapers began to appear.

It was never the UN's intention to get into the media business over the long-term but UNTAC realised that without a free press, it would be impossible to hold a real election but without a working press after 1991, the burden was on UNTAC to set up some kind of media in a hurry. This gave rise to Radio UNTAC, a widely acclaimed alternative source of credible news and information that many credit with helping to create the environment that made the 1993 elections possible and led to a 95% turnout

despite efforts by the Khmer Rouge to terrorise the populace into rejecting the polls. As the first broadcast station under a UN peacekeeping mission, Radio UNTAC pointed out the necessity of widely accessible news and information as a key component of a transitional environment. By all accounts, Radio UNTAC was popular and trusted, giving Cambodia, for the first time, a widely available source of non-biased news and giving political parties and candidates access to the media for the 1993 polls.

Radio is vital to Cambodia, which has a very low literacy rate and a population barely served by newspapers outside of Phnom Penh. But when UNTAC pulled out in late 1993, Radio UNTAC went off the air, perhaps prematurely, and the infrastructure left behind was not put to good use, according to critics. In some ways, the international community appears naive in retrospect for thinking that 18 months of UNTAC and the holding of elections would be enough to set the tone for the future. It was just not that easy. Gordon Adams of the BBC, who worked in Cambodian radio education, wrote in the magazine *Crosslines* in 1995 that there were no funds for transmitter costs, spare parts for the state of the art recording equipment were unavailable, telecommunication links to remote transmitters became inoperative, and the radio receivers which had been delivered to villagers fell into disrepair. In short, the operation was unsustainable, a fact that was compounded by the government's desire to maintain tight control over radio and television, even while allowing newspapers to speak their mind.

Radio UNTAC's operations manager, Jeff Heyman, countered in an email interview for this article that it was never UNTAC's job to sustain the media. "We did

give some thought, perhaps not enough, about what might happen after UNTAC's mandate expired," he said. "But, to be honest, 'press freedom' as a goal was not exactly in UNTAC's mandate. Our goal was to provide an environment for free and fair elections, and for the first time in such a UN mission, a broadcasting station was used to further this aim . . . with its role complete, the station had to close in order for the Cambodian people to finally take charge of their own destiny."

ELECTRONIC MEDIA CONTROLS

That destiny of the electronic media, if not in print, has come increasingly to resemble other authoritarian regimes in Southeast Asia. In this sense, Cambodia does not have a free press and the state exercises formal and informal control over the electronic media, with licenses to operate withheld from CPP opponents and granted to allies. It is a process that has been underway continuously since the 1993 elections, according to *Cambodian News Media* by John Marston (forthcoming in *Foreign Devils and Other Journalists: The News Media in Southeast Asia*, (D. Kingsbury et al. eds., Clayton, Victoria: Monash Asia Institute)). "The distinctions between corporate, party, and state media, which seemed fairly clear at the time of the 1993 elections, blurred more and more with the formation of joint ventures and the success of the CPP in consolidating its power in relation to state institutions," writes Marston. "Even before the 1997 coup, CPP had managed to dominate most of the large-scale media institutions in the country, and, after bringing FUNCINPEC radio and television into its camp at the time of the coup, was clearly the dominant player from then on."

With the exception of one very low-power radio station run by the Women's Media Center in Phnom Penh and the iconoclastic Radio Beehive owned by businessman Mam Sonando, Cambodia's airwaves are dominated either by the government or government allies, according to observers in Phnom Penh. For example, the Sam Rainsy Party, now the principle opposition voice in the country, has repeatedly been denied permission to open a radio station in recent years. The country's six television stations, which once broadcast some innovative public affairs programming—including a programme on state TV, cancelled in 1995, which allowed callers to ask government ministers questions live—is now quiet, with news self-censorship the rule on-air. Even major news stories, which are bannered in the newspapers, can be left out of the electronic news. The death of Pol Pot in 1998, for example, went unreported on Cambodian radio and television, according to Michael Hayes.

This vacuum of electronic information has been partly filled by Khmer language short wave broadcasts from the BBC, Voice of America, and the U.S.-government owned Radio Free Asia (whose Cambodian programming director, based in Washington, is Pin Samkohn, former head of the Khmer Journalists Association). But there are limits to the government's patience with these foreign outlets. An innovative agreement that would have given RFA an FM transmitter site in Cambodia was withdrawn by the Ministry of Information earlier this year.

It is a curious situation, to be sure, where the print press is unbridled to a degree rarely seen in most countries while the electronic media is government dominated. An opportunity clearly exists here for the

international community to exert efforts to pressure the government to open the airwaves to dissenting voices. It is clear to many observers that the print press has remained free in large part due to international pressure to respect freedom of expression. Before Cambodian democracy can be said to take firm hold, however, that freedom should extend to radio and television.

TRAINING EFFORTS

Anxious to help Cambodia dig out from its disastrous political maelstrom, UNESCO, the Asia Foundation, and a variety of other funders and agencies engaged in a number of training programmes for the media following the 1993 elections. They were part of an explosion of NGO activity in the 1990s that led to vast amounts of money being spent to rebuild Cambodia and establish a civil society. The rush of money and organisations into Cambodia during the period following the Paris Accords and the 1993 elections was not unlike the scramble to help Indonesia following the ouster of Suharto or the current drive to rebuild East Timor. In Cambodia, the West wanted to help but frequently, according to observers who were in Phnom Penh at the time, there was little coordination among funding agencies and NGOs, at least in media, and little long-term planning. Most of the media training efforts involved short-term seminars, with little follow-up or rigorous recruitment of students. The seminars appear to have had a limited impact on the journalists they were designed to serve. "I took part in some training courses," said Kher Muntit of Associated Press. "But their impact is really very little because of the political situation." Others note that while western notions of fairness and objectivity may be expressed at seminars, the

participants are in no position to impose such values on their editors and publishers once the training is finished.

UNESCO and its partner donors, principally the Danish and French governments, in 1994 began funding the Cambodian Communications Institute ("CCI") in partnership with the Ministry of Information, which donated a building to house the institute on the grounds of the ministry. In its first several years, the format of the training at CCI was mostly short-term seminars on a variety of subjects taught by foreign experts. Although now its current director, Sek Barisoth, says that longer terms courses are being offered to working journalists, in part, because short-term seminars have proven ineffective.

While Barisoth is personally respected even by government opponents, CCI has drawn criticism because of its connection to Hun Sen. A promised "Royal Decree" to give the institute an independent charter and Board of Directors has yet to be acted upon. Several journalists in Phnom Penh say they have been reluctant to work with the Institute out of fear that their comments in seminars may be monitored by agents of the government. Their fears are impossible to verify independently and Barisoth says government agents no longer show an interest in the Institute, although he admits that CCI continues to have image problems as a result of its formal link to the government.

The Asia Foundation, with its principal funding coming from the United States Agency for International Development, chose to work in the early 1990s with the Khmer Journalists Association in hopes of promoting a strong independent association to promote ethical standards and professionalism. The

foundation brought in an outside expert and helped to develop a code of ethics and a series of training seminars with the KJA but unfortunately, the association split into two factions in 1995, with Hun Sen's allies promoting a pro-CPP organisation, the League of Cambodian Journalists, and reportedly pressuring journalists to leave the KJA. As a result, the KJA became associated with Ranariddh's FUNCINPEC party. With the 1997 coup and Pin Samkohn's exile, the KJA effectively ceased to exist. The LCJ has also become dormant, leaving journalists without an active professional association in Cambodia.

The Asia Foundation distanced itself from the KJA following the split and has chosen to work on one of the more promising current initiatives in Cambodia: a one-year certificate programme in journalism at the University of Phnom Penh. Two of the most widely respected Cambodian journalists, Agence France-Presse's Reach Sambath and Kher Munthit of Associated Press, both teach in the programme and there is a desire to see the programme evolve into a degree programme in journalism. "Maybe we have to forget the old generation of journalists," said Reach, "and focus on the new ones if we are going to change Cambodia."

Short-term training programmes have not disappeared from the scene, partly because they are an easy sell to funders, who like to see concrete results from their efforts. The Canadian government, for example, is currently funding a year-long series of radio training workshops. As with many such seminars in Asia and elsewhere, the programme is directed by non-Khmer speaking trainers and is short-term; future follow-up is unclear and the programme is concentrating on politically neutral techniques rather than long-range skills and

potentially controversial topics. This is not to say that the Canadians, their NGO partner, or their trainers are lacking in good will or commitment. But the persistence of short-term training, despite mounting criticism from participants and others about the efficacy of these programmes in Cambodia and elsewhere is a sign of how entrenched the model has become. "I don't know how much good it really does," one consultant who makes his living doing radio training in the developing world told me recently. "But at least it doesn't hurt."

"Your short term training programmes always look good on paper," says Kavi Chongkittavorn, the Executive Editor of the *Nation* newspaper in Bangkok and chairman of the Southeast Asian Press Alliance, a regional advocacy group. "It makes a nice report for an organisation but it does no good." Kavi, who was a correspondent in Cambodia in the late 1980s and travels frequently to Phnom Penh, advocates the use of regional experts, third-country newspaper internships and local associations for training journalists. Unfortunately, he says, the international community wanted rapid results in Cambodia, something which in retrospect was probably impossible to achieve. "UNESCO and others wanted to make a quick foothold in the press. That is always the case. They spend the money too quickly and it becomes corrupt. The seminars are some kind of perk that gets passed around with no real effect. That is the problem."

PRIVATE EFFORTS

In the view of this writer, good journalists come from good newspapers and other media outlets. In that sense, probably the most effective media initiatives in Cambodia have come from private sources. A Thai newspaper group started *Rasmei*

Kampuchea in 1993, in a joint venture with powerful businessman and Hun Sen ally Theng Bun Ma. When the Asian economic crisis forced the Thais to relinquish the investment in 1997, the paper was established well enough to continue on its own. While *Rasmei* remains pro-government, it is arguably the closest thing Cambodia has to a balanced Khmer language broadsheet. Its editor, Pen Samithy, is credited with trying to professionalise and train his staff. Samithy freely acknowledges his personal links to the old CPP party—he was trained in journalism in Moscow in the 1980s—but says he is now free to criticise the CPP—and has done so editorially.

Samithy is part of an informal group—which includes Kher Muntit of AP, Reach Sambath of AFP, and Sek Barisoth of CCI—which has met to discuss ways to professionalise the media and engender greater cooperation among Khmer journalists. The efforts are fledgling and may yet be derailed by the fractious political environment but such discussions should be encouraged whenever possible and broadened to include as many participants as possible. The long-term development of an indigenous and responsible press in Cambodia must be sustained by Cambodians themselves working through professional associations, perhaps in cooperation with other Asian journalists.

The two privately operated, English-language publications in Cambodia continue to serve the role of *de facto* newspapers of record and as training grounds for some Khmer journalists. The *Cambodian Daily*, technically owned by an NGO, was started by Bernard Krisher, a former *Newsweek* correspondent based in Tokyo, in 1994. Using his contacts in the industry, Krisher has been able to attract in-kind donations

from foreign media companies while recruiting an eager staff of young expatriate journalists who work long hours at low-pay in return for the excitement of the Cambodia story and the chance to build a reputation. It is a reasonable effort. The paper maintains high editorial standards, prints a few pages in Khmer, and trains and employs a handful of local journalists.

The *Daily*, along with Michael Hayes' biweekly *Phnom Penh Post*, which he began in 1993, is a must read for expatriates and intellectuals in Phnom Penh. *The Post*, which is operated as a private concern with no NGO status, may be the only newspaper in Cambodia completely supported through advertising revenue and newsstand sales. It has also been an important training ground for both foreign and local journalists and has gained an international reputation for frequently breaking significant stories in its pages. Both papers are the products of a more optimistic time, when foreign companies thought there might be money to be made in Cambodian media, but their persistence has been crucial in providing a source of fair-minded reporting in a politically charged environment.

Both publications have had an uneasy relationship with the government and, as recently as late 1998, Khieu Khanarith threatened to have them shut down and their journalists expelled from the country. International outrage, including the direct intervention of the American ambassador to Cambodia, prevented the government from acting on the threat.

CONCLUSION

International shame over the tragedy of the Pol Pot years and the complicity of many countries, including the United States, in failing to apply strong sanctions to the

Khmer Rouge even after they were driven from power by the Vietnamese in 1979, meant there was no shortage of goodwill available to assist the Cambodian media—and other civil society sectors—following the Paris Peace Accords. But given the large amounts of time and money expended to foster a free press, it is no wonder that many feel dismayed by the results. The newspapers are often too free and the electronic media not free enough. On top of that, Khmer journalists do not have even a professional association to defend their rights and expand their horizons.

In retrospect, it is easy to fault the United Nations for giving UNTAC a limited mandate in which to accomplish its goals or to blame those who provided short-term training for failing to see the limitations of their work. The problems go much deeper than that, however, and it may be that in the case of Cambodia only time and patience will lead to the kind of media environment and sustainable institutions that can truly contribute to building a democratic society. It is important, however, that the following lessons of the Cambodia experience be considered in future situations:

- Donors and NGOs should seek wherever possible to coordinate their efforts at journalism training and funding and to apply models that may yield long-term results, such as the development of a faculty for journalism education at the University of Phnom Penh and longer-term training courses for working journalists.

- Partnerships with the government, despite promises of independence, can hamper the effectiveness of programmes to reach a wide audience, as was the case at the Cambodian Communication Institute.

- Care should be given that the establishment of alternative radio outlets, like Radio UNTAC, have a long enough life to enable lessons and technology to be applied widely to the country involved.

- The creation and nurturing of professional associations is of crucial importance. Without a functioning journalists' association, the Cambodian media is hampered both in its efforts to negotiate with the government and to develop professional standards.

- Wherever possible, attention should be given to the lessons of neighbouring countries with similar cultures. In the case of Cambodia, Thai and Philippine journalists may have more to offer as trainers and role models than westerners, whose media is light years apart from that of Cambodia in terms of history and culture.

- Patience is a virtue. The international community did almost nothing about the Cambodian tragedy for fifteen years and then rushed in once the peace accords were signed with the idea of transforming the media almost overnight. It may have been an impossible task and a longer-term view could have contributed to more realistic expectations.

KOSOVO

Stacy Sullivan

INTRODUCTION

When NATO forces moved into Kosovo, putting an end to the province's 15-month war, the United Nations was vested with administering the region, essentially making Kosovo a protectorate. Officials of the UN-led mission would have the authority to govern until elections could be