

CULTIVATING CAMBODIA: THE COLD WAR, THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR  
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, AND THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA, 1960-64

by

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(Under the Direction of Libby V. Morris)

ABSTRACT

By the early 1960s, universities in the United States, particularly land-grant institutions, had assumed an important role in U.S. Cold War foreign policy. The basic land-grant ideal—that extending skills and knowledge could lead to greater social and economic development—was in keeping with prevalent U.S. foreign policy goals relative to the less-developed world. Included in the United States’ Cold War arsenal was significant economic aid, including technical assistance projects. U.S. foreign policy architects believed that this technical knowledge would generate economic development leading to stable, democratic nations more oriented towards the United States than China or the Soviet Union. By 1962, the United States Agency for International Development (AID) was funding \$120 million in technical assistance projects carried out by sixty-two U.S. universities in thirty-seven developing countries.

Southeast Asia’s strategic importance to the United States grew considerably after World War II. The region, including Cambodia, was viewed as a key line of defense against the perceived Communist menace and Soviet expansionist goals. In 1960, AID (then the International Cooperation Administration) contracted with the University of Georgia to improve Cambodia’s agricultural capacity by developing the programs and facilities of Cambodia’s

National School of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Forestry. Over the next three years, ten University of Georgia faculty and staff served as long-term project advisors in Cambodia. As part of the project, twelve Cambodian students also attended and graduated from the University of Georgia in agriculture and forestry.

The University of Georgia project in Cambodia provides important insights into the broader issue of land-grant university involvement in U.S. foreign policy during the Cold War. The Georgia project faced a number of challenges, including organizational and bureaucratic conflict between the University of Georgia and AID in Cambodia and a lack of buy-in on the part of the Cambodians.

University officials believed that the land-grant model could assist Cambodia in developing a productive agricultural sector that would generate economic development leading to a stable, democratic Cambodia allied with the United States. These ambitions became a casualty of U.S. foreign policy in Southeast Asia and the realities of the Cold War as Prince Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia in 1963 suspended all AID programs, including the University of Georgia's project.

INDEX WORDS: Universities and Colleges, International Education, University of Georgia, Cambodia, University Technical Assistance, Agency for International Development, Cold War, Land-Grant Universities

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## DEDICATION

To my mother and my late father, who valued family and education above all.

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This study was initiated as a research paper for Thomas G. Dyer's History of Higher Education course. As I struggled to choose a research topic, Tom suggested that I explore a certain University of Georgia project in Cambodia in the 1960s. This conversation led to a three-year odyssey that took me from Athens to Washington, D.C., and to Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

I could not have asked for a more supportive committee throughout this process. My major professor, Libby Morris, was always available to me with encouragement and sound advice both in completing this study and in my own professional development. Libby inspires me through her scholarship and the way in which she approaches all of her work. Doug Toma was a great support and a most enthusiastic committee member. Derrick Alridge's superb qualitative research and historical methods courses taught me how to be a researcher.

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I must acknowledge two exceptional people. Art Dunning initially urged me to pursue a Ph.D. and has supported me professionally since I began the doctoral program. This study would have never been completed without the patience of Steve Wrigley and his unrelenting insistence that I finish. Steve, who perhaps unknowingly has "raised me" professionally, motivates me every day to be more contemplative, to work harder, and to find new ways to make the University better.

Several people provided specific support for my research efforts. Stephen Brown, archivist at the University of Georgia's Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, was especially helpful early on in my research. Ou Thuok (Tuck), Sin Meng Srun, and Peter Cody were kind enough to spend many hours with me discussing their experiences relevant to this study. Staff from the Documentation Center of Cambodia in Phnom Penh went out of their way to aid my research. Bobbie van Haeften in the United States and Phat Muny and Lam Khannarith in Cambodia helped to make connections useful for this project. Donald Branyon, Jr. was particularly generous with his time and with providing access to his father's photographs and files, some of which were used in this study. Fellow graduate students Joy Blanchard and Charlie Mathies were especially supportive of my work.

I wish to acknowledge my loving and understanding family in West Virginia with whom I missed several holiday celebrations because of this project. Finally, Andy Herod, the most brilliant and prolific scholar I know, supported and motivated me every day in so many ways. Thank you, Andy, for always reminding me of what is important in life.



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## CHAPTER I

### THE COLD WAR CONTEXT OF UNIVERSITY TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN CAMBODIA

When Cambodian ruler Prince Norodom Sihanouk visited the United States in October 1958, U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles had hoped to convince him of the “errors” of Cambodia’s neutral position in the Cold War.<sup>1</sup> Particularly vexing to the United States were Sihanouk’s periodic visits to Nikita Khrushchev in Moscow and the fact that, earlier that year, Sihanouk had opened official diplomatic relations with Communist China.<sup>2</sup> Keeping Southeast Asia free of both Chinese and Russian Communism was priority number one on the United States’ foreign policy agenda. A few years earlier, President Eisenhower had summed up the strategic importance of Southeast Asia as a whole in a press conference where he outlined the “falling domino” idea that should one nation of Southeast Asia fall to Communism “the possible consequences of the loss are just incalculable to the free

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<sup>1</sup> Copy of “Cambodia Neutral: The Dictate of Necessity, by Prince Norodom Sihanouk,” file Program, Box 386, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, National Archives at College Park, Maryland (NACP). In July 1958, Sihanouk outlined Cambodia’s neutralist stance in an article in the journal *Foreign Affairs*. Sihanouk maintained that Cambodia’s neutrality was a result of the necessity of being “wedged” between two Western-bloc nations and only “thinly screened” by Laos from two Eastern-bloc countries. He noted that Cambodia’s neutrality is “neither complaisance nor surrender to anyone” and that while he has no “particular liking for Communism” he had no wish to join a crusade against it. He also noted that Cambodia received \$25,000,000 in aid from China over a two-year period and \$40,000,000 in economic and military aid from the United States for fiscal year 1957-58.

<sup>2</sup> Robert J. McMahon, *The Limits of Empire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 83. Kenton Clymer, *The United States and Cambodia, 1870-1969* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 66. The Prince’s visit to the United States was part of “an obvious effort” to repair the relationship between Cambodia and the United States.

world.”<sup>3</sup> By 1958, in the United States’ view, Southeast Asia would be the principal stage on which the Cold War was being played out and Cambodia was arguably “the hub of the wheel in Southeast Asia.”<sup>4</sup>

Indochina, or Southeast Asia, had become of gradual but steadily increasing importance to United States’ post-World War II foreign policy.<sup>5</sup> Before the war, the United States had been content to allow its European allies to colonize and dominate the region as long as trade routes were secure and there was access to raw materials for industrializing economies in Europe and at home. During World War II, access to Southeast Asia’s important natural resources was interrupted with the Japanese occupation of most of the region. Although he had philosophical issues with European countries returning to their colonies after the war, President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s eventual acceptance of the return of a European presence in Southeast Asia was recognition that the realities of the post-war geo-strategic landscape trumped his own deeply-held ideals of national sovereignty, self-determination, and democratic governance. Indeed, Roosevelt wanted the United States to have its own military presence in Southeast Asia and so could not very well protest the return of our European allies. In the end, Roosevelt was more

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<sup>3</sup> Walter LaFeber, ed., *America in the Cold War, Twenty Years of Revolutions and Response, 1947-1967*, Dwight D. Eisenhower: *The Falling Domino and Southeast Asia*, April 7, 1954, (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.), 95.

<sup>4</sup> Clymer, *United States and Cambodia*, 65

<sup>5</sup> McMahon, *Limits of Empire*, 1. The French grouped together into the term Indochine or Indochina their colonies of Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam. Today, Southeast Asia typically refers to the broader region including the countries of Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos. Clymer, *United States and Cambodia*, 19. Clymer notes that Roosevelt would have thought primarily of Vietnam when referring to Indochina as the United States had an official presence only in Vietnam. “A Short History of Cambodia,” 26, file Cambodia: A Short History Of, March 1957, Box 386, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. This document from the U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh notes that Indochina was “an artificial creation embodying today’s Vietnam (Tonkin, Annam, and Cochinchina), Cambodia and Laos—an utterly anomalous entity that owed its existence only to French fiat and which has disappeared without a trace.” Document cover note “This document is not classified. However it should not be made available to any foreign national and is kept in the safe. This is the only copy we have.”

concerned with keeping European allies in the fold of critical post-war alliances and so conceded a return of European powers to their Southeast Asian colonies.<sup>6</sup>

Immediately after the war, U.S. interest in and attention to Southeast Asia was motivated less by its own direct interest in the region and more by how the region and events there affected the political and economic stability of post-war Europe, the first line of defense against the perceived creeping Communist menace and Soviet expansionist goals.<sup>7</sup> Clearly, all of Indochina was not equally accepting of a return by their French colonizers. In Vietnam, the French were met with armed and violent resistance by Ho Chi Minh and the Viet Minh. Although there was a growing nationalist resistance movement in Cambodia, the French mainly met with protests from Sihanouk himself, who claimed that Cambodia had achieved independence under the Japanese. Although Sihanouk was skilled at exploiting the full public relations effect of denouncing the French and pressing the colonizer for independence, he likely had mixed feelings about the French presence in Vietnam as Cambodia and Vietnam had been historic enemies. The French assuaged U.S. concerns about falling back into colonial patterns and Sihanouk's desire to move to an independent Cambodia in 1946 by making Cambodia a "free state associated with France," allowing elections and Cambodia's first constitution.<sup>8</sup>

President Harry Truman continued to indulge European allies, particularly the French, in their desire to keep their respective colonies, even though by 1949 unrest and all out military conflict in Vietnam was worrisome for the United States on a number of levels. First,

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<sup>6</sup> McMahon, *Limits of Empire*, 12-13; and Clymer, *United States and Cambodia*, 19. Clymer notes that Roosevelt was interested in seeing moves towards trusteeships and independence after World War II.

<sup>7</sup> LaFeber, ed., *America in the Cold War*, George F. Kennan ("Mr. X"): *The Sources of Soviet Conduct*, July 1947, 44; Harry S. Truman: The Truman Doctrine, March 12, 1947, 49.

<sup>8</sup> Clymer, *United States and Cambodia*, 20. U.S. officials lamented that the French in reality still ran the country.

particularly with France, Truman was convinced that its conflict in Vietnam would weaken France politically and economically, which could destabilize Europe. Europe's economic recovery was stalled, France was key to that recovery, and the French could not afford another armed conflict. Second, Truman feared that the United States itself would suffer a weakened geo-strategic position relative to the Soviet Union as a result of the French conflict in Vietnam. Nationalist Ho Chi Minh's movement was decidedly Communist-leaning and his followers were growing in number. Would the Indochinese people see the United States in the same light as their French aggressors and oppressors? Finally, the United States and its allies in Europe needed a stable Southeast Asia to maintain access to markets and raw materials, so important to post-war industrial economies and their recoveries, including Japan, which the U.S. government did not want to see turn to the Soviets for aid and assistance.<sup>9</sup>

By 1950, the Truman administration had come to view Southeast Asia as a highly symbolic, if not real, challenge to stopping Communist (both Sino and Soviet) advancement and securing U.S. strategic, economic, and political interests around the world. A number of events heightened U.S. interest there, including the fact that the Soviet Union had detonated an atomic bomb, the establishment of a Communist government in China in 1949, the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, and Beijing's and Moscow's official recognition of Ho Chi Minh's Communist government in Vietnam.<sup>10</sup>

The issues of rising nationalistic sentiment and increasing opposition to his rule were as problematic as the threat of Communism for Cambodia's Prince Sihanouk in the first half of the

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<sup>9</sup> McMahon, *Limits of Empire*, 34-39. McMahon notes that the United States wanted to reduce the post-war dollar gap between the United States and Europe. During the colonial era, European nations earned U.S. dollars through the sale of Southeast Asian raw materials to the United States. Post-war Europe needed access to these raw materials to be able to earn dollars critical to their economic recovery.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

1950s. A radicalized political opposition calling for democratic reforms and independence had coalesced as a group of French-educated Cambodians returned to Cambodia during the early 1950s. Additionally, there were large numbers of Communist Viet Minh in Cambodia and several parts of the country were unsecured. The lines and loyalties between the nationalist democratic reform groups and supporters of Ho Ch Minh in Cambodia were often blurred.<sup>11</sup> Given that by 1954 Sihanouk had successfully negotiated threats to his rule on numerous fronts, and swayed by his argument that he was the only viable alternative to Communist rule in Cambodia, the French acquiesced and Cambodia became an autonomous state as part of the 1954 Geneva conference.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> David P. Chandler, *The Tragedy of Cambodian History: Politics, War, and Revolution Since 1945* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991), 46; and “Short History of Cambodia,” 28. The U.S. Embassy document emphasizes the blurred lines between nationalists, democratic reformers, and Communist groups in Cambodia. The democratic reformers and nationalists called themselves the Committee of National Liberation; the Viet Minh created the Committee for the Liberation of the Cambodian People. The document notes that the “Communists did everything to capitalize on a nationalist cause. Tragically, the French in Cambodia did much the same that the Germans had done in occupied France: By calling all resistance fighters Communists or stooges of the Communists, they did not reduce the prestige of the resistance but merely boosted that of the Communists.” Clymer, *United States and Cambodia*, 28. By the end of 1952 there were an estimated 10,000 Viet Minh in Cambodia.

<sup>12</sup> Clymer, *United States and Cambodia*, 37.

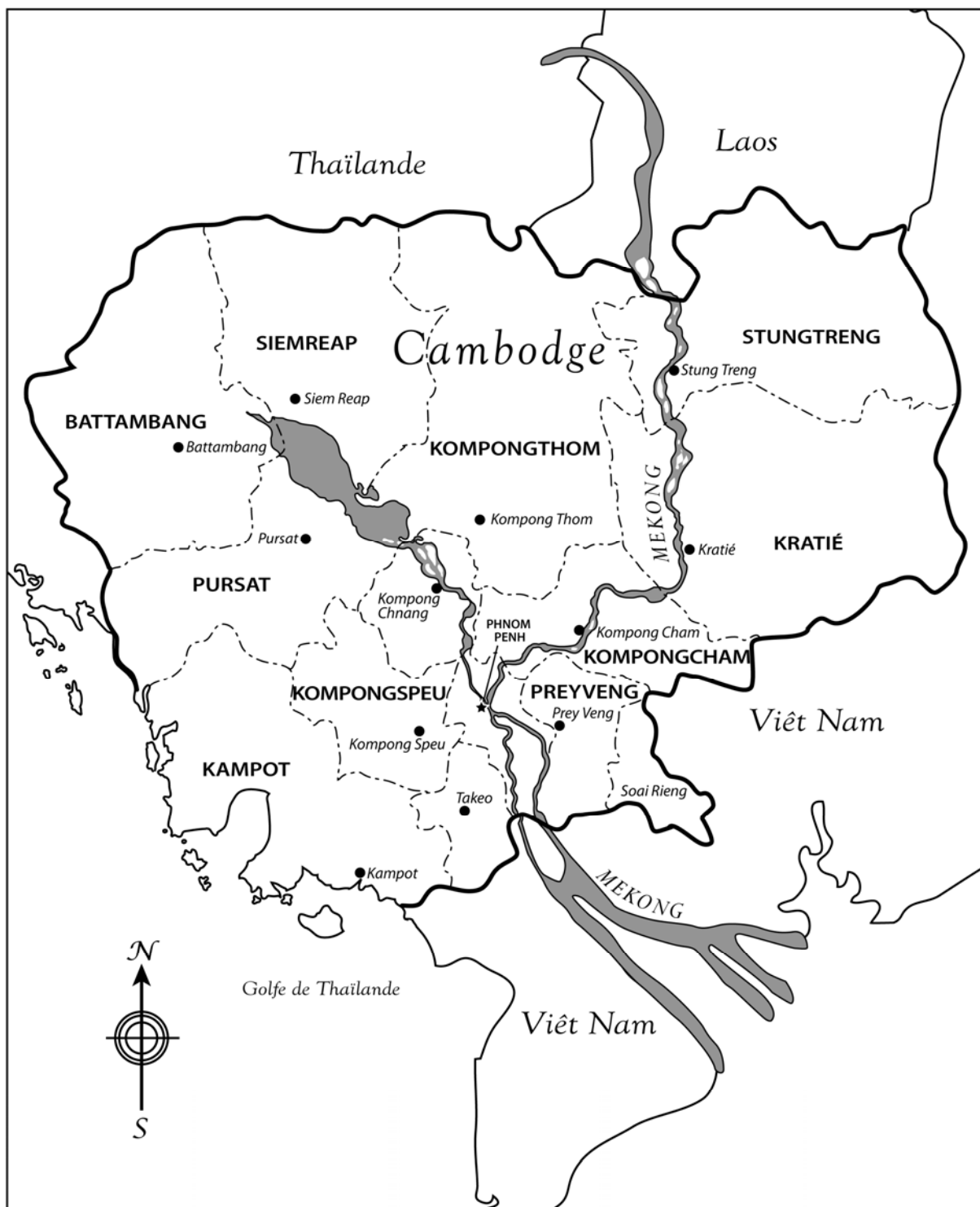


Figure 1.1. Map of Cambodia from the personal files of Donald Branyon. Cartography by University of Georgia Research Services.



The perceived or real threat of Communist expansion in Southeast Asia dominated U.S. foreign policy over the next several years. Additionally, U.S. foreign policy and in particular its philosophy of foreign aid were increasingly being driven by prevailing economic theories relating to best way to ensure economic development in developing nations (and thus keep the nations free from Communism). The United States, through foreign aid, could help the underdeveloped world transform traditional to modern societies and in the process develop stable economic, social and political structures that would be tethered to the free market.<sup>13</sup>

If the Cold War was a zero-sum game and a Communist win anywhere in the world meant a U.S. defeat, the United States would use all of its powers, including military and economic aid, technical assistance, and diplomacy, to stop such a defeat by the Soviets or Chinese. For the United States, it was not simply its own security interests in Southeast Asia that were at stake, but the entire global balance of power that was under attack from Communists seeking to extend and consolidate their own power.<sup>14</sup>

More troubling perhaps to the United States was what was perceived as a change in tactic by Nikita Khrushchev, the Soviet Premier. In the view of the United States, the Soviets were now aggressively exploiting the weaknesses of less developed regions and newly created nations with offers of economic aid—technical assistance, credits, arms, military training, and

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<sup>13</sup> See broadly W.W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*, (Cambridge University Press, 1960) and W.W. Rostow, *The Progress of Economic Growth*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1962). Rostow, who served in the Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson administrations, was the architect of modernization theory, the idea that there were five stages of economic development that traditional societies would pass through to develop into “modern societies” like those of Europe and the United States.

<sup>14</sup> McMahon, *Limits of Empire*, 70; and LaFeber, ed., *America in the Cold War*, NSC-68: *How to Prepare for an Indefinite Period of Tension and Danger*, April 1950, 75.

personnel—to reduce U.S. influence, shift the balance of power to the Soviets, and therefore achieve world domination.<sup>15</sup>

The United States countered the perceived Soviet economic offensive with its own giant carrot—massive increases in economic and military aid to the region, including Cambodia, such that between 1955 and 1959, the United States had provided some \$262,500,000 in economic and military aid to Cambodia.<sup>16</sup> Immediately upon Cambodia's independence from France, a United States Overseas Mission (USOM) office opened in Phnom Penh. The official goals of American aid as carried out by USOM were to consolidate Cambodia's national independence, build a solid national economy, and increase the standard of living and production potential, particularly in rural areas—goals agreed to by the Cambodian government. The broad project categories emanating from these goals and agreed on by both governments included: furnishing foreign exchange for the purchase abroad of imports essential to the Cambodian economy; providing necessary equipment and materials for development projects; training technicians so the Cambodian government could use modern methods to develop agriculture, education, industrial production, natural resources, public health, media, and public works; and sending

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<sup>15</sup> Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, *The Threat of Soviet Economic Policy*, (Washington, D.C., October 1961), file Participants-general letter, etc., Box 128, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. The Chinese strategy was viewed as more selective than that of the Soviets, focusing on countries that were closer geographically and that were not western-leaning since strengthening these countries would mean strengthening their abilities to resist revolutionary pressures.

<sup>16</sup> United States Operations Mission to Cambodia, "U.S. Economic Aid Program to Cambodia, 1955-59, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, January 1960," Box 386, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. U.S. aid to Cambodia began in 1950 and through 1954 was administered through the Special Technical and Economic Mission to the Three Associated States of Indochina in Saigon. The \$7.8 million in military and economic aid for Cambodia during this time was used to assist Cambodia during a time of Viet Minh infiltration. Between 1955 and 1959, a total \$262,500,000 in economic and military aid was granted to Cambodia - \$180,400,000 for economic and military aid (\$93,200,000 to finance economic and technical projects, \$87,200,000 for military salaries and to finance military installations) and \$82,100,000 for military equipment and supplies. McMahon, *Limits of Empire*, 77. McMahon notes that by 1959, South Vietnam was the fifth leading recipient of U.S., aid receiving \$250 million annually.

Cambodians to the United States to study in fields related to economic development. Of course, a substantial portion of U.S. aid to Cambodia was in the form of military assistance; Cambodia and the United States signed an agreement in May 1955 that led to the formation of the Military Assistance and Advisory Group (MAAG) to provide pay and allowances for Cambodian troops, military materials, the construction of military facilities, and logistical training.<sup>17</sup>

The \$103,834,000 allocated for economic and technical aid to Cambodia included technical cooperation programs designed to develop new knowledge and skills that would further Cambodia's economic development and increase its standard of living. This funding targeted programs in the fields of agriculture, health, education, civil police, public administration, and public works.<sup>18</sup> Although around the world the United States had a history of military aid and aid for specific high profile development projects, the addition of aid for technical assistance programs as part of the United States' Cold War arsenal was a direct product of Truman's Point Four program as outlined in his 1949 inaugural address. The idea was that imparting technical knowledge and scientific know-how to underdeveloped nations could improve their economic development and foster stable democracies.<sup>19</sup> Point Four was operationalized when Congress signed the 1950 Act for International Development, which authorized the development of the

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<sup>17</sup> "A Brief Resume of the Activities of the U.S. Embassy in Cambodia," November 12, 1958, file Reference Cody, Box 386, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. "United States Operations Mission to Cambodia, U.S. Economic Aid Program to Cambodia, 1955-59 Summary," Box 386, USAID/Cambodia, RG 286, NACP. Probably the most high-profile result of American aid was the Khmer-American Friendship Highway from Phnom Penh to the deep sea port at Sihanoukville, completed in 1959 at a cost of \$32.2 million.

<sup>18</sup> U.S. Economic Aid Program to Cambodia, 1955-59.

<sup>19</sup> LaFeber, ed., *America in the Cold War*, Harry S. Truman: *The Truman Doctrine*, March 12, 1947, 49.

Technical Cooperation Administration, the agency which would develop, organize, and oversee the implementation of technical assistance programs in developing countries.<sup>20</sup>

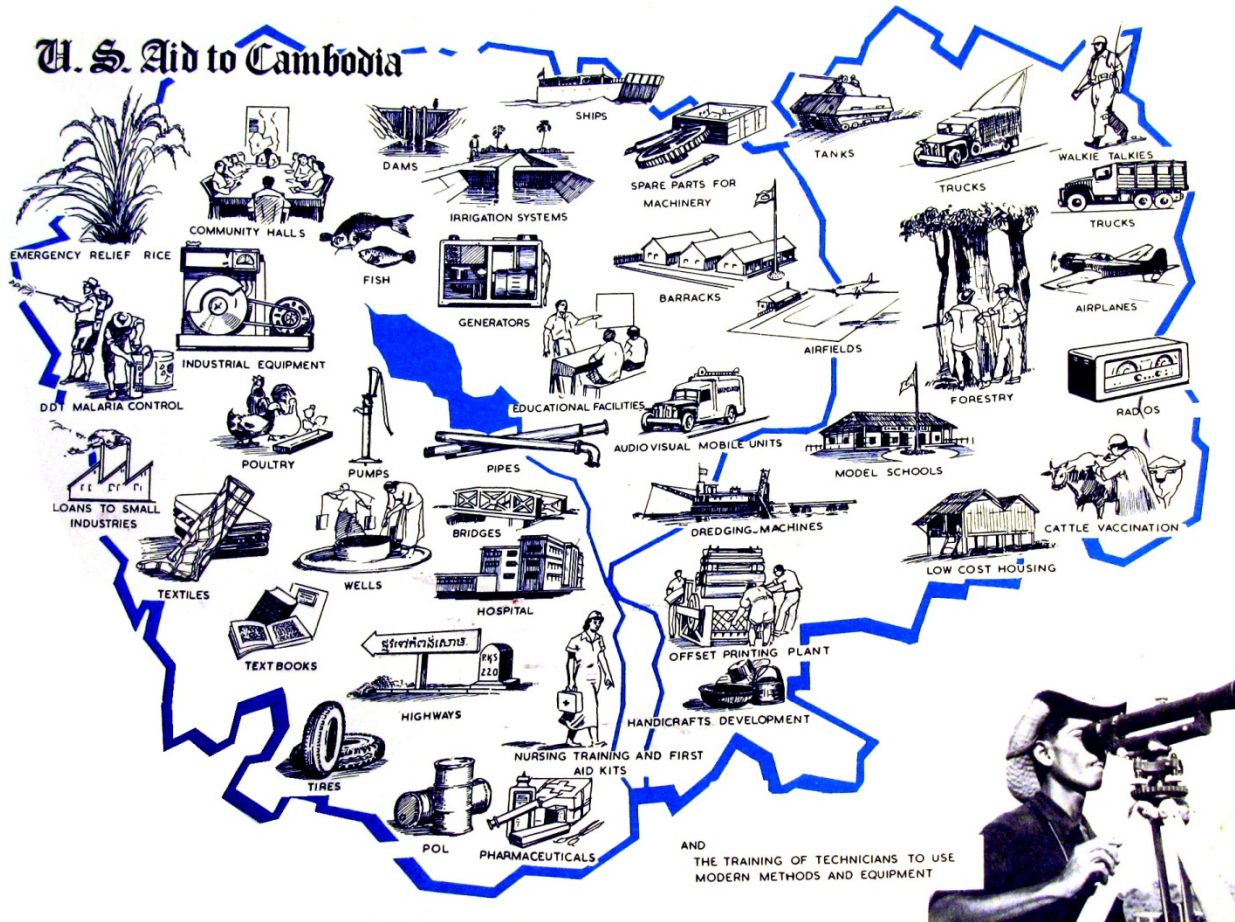


Figure 1.2. A depiction of U.S. aid programs in Cambodia from 1955-57 from the document *U.S. Aid to Cambodia*, file Program 1962-1963 Presentation to Prince Sihanouk, Box 386, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG286, National Archives and Records Administration.

<sup>20</sup> *Act for International Development*, Public Law 535, Chapter 220, Title IV, US Congress HR 7797, 81<sup>st</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> session.

Universities in the United States paid close attention to these developments, particularly those members of the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, who “forcefully volunteered” their services in implementing the technical assistance work that would emanate from Point Four. John Hannah, president of Michigan State University and president of the national association, in particular, offered to President Truman the assistance of universities on implementing Point Four. There was general agreement among the “internationally-minded” land-grant institutions and government officials charged with developing and organizing Point Four technical assistance work that the land-grant philosophy had relevance for the developing world—particularly on projects related to agriculture and rural development—and that projects should seek to transplant the land-grant idea and not the land-grant institutions’ organizational form.<sup>21</sup>

That in the early 1950s those charged with implementing Point Four would see that the land-grant model would have relevance for the developing world is not surprising. The Morrill Act of 1862 and the resulting development of land-grant institutions was one of two movements having the most profound impact on higher education in the United States, the other being federal support for scientific research at universities during World War II.<sup>22</sup> As was the case with U.S. institutions of higher education in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and very early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, if institutions of higher education in the developing world existed at all, they were largely modeled after those of their European colonizers—ivory towers set apart from general society and places

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<sup>21</sup> John M. Richardson, *Partners in Development: An Analysis of AID-University Relations, 1950-1966* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1969), 14; John Ernst, *Forging a Fateful Alliance: Michigan State University and the Vietnam War* (East Lansing, Michigan State University Press, 1998), 6. Hannah also served as a member of the International Development Advisory Board of Point Four from 1950-52. Fred Hechinger, “Export Lessons: U.S. Colleges Play Vital Part in Foreign Aid Programs,” *New York Times*, 15 July, 1962, p. 113. Hechinger notes that in 1962, there were 68 land-grant colleges and universities.

<sup>22</sup> Clark Kerr, *The Uses of the University*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 35-36.

for elite gentlemen to receive education leading to employment in occupations such as medicine and law.

Fresh from independence from their colonizers, however, in the 1950s and 1960s many developing nations, including Cambodia, found themselves in positions similar to that of the United States in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century: with a specific need for trained personnel with skills and knowledge necessary to propel rapid industrialization and agricultural and economic development. Additionally, just as the U.S. land-grant movement had been in part a response to “a growing democratic, even egalitarian and populist trend in the nation,” newly independent nations could now offer education to a broader cross-section once denied access to higher education.<sup>23</sup> This was particularly true in Cambodia, where the lack of attention to education by the French had resulted in a very narrow pipeline of students at the primary and secondary levels and extremely limited opportunities for education or training beyond high school. At the primary and secondary school levels, the French were content to let the traditional pagoda schools provide education. Few state-funded schools existed and almost all teachers were provided by France. This model was not the result of a lack of demand, though: in 1938-39 there were 13,300 students enrolled in state-run elementary schools; by 1955-56, post-independence, there were 195,000. The French certainly did not encourage Cambodians to attend university in France and although some Cambodians were able to attend the Indochinese University in Hanoi, the virtual lack of an educated class in Cambodia meant that, upon independence, there were few trained personnel for government departments such as agriculture, public works, education, etc.

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

The United States estimated that it would be a generation before Cambodia was able to develop the necessary numbers of specialists required to run all government departments.<sup>24</sup>

Thus, the land-grant ideal of developing skills and knowledge that would lead to development and access to higher education for a broader base of society was in keeping with President Truman's intent for Point Four – to export and grow knowledge in the developing world, particularly scientific and technical knowledge, that would generate economic development, which would necessarily lead to stable, democratic nations more inclined to orient themselves to the United States than China or the Soviet Union. Land-grant institutions were poised and ready to assist with this effort, and they did assist. What began as \$35 million in technical assistance projects under Truman<sup>25</sup> had grown significantly under Eisenhower, so that by the time of the Kennedy administration in 1962, funding for technical assistance development projects had grown to \$120 million with over 103 contracts with 62 universities in 37 countries.<sup>26</sup>

It is also not surprising that the two primary educational associations in Washington, the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities and the American Council on Education (ACE) emerged early on as proponents of university involvement in the new government-funded international technical assistance work. Under George Zook's leadership, ACE had been an advocate for international educational exchanges and activities, encouraging institutions to pursue international ties and connections would lead to peace and understanding among nations. Zook saw a role for U.S. colleges and universities in the post-war rebuilding of education in regions affected by the war and was a strong proponent of directing U.S. government funds to

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<sup>24</sup> "Short History of Cambodia," 15 March 1957.

<sup>25</sup> Ernst, *Fateful Alliance*, 7.

<sup>26</sup> Hechinger, "Export Lessons."

support such efforts. During this time the land-grant association was also developing a global outlook as its member institutions' came to see their niche in the practical application of agriculture and science as relevant for the broader world. Additionally, both associations had longstanding and deep relations with the federal government, having sophisticated federal relations apparatuses that advocated for federal funding for higher education for research, student aid and facilities. The land-grant association garnered federal support through the Department of Agriculture for its members' international programs and ACE was successful in convincing the United State Department of State to allow it to administer international education projects in Latin America.<sup>27</sup>

Much of the early growth in federal-university partnerships happened under Harold Stassen's 1953-55 leadership of the Foreign Operations Administration. Stassen, former Governor of Minnesota, presidential candidate, and President of the University of Pennsylvania, brought with him a first-hand understanding of universities and the resources and expertise they could bring to foreign technical assistance projects. Stassen operated from the philosophical perspective that the key to development was education and the pragmatic perspective that utilizing the expertise of university personnel would improve the overall quality of the work being carried out by the United States foreign operations missions. The politician in Stassen could also see the appeal of engaging universities and the implications for increased support from a Congress that was decidedly skeptical of foreign aid. Hence, whereas Congress had in 1953 mandated that the total foreign affairs personnel be reduced by twenty-five percent, Stassen

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<sup>27</sup> Hugh Hawkins, *The Rise of National Associations in American Higher Education, 1887-1950*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 176-191.



saw university personnel working under technical assistance contracts as a way to replace the lost manpower.<sup>28</sup>

Stassen appealed directly to land-grant institutions to help him meet his agency goal of having one university contract in each United States overseas mission. Addressing the 67<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the National Association of Universities and Land-Grant Colleges in 1953, Stassen was specific about how he wanted to see the relationship develop:

We are prepared to enter into new, broad, long term contracts with the Land-Grant colleges in the United States in relationship to specific underdeveloped countries and the educational institutions within those countries. We are prepared on the basis of three year contracts to set agreed upon objectives of accomplishments, and broad outlines of the method of program and to leave to a very major extent the decentralized implementation of research and education and extension work to the institutions within the United States which have the relevant particular kind of training and experience.<sup>29</sup>

By the late 1950s, U.S. land-grant universities had become key actors carrying out U.S. Cold War foreign policy in the underdeveloped world.

When the United States Overseas Mission (USOM) in Cambodia and the International Cooperation Administration (ICA) in Washington first developed an interest in contracting with an American university to expand and improve the Cambodian National College of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Forestry in the late 1950s, it had already identified improving Cambodia's agricultural capacity as was one of its immediate priorities. The United States estimated that although eighty-five to ninety percent of Cambodia's population relied on agriculture, fisheries, and forestry for their livelihood, Cambodia's exportable surplus of agriculture—crops (rice, rubber, corn, pepper, peanuts, and spices), livestock, fish, and forest

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<sup>28</sup> Richardson, *Partners in Development*, 34-39. In 1953, Eisenhower combined all foreign assistance programs including the Technical Cooperation Administration under the Foreign Operations Administration (FOA), which took the place of the former Mutual Security Agency. The FOA was abolished in 1955 and programs were shifted to the Department of State.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 34-35.

products—was far below what it could be. Developing agricultural industries and improving the development of agricultural and forest resources could increase exports that would lead to economic progress. The United States had identified the agricultural development of Cambodia's small farmers in particular as vital to the country's economic development and a "natural bulwark against the rise of totalitarianism" since the farmer who owned his own land, it was believed, was more likely to resist totalitarianism. The United States directed its funding for agricultural projects to agricultural training, technical assistance, and services and provision of agricultural equipment. The goals were to include training technical workers in agriculture, developing a system of disseminating information on improved agricultural practices, ensuring adequate credit on reasonable terms, developing an orderly marketing system for small farmers, developing a dependable source of water for irrigation, instituting a program of developing forestry and fisheries resources, improving the quality of livestock and production methods, improving soil and water management, and improving crop varieties. Throughout 1955-1959, USOM and the Cambodian government developed a series of cooperative projects to address the country's agricultural challenges: Agricultural Education, Development of Cooperatives and Production Credit, Agricultural Extension, Development of Irrigation and Drainage, Development of Forest Resources, Fisheries Conservation, Livestock and Improvement and Disease Control, Crop Development, and Studies of Soil and Water Resources.<sup>30</sup>

Identifying an American agricultural university to assist in the development of agricultural education and extension institutions in Cambodia had been a priority for the U.S. government from the inception of its aid program in Cambodia. From 1952-1956, the United

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<sup>30</sup> "U.S. Economic Aid Program to Cambodia 1955-59," Box 386, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. Fiscal years 1955-57 funds programmed for agriculture were \$6,717,000.

States had provided \$45,000 in direct dollar aid for teaching and demonstration materials, supplies, and equipment for Cambodia's two new agricultural institutions – Prek Leap School of Agriculture (agricultural extension agent training school) and the National School of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, and Forestry (training for “controllers” of agriculture). The Cambodian government had allocated some \$320,000 in counterpart funding for construction and improvement of facilities, supplies and equipment, and student scholarships. Although USOM had seen improvements in the physical plans and facilities of both institutions, the United States saw little progress in the quality of instruction in the absence of a plan for technical assistance. One of the primary challenges was the lack of qualified, full-time teaching staffs; both institutions depended on government technicians who were periodically assigned to teach certain subjects.<sup>31</sup>

As part of its official FY 1957 Operational Program for Cambodia, the United States sought to obtain the assistance of an American agricultural college to improve and combine the two Cambodian agricultural institutions into a single institution, to train an administrative staff, and to improve the quality of instruction according to the needs of the country. The new project, Development of Agricultural and Education and Extension Institutions, would include \$135,000 in AID funding and \$171,000 in counterpart funding for FY 1957.<sup>32</sup> The financial commitment on the part of the Cambodians and the fact that 22 percent of its total national budget was

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<sup>31</sup> “Far East and Pacific, FY 1957 Operational Programs-Cambodia, TC Project Descriptions and Work Plans,” file Reference, file Reference, Box 386, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP; and “End of Tour Report-William M. Shumate” (Agriculture Education Advisor, USOM), 27 October 1960, file Cambodia Agriculture 1960, Box 33, Cambodia 1955-61, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies 1948-61, RG 469, NACP.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. Although the FY 1957 document references combining the two agricultural institutions, Shumate's End of Tour Report from 1960, reporting on activities between 1958-60, describes the objectives as developing both institutions to the point where they compare favorably with an American school of similar standing and recommends ending aid to Prek Leap.

designated for education was a clear indication of their interest in building an educational infrastructure.<sup>33</sup>

In November 1957, USOM, under the International Cooperation Administration (ICA), contracted with Montana State College to evaluate the programs and facilities of Cambodia's two agricultural institutions and to assist in developing a plan of operation to strengthen agricultural education. In December 1957, Dr. Harvey F. Baty, Director of the International Cooperation Center at Montana State, traveled to Cambodia for three weeks to determine whether Montana State College could undertake such a project. Baty evaluated the agricultural education programs at Cambodia's two agricultural schools, the National College of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, and Forestry and Prek Leap School of Agriculture.<sup>34</sup>

The National College of Agriculture and Prek Leap were developed following the Japanese occupation of Cambodia during World War II, the return of the French, and the setting-up of an autonomous Cambodian state within the French union. As it inched towards independence, it was obvious that Cambodia needed an educational infrastructure. In 1947, the Cambodian Council of Ministers passed an order creating a school of agriculture within the city of Phnom Penh—the National School. The National School was developed as a result of military events in larger Indochina. Its programs were to replace those which had previously existed at the University of Hanoi and it was oriented to serve the needs of both Cambodia and Laos. In 1951, a new governmental cabinet was formed and an additional agriculture school was developed at Prek Leap, ten kilometers outside of Phnom Penh on a peninsula formed by the

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> “Contract Between the International Cooperation Administration and Montana State College, PIO/T 42-11-227-3-70147,” November 1957, file Cambodia Education-Montana, Box 36, Cambodia 1955-61, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies 1948-61, RG 469, NACP.

Tonle Sap and Mekong rivers—a location with more land and where the French aid mission had in 1949 constructed facilities for use as an agricultural school.<sup>35</sup>

Although both institutions were created to develop agricultural professionals, they were different in scope and educational objectives. Prek Leap had been developed as a training program for agricultural extension agents who would graduate to work in Cambodia's various provinces. Its curriculum consisted of two years of training, about half of which was spent on field work. Its admissions requirements included an admissions test, that the applicant be physically fit, and six years of previous schooling. The National School was more rigorous in its curriculum and entrance requirements; students enrolled in its three-year program were required to have the “diploma,” which meant at least ten years' previous schooling. Along with being of good moral character, physically fit, and between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, students were interviewed and required to take an entrance examination. The curriculum included two years of classroom training plus twelve months of practical on-the-job training. Graduates of the National School would become employees in the Ministry of Agriculture's field offices. Upon completion of the three-year program, students would have had academic training equivalent to the freshman year of college in the United States.<sup>36</sup>

Physical location was a challenge for both institutions and would eventually come to be a major factor in U.S. efforts to further develop agricultural education in Cambodia. The National College was located within Phnom Penh on less than 20 acres of land. Because of space limitations, there were no living quarters and so students were provided a subsidy to cover living

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<sup>35</sup> “End of Tour Report-William M. Shumate,” 27 October 1960, file Cambodia Agriculture 1960, Box 33, Cambodia 1955-61, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies 1948-61, RG 469, NACP.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

expenses. On the other hand, although Prek Leap's campus included a little over 100 acres of land, the site could only be accessed by ferry and much of the land remained flooded during rainy seasons. Unlike the National School, Prek Leap's campus did include dormitory facilities.<sup>37</sup>

Baty's observations and recommendations validated what U.S. officials had already come to realize: the facilities at the National school were not adequate and the Cambodian government should allocate suitable land away from the flood zone for its development. Baty amplified his concerns about the need for the Cambodian government to identify suitable land even after his return to the United States:

As I see it, the most important and urgent step for the immediate future needs to be taken by the Cambodian government, i.e., to make available to the National School of Agriculture suitable area of land—above the high water level ... It would be sad to recruit a team and send them there all stirred up and ready to go—and then have them wait six months or a year before they could plant a seed or begin any experimentation or research, variety testing, etc.<sup>38</sup>

Although there may have been some expectations on the part of Montana State that it would be awarded a contract to develop the school of agriculture in Cambodia, this was not to be. In fact, it would be a full two years before a contract was awarded to a U.S. university. Monthly reports from ICA's agriculture division in Phnom Penh give some indications of why there were delays. First, while the Cambodian government had communicated to the United States that they were very interested in developing the agricultural schools through a contract with a U.S. university, the Cambodians were slow in moving forward and changed their minds frequently. From the outset, the ICA contract was to include the development of both the

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Harvey F. Baty to C.L. Orrben, 3 August 1959, file Contract Georgia1960, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP; and Jack C. Thompson, "Review of Key Points in Operations Under the UGA Contract to Assist the Cambodian National School of Agriculture," March 1963, file USAID-Phnom Penh, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

National School and Prek Leap. In September 1959 the Cambodians decided they wanted two separate projects, since the management of Prek Leap (as the school for extension agents) was managed by a different section of the Ministry of Agriculture than was the National School. Additionally, although U.S. officials had proposed Montana State as the university that would carry out the contract, this was a sticking point with the Cambodians, who wanted an institution from the southern United States (because of similarities in crops that could be cultivated in Cambodia) and a project team with French language capabilities. Given such requests, ICA in Washington was having difficulty recruiting a university acceptable to the Cambodians. ICA came close to identifying an institution in July 1959, as it had begun contract negotiations with Southwestern Louisiana Institute. However, these negotiations fell through and by October 1959 ICA had contacted agricultural universities in Florida, Texas, California and Arizona to no avail. The second reason for the delay was that the USOM Phnom Penh office needed an agricultural education advisor to assist in moving the project along; that person did not arrive in Cambodia until October 1958. Third, the contract's plan of work depended on the Cambodian government's five-year plan for agricultural education, which was slow in coming. Fourth, the lack of full-time staff at both institutions meant that there were not adequate personnel to work with USOM officers to move the project forward. Finally, the Cambodian government had not yet identified suitable land for the development of the new site for the National School—an important step the United States wished to have completed before the arrival of the U.S. university contract team.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> "Agriculture Division Monthly Reports, July 1958-27 May 1959," file Monthly Report 42-11-227 Agricultural Education, Box 60; Agriculture Division Monthly Reports, 17 July 1959 – 16 December 1959, file Monthly Report FY/60 412-11-227 Agricultural Education, Box 60; Translated letter from Cambodian Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Agriculture Srin-Samy to Russel E. Kilgore, Chief of Agriculture Division, USOM, Phnom Penh, 2 March 1959, file Contract Agricultural Education, Box 60; and Airgram from ICA/W, "University Contract," 13 July 1959, file Contract Georgia 1960, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP;

Despite these obstacles and delays, USOM and ICA Washington continued to believe that a university contract was the best way to improve agricultural education in Cambodia. On the question of USOM's agricultural work in Cambodia, though there was already evidence of differences in expectation and goals between the United States and Cambodian government about the project, as well as some frustrations on the part of the United States officials in Phnom Penh about the Cambodians seeming support on the one hand for the project and, on the other, their apparent indifference to it, at least as demonstrated in their delaying action on certain things like a new college site, approving a university contractor, and developing a five-year plan for agricultural education. The United States, however, persevered in moving the project forward so that by November 1959, after the Cambodians rejected Montana State as the contractor and ICA had failed to interest several southern universities, ICA had contacted the University of Georgia to gauge its interest in undertaking the work in Cambodia.



## CHAPTER II

### ENTER THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

For University of Georgia President Omer Clyde (O.C.) Aderhold and Dean of the College of Agriculture, Calvin Clyde (C.C.) Murray, the opportunity for the University of Georgia to join the ranks of other land-grant peer and aspirational institutions undertaking technical assistance projects abroad must have been both enticing and unsettling. By early 1960, at least seven major land-grant institutions were carrying out agricultural technical assistance projects in the developing world: Cornell, Purdue, Michigan State, Oklahoma State, University of Arkansas, Utah State, and the University of Illinois.<sup>1</sup> Adding a large, externally funded international project was fitting at a time when the University of Georgia was undergoing the largest programmatic and physical expansion in its history as it sought to move from a provincial institution with an outlook that barely extended beyond its own boundaries to a modern university with statewide prominence and a growing national presence. During his tenure, Aderhold had steadied and improved the institution's finances, conceptualized and implemented the financing and construction of new buildings and dormitories, brought about substantial growth in the University of Georgia's research efforts, and worked to bring faculty salaries on a par with national averages. Aderhold and Murray had a strong bond and working relationship, having assumed their current positions at the same time in 1950, a time of great turmoil within the University and the University System when external forces sought to separate the College of Agriculture from the University of Georgia. Both men had demonstrated sound leadership and

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<sup>1</sup> John M. Richardson, *Partners in Development: An Analysis of AID-University Relations, 1950-1966* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1969), 18.

resolve and had successfully negotiated external political pressures, shoring up the resources and position of the College of Agriculture.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, when Aderhold was named President of the University in 1950, Board of Regents Chair Hughes Spalding commented that the new University President should be a man “from our own system” and a man interested in and sympathetic to agriculture.<sup>3</sup> Aderhold certainly knew something about Georgia and about the University of Georgia. Born and raised in Georgia, Aderhold did his undergraduate and Master’s degrees at the University, leaving Georgia only to do a Ph.D. at Ohio State University. He was at different points a teacher, a school principal, and a superintendent of public schools in Jefferson, Georgia. By age forty-six he was Dean of the College of Education and he became the fourteenth President of the University of Georgia five years later. Aderhold had led the University through what would be the institution’s greatest expansion of its physical presence and teaching, research and service programs. Under Aderhold, the value of the University’s physical plant increased from \$12 million to over \$100 million. The Kellogg Foundation contributed \$2 million to this expansion to support the development of the Georgia Center for Continuing Education. To ensure that the University properly planned for its growth, Aderhold commissioned the Brumbaugh Study in 1958 to examine the status of academic programs and plan for the institution’s future.<sup>4</sup>

Murray had been surrounded by agriculture his entire life. A native North Carolinian, as a boy Murray worked on his father’s farm and then completed an undergraduate degree in

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<sup>2</sup> Thomas G. Dyer, *The University of Georgia: A Bicentennial History, 1785-1985*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1985), 281, 283-302.

<sup>3</sup> “Aderhold to Succeed Dr. Rogers; Regents Junk Ag Compromise Plan,” *Red and Black*, 20 July 1950, p.1.

<sup>4</sup> Dyer, *University of Georgia*, 297. “Presidents at the University of Georgia 1785-1997, Omer C. Aderhold,” Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia, <http://www.libs.uga.edu/hargrett/pexhibit/presiden/aderhold.html>, accessed September 5, 2009.

agronomy at North Carolina State College. He was offered a graduate fellowship at Michigan State University. This was at the height of the economic hardships during the Great Depression, and before Murray could accept, all teaching fellowships in Michigan were abolished and so he returned to his family's farm to help his father. After teaching for three years on the staff of North Carolina State followed by a short stint at the Soil Conservation Service, Murray accepted a position at the University of Georgia, where he worked towards his Master's in Agronomy while serving as an Instructor. He received his Master's degree in 1938, the same year that President Franklin D. Roosevelt was awarded an honorary law degree from the University of Georgia, and then took a leave of absence from the University of Georgia to pursue a Ph.D. in Agronomy from Cornell University. After graduating from Cornell, Murray returned to the University of Georgia to teach for 10 years, but was lured away by a better paying position at Louisiana State University, where he spent two years, before returning to Georgia as Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station in Griffin.<sup>5</sup> As Dean of the University's largest college, Murray brought to the College of Agriculture an understanding of the political and practical importance of agriculture to the state and the fact that the state was the University's campus. Murray's reach extended to each of Georgia's 159 counties where the University had cooperative extension agents, to the University's experiment stations in Griffin, Tifton, and Athens, and to the 1,100 enrolled students and 40 faculty members employed by the College. Under Murray's leadership, the College had adopted a new approach to instruction that focused on the development of the whole student and not simply strict disciplinary instruction. Among the new

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<sup>5</sup> "Dean Murray of College of Agriculture Tells of Success from Humble Beginning," *Red and Black*, 18 January 1962, p. 6; and Richard Conley, "Dr. Murray Will Guide 'New Era' Ag Program," *Red and Black*, 27 July 1950, p. 1.

requirements was a freshman orientation course that included instruction on the history and organization of land-grant colleges, taught by Murray himself.<sup>6</sup>



Figure 2.1. Omer C. Aderhold, Negative 4806, folder 1, Georgia Photo File, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

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<sup>6</sup> “Ag Orientation Program Required for Freshman,” *Red and Black*, 1 October 1954, p. 7; and Don Rhodes, “Ag Head Comments on Farmer’s Image,” *Red and Black*, 17 May 1966, p.2.

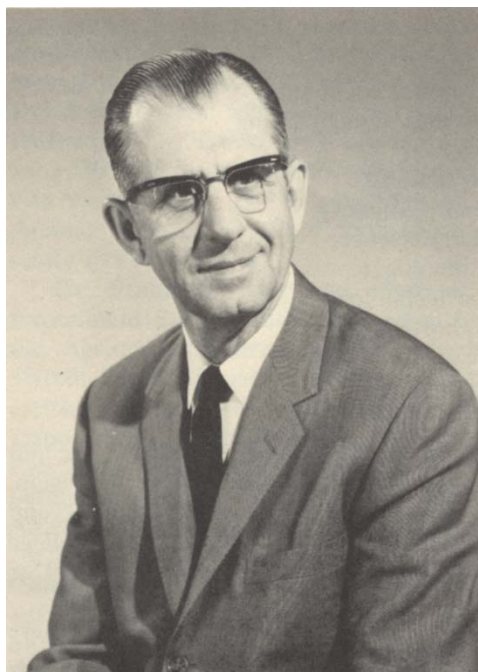


Figure 2.2. Calvin Clyde Murray, *History of the College of Agriculture of the University of Georgia*, 1975, p. 105, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

There would have been certain appeal for Aderhold and Murray to the idea of undertaking such an ambitious project in Cambodia. Both men were active in the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities and so would have been well-aware of the fact that their land-grant colleagues were participating in large numbers in overseas technical assistance projects.<sup>7</sup> The fact that the contracts for overseas technical assistance work were substantial meant that this would be a way to grow the University of Georgia's portfolio of external funding, funding that brought flexibility and prestige. Aderhold had already made development and

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<sup>7</sup> C.L. Orrben, "Report of Discussion with President O.C Aderhold and Dr. C.C. Murray, Dean of College of Agriculture on a Proposed Contract with ICA to Assist in Establishing a National College of Agriculture in Cambodia," 10 November 1959, file Contract Georgia 1960, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, National Archives at College Park, Maryland (NACP). Aderhold and Murray were on their way to the meeting of the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities.

external fundraising one of his priorities for the institution and having an ICA technical assistance contract would add to the growing list of external funding sources. Perhaps more importantly, however, both men had a deep and abiding belief in the land-grant philosophy and mission and its applicability to the development challenges of countries like Cambodia.

Aderhold and Murray were of the idea that the University of Georgia had a role to play in the Cold War—transferring agricultural knowledge to Cambodians would lead to social, political, and economic development necessary to direct the developing nation away from China and the Soviet Union and towards the United States.<sup>8</sup>

Even though the idea of joining the growing list of other land-grant institutions improving the agricultural capacity of far-away places was appealing, neither Aderhold nor Murray were the type of administrators who would impulsively jump into a project without thorough analysis and consideration. From the outset, both men made clear to ICA officials that there were a number of issues that gave them pause. First, as noted, the University of Georgia was preoccupied with a number of pressing issues at home related to the ambitious expansion of its physical facilities and academic programs. In conversations with ICA officials, Dean Murray also noted new enrollment pressures as demand for seats at the University of Georgia continued to increase. Dean Murray in particular considered, how, if the University of Georgia were to enter into a college contract in Cambodia, he would balance the College of Agriculture's need to recruit staff to handle increases in enrollment with the need to release his best staff for two years overseas duty. Certainly, if the University of Georgia were to undertake the project, it would

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<sup>8</sup> C.C. Murray to Jack Thompson, 2 February 1963, file USAID Phnom Penh, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. Murray wrote: "I hope that we can remain a part of a meaningful program which will be helpful in increasing the agricultural production efficiency of Cambodia and through it advance the economic growth of the country. I believe that on a long-range basis some type of institutional arrangement symbolizing the land-grant college as we know it will develop as an integral part of Cambodia's program in higher education."

send its best men to Cambodia. However, Murray feared that being down even a few personnel would strain the capacity of the College, particularly at a time when it was growing by leaps and bounds.<sup>9</sup>

Having navigated some torrential political waters in the past, Aderhold and Murray would have been highly sensitive to how participating in the overseas project would play to the University of Georgia's important constituencies at home in Georgia. Although both men no doubt recognized the benefits of an international perspective, the State was not the apex of progressive thinking on such matters. In considering whether or not to take on the contract, it is not surprising that Aderhold and Murray sought input from Georgia's two U.S. Senators, Richard B. Russell, Jr., Chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee, and Herman Talmadge, both University of Georgia graduates and both skeptical of foreign aid. Murray noted later:

We gave very careful consideration to our involvement in this program before our contract was developed. This was carefully reviewed and thought through by President Aderhold. I also discussed and reviewed this with Senators Russell and Talmadge and several members of the House of Representatives from the State of Georgia, all of who are warm personal friends. While these people had some reservations about foreign aid, they thought that we could be of help of the development of a program in the Mission there.<sup>10</sup>

A third major hesitation for Aderhold and Murray was the problems other universities had encountered with ICA in implementing project contracts.<sup>11</sup> The land-grant university community in the United States was well-aware of the growing number of university-ICA

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<sup>9</sup> C.L. Orrben, "Report of Discussion with President O.C Aderhold and Dr. C.C. Murray, Dean of College of Agriculture on a Proposed Contract with ICA to Assist in Establishing a National College of Agriculture in Cambodia," 10 November 1959, file Contract Georgia 1960, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>10</sup> C.C. Murray to Jack Thompson, 2 February 1963, file USAID Phnom Penh, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia

<sup>11</sup> C.L. Orrben, "Report of Discussion with President O.C Aderhold and Dr. C.C. Murray, Dean of College of Agriculture on a Proposed Contract with ICA to Assist in Establishing a National College of Agriculture in Cambodia," 10 November 1959, file Contract Georgia 1960, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

conflicts over procedural issues regarding contracts and project implementation. In the mid-1950s, under Stassen's tenure at FOA, the number of university technical assistance projects, particularly those in rural development and agriculture, had virtually exploded, with seemingly little planning, coordination, or forethought. Although Stassen gave universities favorable treatment on the surface, Stassen's determination and urgency to develop university contracts without proper planning had two important repercussions. First, there were no clear procedures or policies for identifying the best university contractors for particular projects—mission and ICA officials used their existing contacts, friends or nepotistic relationships, which sometimes meant universities' capabilities were not exactly matched to host country needs. Second, because of the rush to enter into contracts, often there was a lack of understanding or agreement on the part of ICA officials, universities, and host countries on exactly what was to be accomplished through the contract.<sup>12</sup>

Organizational and leadership changes within the agency were such that by 1955 there was an entirely different approach to university contracts. The Foreign Operations Administration, which had become the International Cooperation Administration (ICA) under the Department of State, was now headed by John B. Hollister, former Republican Congressman from Ohio. Unlike Stassen, Hollister showed little interest in university contracts and looked unfavorably on U.S. technical assistance work in general, showing more interest in ferreting out perceived waste and inefficiencies in foreign aid and developing processes and quantitative measures to evaluate which projects were successful and should be continued. As part of the organizational changes, all contracting responsibilities were consolidated into a central office staffed by contract specialists. These changes resulted in conflict between ICA and universities on a number of levels. Whereas under Stassen each contract was negotiated by universities and

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<sup>12</sup> Richardson, *Partners in Development*, 43.



particular program staff within the agency, now universities were subject to ICA's boilerplate language developed by ICA. Similarly, previously contracts were more open-ended and would be terminated when work and activities were deemed complete. Now, universities had a maximum three years to implement technical assistance projects. Universities saw the new standardized procedures and complex, bureaucratic policies as creating undue delays in moving contracts and projects forward. Additionally, Stassen's top-down leadership style had meant that even routine decisions were often kicked up to his level and quickly handled, often in favor of universities but creating resentment among some ICA staff who believed universities were receiving special treatment. Hollister's approach was more process-oriented so that, for example, a salary issue for a university overseas staff person would need review and approval by technical personnel, program officers, and the controller in the appropriate USOM; the program officer, office of contract relations, and country desk officer at ICA in Washington; and various technical field specialists in the technical service office.<sup>13</sup>

The proliferation of processes and standardization of contracts, coupled with Hollister's desire to get a handle on (in his view) the unbridled and unmanaged university technical assistance projects, led to fewer opportunities for universities to have input in project development, on project goals, and how specific goals were to be achieved.<sup>14</sup> During this time, the challenges created by the diverse and sometimes competing organizational missions and philosophies between ICA and universities began to surface as well. To satisfy Congress and his own fiscal conservatism and guarded approach to foreign aid, Hollister was preoccupied with keeping low the number of technical assistance projects; those that were undertaken would be

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<sup>13</sup> Richardson, *Partners in Development*, 53-62.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.

shorter-term projects with agency-imposed quantifiable results and overall costs savings.<sup>15</sup> This approach to technical assistance was in sharp contrast to how universities saw their participation in overseas projects. What the universities perceived as ICA's rigidity and heavy-handedness on contracts and policies and the carryover resentment towards universities from some ICA staff who had worked under Stassen manifested into downright hostility and a serious deterioration between the agency and universities. To address the strained university-ICA relationship and to mediate procedural and contractual relationships, in 1954 the American Council on Education (ACE) and the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities joined together to seek to address these issues over the course of several years. In 1954, the two organizations formed the Committee on Institutional Projects Abroad (CIPA). Although the Committee's purpose was to assist in contract negotiations and administration and identify problems of policy, planning, and development, CIPA in practice was more a voice for universities than a mediating force between universities and ICA. In 1955, the Committee surveyed the forty-three university contract institutions on their views of the ICA programs. Institutions complained of constant checks and amendments, lack of provisions for contingencies, a multitude of forms, and purposefully imprecise definitions.<sup>16</sup>

Relationships between ICA and universities continued to worsen over the next few years. In April 1957, ACE released a new survey of its members of their views on university-ICA partnerships. According to the survey and resulting report, *International Activities of American Colleges and Universities*, ACE members felt that there was little understanding between the

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<sup>15</sup> Richardson, *Partners in Development*, 53. Hollister had been Executive Director of the Hoover Commission and had investigated "mistakes and waste" in US foreign aid programs.

<sup>16</sup> Lynton K Caldwell, "University-Government Relations," in *Universities and Development Assistance Abroad*, ed. Richard A. Humphrey (Washington, DC: American Council on Education, 1967), 40.

government and universities as to ICA policies and procedures and internal challenges faced by institutions in carrying out overseas programs. Colleges and universities surveyed also wanted greater participation in the early development of policies and procedures that guided overseas programs.<sup>17</sup>

Despite the Committee's efforts to improve university-ICA contractual relations, throughout 1955 and 1956 universities continued to protest their treatment by ICA. Universities' frustrations with ICA reached such high levels that in 1956 representatives from the American Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities threatened to take their concerns to President Eisenhower and warned that a number of institutions would withdrawal from their ICA contracts. This showdown of sorts between the politically powerful land-grant institutions and their associations and ICA resonated with ICA director, John A. Hollister, who proposed at a conference of university contract representatives that the problems were all a misunderstanding. Hollister assured greater cooperation, but these assurances did not manifest into significant improvements.<sup>18</sup>

These issues had become high priorities on the agendas of the two major educational associations and Aderhold and Murray were indeed aware of them. But Murray and Aderhold were also willing to consider a small contract—small because of their first priorities of programmatic and physical expansion—and so they agreed to meet in Athens with C.L. Orrben, the Far East Branch Advisor for ICA, in November 1959. After a two and a half hour meeting with Murray and a one-and-a-half hour meeting with Aderhold, Orrben had convinced the University of Georgia to at least consider the Cambodia contract with a few stipulations. First,

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 28-42.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 43.

Murray and Aderhold wanted their own survey team to travel to Cambodia to assess the situation. Second, Murray and Aderhold were about to attend the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and University meeting and they planned to sound out administrators from other universities on their experiences with such contracts.<sup>19</sup> Third, although the Cambodian government had stipulated that they wanted the contracting university agricultural personnel to have French language capabilities, Murray and Aderhold made clear to ICA that it would be impossible for the University of Georgia to furnish faculty members who were proficient in French and so interpreters would be required.<sup>20</sup>

By December 1959, ICA was eager to move on the Georgia contract. Efforts to identify a southern agricultural institution with the capability to assemble a team of French-speaking agricultural specialists had turned up nothing. The University of Georgia had showed some interest and ICA in Washington was ready to move forward on getting a contract in place. In January 1960, at the request of USOM in Phnom Penh, the Cambodian government agreed to meet with the University of Georgia and to waive the French language requirement, provided USOM provided qualified interpreters to assist the project team.<sup>21</sup> The University of Georgia

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<sup>19</sup> C.L. Orrben, "Report of Discussion with President O.C. Aderhold and Dr. C.C. Murray," 10 November 1959, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP; and "Report of Audit of the University of Georgia Contract Nos. ICAc-1392 and 1494 to Develop Agricultural Education in Cambodia for the Period from Inception, February 20, 1960 through November 30, 1962, 20 February 1963, file USAID Phnom Penh, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. This 1963 audit conducted by AID noted that the University of Georgia initial survey team was sent due to changing conditions in Cambodia and the "lack of sufficient detail in the University of Montana report."

<sup>20</sup> Ralph O. Lewis, Acting Chief Agriculture Division to Yim Dith, Secretary of State for Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture, Phnom Penh, 15 December 1959, file Contract Georgia 1960, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>21</sup> Memorandum from Department/Riddleberger, Subject "Agricultural Education Contract," 11 December 1959; Translation of letter from Cambodian Minister of Plan to Director, USOM, Subject "Contract with University of Georgia," 9 January 1960; and Ralph Lewis, Acting Head of Production & Marketing Branch to Russel E Kilgore, Chief, Agriculture Division, 8 February 1960, file Contract Georgia 1960, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. Lewis expresses his concern about USOM's

satisfied the Cambodians' desire to have a southern institution. Additionally, the director of the National School, Dr. Prom Tep Savang, had visited the University of Georgia in late 1958 as part of a three-month study tour of land-grant institutions and so his favorable impressions of the University of Georgia likely influenced their decision.<sup>22</sup>

At the same time the University was considering the project in Cambodia, ICA approached the University about a similar project in Vietnam. ICA was seeking a U.S. agricultural university to develop the curriculum of the National College of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Forestry in Bao Loc. The University of Georgia decided that its survey team should explore the opportunity in Vietnam as well as that in Cambodia.<sup>23</sup>

Dean Murray and J.W. Fanning, head of the University's Department of Agricultural Economics traveled to Cambodia and Vietnam in March and April 1960. The pair arrived in Cambodia on March 10, 1960 with the goals of becoming familiar with Cambodia's agricultural education challenges, delineating some of the objectives and substantive aspects of a cooperative relationship, and developing an understanding of how a cooperative arrangement would best be implemented. During their two-week stay, the pair met with USOM personnel, the Cambodian Secretary of State for Agriculture, Dr. Savang, and his staff at the National School, and traveled to Cambodia's rural provinces. Murray and Fanning came away from these meetings,

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ability to provide interpreters for American professors who were not fluent in French. He suggests initiating an immediate search for qualified interpreters.

<sup>22</sup> "Agriculture Education, Monthly Report, December 1958," file Monthly Report 42-11-227, Agricultural Education FY/59, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP; and Dean C.C. Murray and Professor J.W. Fanning, "Report of the University of Georgia College of Agriculture Survey Team on a Proposed Cooperative Agreement between the University of Georgia College of Agriculture and the National College of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Forestry of Cambodia," file University of Georgia Pre-Contract Survey, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives.

<sup>23</sup> "UGA/Vietnam Program, Fifth Semi-Annual Progress Report, July 1-December 31, 1962," file Letter of Termination, Box 57, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

particularly those with the Cambodian government, with the feeling that there was a high degree of support for the project on all sides.<sup>24</sup>



Figure 2.3. Dr. Prom Tep Savang, Director of the National School of Agriculture and William M. Shumate from the AID Agriculture Division discuss plans for a new veterinary services building. Cam-60-1246, 1247, file 286-Cam-56, Box 6, Photographs of AID Activities in Cambodia 1966-1963, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, National Archives at College Park, Maryland (NACP).

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<sup>24</sup> Murray and Fanning Report, 1960, file University of Georgia Pre-Contract Survey, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives; and Lewis to Dith, 15 December 1959, file Contract Georgia 1960, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

Murray and Fanning returned to Athens enthusiastic about the University entering into a contract with ICA, for they now had a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing agricultural education in Cambodia, as well as a list of recommendations for the development of Cambodia's National College.<sup>25</sup> USOM in Phnom Penh was equally pleased with the visit by Murray and Fanning:

USOM was extremely pleased with the competence, attitude and plans of the survey group. It is understood that Dean Murray will recommend to the President of the University of Georgia that it enter into a contract with ICA. This Mission strongly concurs.<sup>26</sup>

Murray and Fanning's agricultural training told them that Cambodia's future development depended on how agricultural resources would be developed. With nearly eighty-five percent of its population engaged in small farming, Murray and Fanning believed that agricultural education could advance the Cambodian economy and raise the standard of living, though they saw many challenges at the National College. Its urban campus located within Phnom Penh meant that there was no farm area for experiments or instruction. The College's two buildings were inadequate for its 104 students. With only one full-time staff member (Dr. Savang) the School's faculty consisted of part-time professionals from the Ministry of Agriculture. The lack of research facilities limited instruction options and learning opportunities for students.

Among Murray and Fanning's recommendations were: the development of a well-trained, full-time faculty and staff to complement the part-time faculty from the Ministry of

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<sup>25</sup> Murray and Fanning Report, 1960, file University of Georgia Pre-Contract Survey, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives.

<sup>26</sup> ICA Airgram from USOM/Phnom Penh, Subject "PIO/T 442-11-227-3-90147," 14 April 1960, file Univ. of GA. Corresp., 1959-61, Box 57, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

Agriculture; development of a research and experimental farm; the addition of a required third year of academic training to become comparable to an accredited two-year college in the United States; implementation of a program of research and extension; and development of adequate curricular materials and instructional methods. Murray and Fanning outlined a role for the University of Georgia that included advising the National College on instruction, laboratory instruction, teaching materials and instructional methods, and developing the college farm for instructional purposes. The two University of Georgia administrators specifically noted that the University should not engage in any formal instruction, but, rather, should assist in curricula development, help to organize research, conduct a needs assessment with National College students and faculty on Cambodia's agricultural needs, and advise on educational materials. Interestingly, although Murray and Fanning noted that they understood that the contract of work would be for two to three years, in actuality they felt that a full contribution by the University of Georgia to the National College would take six to ten years. Among the specific points of the contract, Murray and Fanning advised that the French language requirement would need to be waived and that the development of Prek Leap school would not be included as part of the University of Georgia's responsibilities.<sup>27</sup>

By April 1960, USOM in Phnom Penh, under pressure from the Cambodian government, urged ICA Washington to negotiate and sign the contract with the University of Georgia right away in order to get the University of Georgia project team on the ground as soon as possible. The Cambodian government was on board and agreeable to the contract being awarded to the University of Georgia. The National School's term began in July and the Cambodians wanted the University of Georgia team in place by then. Most importantly, the Cambodian government

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<sup>27</sup> Murray and Fanning Report, 1960, file University of Georgia Pre-Contract Survey, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives.



indicated that it had identified land for the new location of the National School, one of the key issues USOM had hoped to have settled by the time the University of Georgia project team arrived. The Cambodians had identified a 593-hectare site seven kilometers outside Phnom Penh with plenty of room for a campus and college farm with adequate irrigation. The Cambodians had also allocated funding for building the new National School.<sup>28</sup>

The contract delays other institutions had experienced with ICA held true and the University of Georgia's project contract was not finalized until June 15, 1960. The University signed a three-year contract with ICA for providing technical advice and assistance to improve the Cambodian National College of Agriculture for a total amount of \$765,275. The contract guaranteed \$504,190 for two years (June 1961-June 1963) and an additional \$261,085 in financing for one year "if funds are available." The cost-reimbursable contract stipulated that a six-person project team (five faculty members and an administrative assistant) from the University of Georgia would provide technical assistance to improve the National School's curriculum and instruction, such that at the end of the project the National School's academic program would be comparable to a two-year institution in the United States, which would allow students to enter an American "land-grant college type institution" to complete Bachelor's of Science degrees. Specifically, the Georgia team was not to provide formal instruction, but rather advice and consultation on development of the curricula and instruction and developing the college farm.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> ICA Airgram 14 June 1960; ICA Incoming Cablegram from Phnom Penh, 17 June 1960, and ICA Airgram from USOM/Phnom Penh, Subject "University Contract 442-11-227," 23 June 1960, file Contract Agriculture 1961, Box 33, Cambodia, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the Foreign Assistance Agencies 1948-61, RG 469, NACP.

<sup>29</sup> "Contract Between the United States of America and the University of Georgia," 19 June 1960, file University of Georgia Contract and Amendments 1960-64, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives; and Gordon V. Potter to Raymond E. Kitchell, "Univ. of Ga. Contract Budget Estimates, 442-11-227," 1 June 1960, file Contract Georgia 1960, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture,

Administratively, the University of Georgia's project team in Cambodia would work under the general policy guidance of the USOM director, relating directly with the Director of the National College. The Georgia team would consist of University of Georgia faculty members who would commit to two-year tours or sometimes short-term assignments and who would maintain their affiliation with the University. The team's expertise would include specialists in agronomy, horticulture, forestry, agricultural engineering, animal husbandry, and veterinary medicine. The team would be led by a Chief of Party who would represent the team with USOM and who would be responsible for carrying out the project. The contract provided for a University of Georgia campus coordinator and secretarial assistance as part of the Dean's office to handle personnel, fiscal, and participant training matters on campus.<sup>30</sup>

Through the project, the University of Georgia could pay its overseas faculty staff involved in the project a regular salary plus post allowances, educational allowances for dependent children, first-class international travel, and allowances for transportation and storing of cars and household goods and personal effects. USOM would provide local housing and travel, drivers, office space and equipment, and communications services. The contract also stipulated that USOM would provide a "refresher" French language course to the University of Georgia project team at no cost to the University.<sup>31</sup>

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Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. Though the official contract stipulated that an additional \$261,085 would be provided if funds were available, internal ICA Phnom Penh correspondence indicates that ICA personnel felt the \$504,190 for the first two years was inflated and that actual expenditures would be less, making the overall budget for three years less than the \$765,275.

<sup>30</sup> "Contract Between the United States of America and the University of Georgia," file University of Georgia Contract and Amendments 1960-64, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

The significance of the nearly \$800,000 project budget for Cambodia cannot be overlooked. In today's money, the ICA contract would be worth approximately \$5 million to the University of Georgia and would be considered a large contract.<sup>32</sup> When the initial budget installment of \$202,771 hit the University's business and finance ledger in fiscal year 1960-61, it appeared as the second largest public grant, second only to a National Science Foundation grant of \$219,700 for the study of uronic acids. Aderhold and Murray were undoubtedly pleased with this significant expansion of the University's external funding.<sup>33</sup>

Even before the contract was signed, Dean Murray set about assembling the project team. The six member team assembled by University of Georgia was notably all University faculty and staff, with a range of service between five and thirty years. Although there is no indication that Murray had any intentions of staffing the project with non-University of Georgia personnel, many other universities involved in ICA overseas contracts used some combination of university and non-university personnel in staffing their projects. Clearly, Murray would have understood the advantages and disadvantages of both approaches. By using only some non-University of Georgia personnel, Murray could have had a wider and perhaps more well-qualified pool to consider and the University would experience less interruption in its instruction, research, and extension programs at home. Among the advantages of using only University of Georgia personnel were that a University of Georgia team would obviously have a better understanding of the University and closer ties to one another, resulting in a more cohesive team. Additionally,

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<sup>32</sup> Estimate from [www.measuringworth.com](http://www.measuringworth.com); and USAID History: [http://www.usaid.gov/about\\_usaid/usaidhist.html](http://www.usaid.gov/about_usaid/usaidhist.html). In 1961, President Kennedy reorganized U.S. foreign assistance programs as part of the Foreign Assistance Act. ICA was abolished and the administration of military and economic assistance were separated into two functions. The United States Agency for International Development (AID) was created to administer non-military foreign aid.

<sup>33</sup> *University of Georgia Annual Report 1960-61*, Administrative Part 1<sup>2</sup>, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

designating only University of Georgia faculty and staff would demonstrate a strong commitment to the project by the University of Georgia and these personnel could forge a linkage with the National College that would survive long after the end of the contract. Finally, Murray may have hoped that an all-University of Georgia team would return from Cambodia with knowledge and desire to contribute to the University's internationalization.<sup>34</sup>

For their two-year tours, all of the faculty members would take their spouses and, in some cases, their dependent children with them to Cambodia. Donald Branyon, a University of Georgia extension agronomist with a Master's degree, would serve as Chief of Party and would travel to Cambodia with his wife. Branyon was the only member of the University of Georgia team with prior experience working on an ICA contract, having worked for one and a half years on a State University of New York-ICA agricultural project in Israel. Branyon had a deep understanding for and appreciation of agricultural economies, having grown up on a farm just outside of Athens, Georgia. The Assistant Chief of Party position would be filled by Francis Johnstone, Jr., head of the University's Horticulture Department, a veteran of the United States Navy with a Ph.D. from Cornell University. Of the University of Georgia team, his French language skills were the most developed; he had "fair" French speaking and writing abilities and "good" skills reading French. Johnstone would travel with his wife and thirteen year old daughter. Henry Stoehr would fill the forestry position and would travel to Cambodia with his wife. Stoehr held a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan and was an associate professor in the

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<sup>34</sup> John Ernst, *Forging a Fateful Alliance: Michigan State University and the Vietnam War* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1998), 14. Ernst notes that the majority of the Michigan State team in Vietnam were not from the university, though that project team was much larger with 72 members. Committee on Institutional Cooperation, *Building Institutions to Serve Agriculture: A Summary Report of the C.I.C.-A.I.D. Rural Development Research Project*, (LaFayette, IN: Purdue University, 1968), 131. This study notes that whether or not institutions used their own faculty members for overseas projects had become controversial: "the proper source of staff members for project assignment is perhaps the most widely discussed of all the questions of the university AID contract personnel management."

University's School of Forestry. While in the Army he had traveled to New Guinea and the Philippines and he indicated "fair" reading abilities in French and German. The animal husbandry position was filled by Sidney Diamond from Agricultural Extension. Diamond, born and raised in New York, held a Master's degree from the University of Georgia. His wife and four children under thirteen years of age would accompany him to Cambodia. Glenn Johnson, head of the Agricultural Extension Engineering Department at the University of Georgia, had a B.S. degree and had worked at the University since 1928. He would be accompanied by his sixteen-year old daughter and his wife, Edna Johnson, who would fill the administrative assistant position. Mrs. Johnson had been Dean Murray's secretary at the University. Eldred Causey, associate professor in the School of Veterinary Medicine, rounded out the University of Georgia's project team. Causey would be accompanied by his wife and two children, ages four and twelve.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> "Application for Federal Employment (Standard Form 57)" for Johnstone, Johnson E., Johnson G, Branyon, and Stoehr, file Personnel (U.S.) Biographical Data, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives; "Team for Cambodia" Memorandum, 15 June 1960; and J.W. Fanning to C.L. Orrben, 27 July 1960, file Contract Georgia 1960, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.



Figure 2.4. From left, Donald Branyon and Sidney Diamond. 1380, 1381, file 286-Cam-56, 1960 Staff, Box 6, Photographs of AID Activities in Cambodia 1956-1963, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.



Figure 2.5. From left, Francis Johnstone and E.W. Causey. 1382, 1379, file 286-Cam-56, 1960 Staff, Box 6, Photographs of AID Activities in Cambodia 1956-1963, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.



Figure 2.6. Henry Stoehr.1383, file 286-Cam-56, 1960 Staff, Box 6, Photographs of AID Activities in Cambodia 1956-1963, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

The composition of the University of Georgia project team may reveal something about the likelihood of success of the project. For example, all of the Georgia project team members appear to have had more than an adequate level of technical and professional competence, a factor identified as key to success. Johnstone was a department head, as was Johnson, and all other members of the team had several years of professional experience. One of the criticisms of universities in selecting overseas contract teams was that they often selected faculty members close to retirement age. In the University of Georgia's case, the oldest team member was fifty-seven (the Chief of Party who had been with the University for thirty years), the youngest was forty-five years of age. Another element important to the success of the team was an interest in international development generally. At least three of the team members explicitly identified the

attraction of “a foreign assignment,” serving “a needy area of the world,” and the desire for a “foreign experience” as reasons for why they wanted to participate. Additionally, all team members were accompanied by their spouses and/or families, another factor identified as having influence on the degree of success of team members. If the experience of other universities bore out, however, the Georgia project team did appear to have some factors working against it. First, none were fluent speaking, reading, and writing French prior to their arrival, a factor deemed “extremely important to early effectiveness and success.” Second, none of the team members had significant past experience working in Southeast Asia and some team members had no overseas experience at all. Finally, in the rushed time period between when the contract was signed and the project team left for Cambodia, there would have been little time for adequate preparation of the team for their assignment, another factor critical for successful projects. In fact, the University of Georgia team’s orientation in Washington was cut short due to urgent cablegrams from Phnom Penh indicating that the new site of the National School had been identified and the team was to come at once.<sup>36</sup>

As the University of Georgia continued to assemble its overseas project team during June and July 1960, the USOM in Phnom Penh was busy preparing for their arrival while through cablegrams continuing to encourage Washington to send the project team to Phnom Penh immediately:

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<sup>36</sup> *Building Institutions to Support Agriculture*, 134-135. Qualities that were important for those serving in overseas capacities as described by those who had served on such projects, international program administrators, AID personnel, and research analysts who had observed contract team members in foreign countries. “UGA/Cambodia Program Ninth Semi-Annual Progress Report, July 1-Sept. 30, 1964, prepared by G.I. Johnson, Final Report,” file Reports Semi-Annual 1960-64, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives.



School farm site now agreed. 7 kilometers Phnom Penh. RKG 5-year plan total 72 million riels. 18 million first year (1960). Urgent chief of party and agricultural engineer arrive soonest to facilitate land development. Complete team required ASAP.<sup>37</sup>

It was also extremely important to the Mission that the project have “the smoothest possible commencement” as the University of Georgia contract was the first for the Cambodia Mission and implementation of the project was “important for the achievement of United States policy objectives” in Cambodia. The Mission’s Director, Charles Mann, instructed his staff to ensure that the University of Georgia team had adequate housing, furnishings, and transportation, that they had PX and APO privileges, and that provisions were made for their introduction to Cambodian government officials. The Mission and Phnom Penh also needed to settle on a security clearance level for the University of Georgia group. Although ICA/Washington believed the University of Georgia team only needed clearance through “Confidential,” the Mission argued for at least clearance through “Secret” and perhaps “Top Secret.” There were a number of reasons for this. First, the Mission wanted Georgia team members to have access to Cambodian currency, the riel, at free market rates. The Cambodian government had inflated the value of the riel so that the official exchange rate inside Cambodia was thirty-five riels to \$1 when the actual rate outside of Cambodia was sixty-five or seventy-five riels to \$1. The United States Embassy in Phnom Penh secretly maintained a facility in Phnom Penh where its personnel could purchase riels at the free market rate. So that University of Georgia personnel did not travel to Hong Kong or Bangkok to purchase riels at a more favorable rate and risk embarrassment at customs, the Phnom Penh Mission wished to disclose the secret currency exchange set-up to the University of Georgia team. Additionally, the Mission felt that the University of Georgia team needed to be fully-integrated into U.S. development efforts in

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<sup>37</sup> ICA Cablegram from Phnom Penh, 17 June 1960, No. TOICA 1244, file Cambodia Agriculture 1960, Box 33, Cambodia 1955-61, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies 1948-61, RG 469, NACP.

Cambodia and therefore needed “substantial knowledge of political and economic information to engender an appreciation of policy requirements.”<sup>38</sup>

Upon signing its contract with ICA in June 1960 and assembling its overseas team by late July, the University of Georgia joined fifty-three other U.S. universities that were under contract with ICA undertaking educational projects in thirty-three countries. The University of Georgia project team arrived in Phnom Penh with their families between August 8 and September 12, 1960 on what would certainly be the experience of a lifetime.<sup>39</sup>

In July 1960, the University entered into a much smaller contract with ICA for work in Vietnam. Under this contract, two faculty members (one from the University of Georgia and a second from California) would work to develop the instruction, research, and extension programs of the National College of Agriculture in Bao Loc, Vietnam. The two on-site faculty members were supplemented by several short-term advisors brought in by the University of Georgia. This project was riddled with challenges, most notably the increasing concerns on the part of the University of Georgia and ICA/Washington about security of American personnel in Bao Loc, located in Vietnam’s central highlands. The Viet Cong’s presence and attacks in South Vietnam were increasing in intensity and number and the U.S. had significantly increased its military presence in South Vietnam. In January of 1962, the University of Georgia’s team in Vietnam

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<sup>38</sup> Charles A. Mann to Russel E. Kilgore, William M. Kelly, Gordon V. Potter, and Marlin F. Haas, Subject “University of Georgia-National School of Agriculture Contract,” 25 July 1960, file Contract Georgia 1960, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>39</sup> “First Semi-Annual Progress Report, July-December 1960,” file Semi-Annual Reports 19600-64, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives; and Howard E. Wilson and Florence H. Wilson, *American Higher Education and World Affairs* (Washington, DC: American Council on Education, 1963), 99.

was transferred to Saigon because of on-going security concerns and the University and ICA agreed to terminate the contract in July 1962.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Joseph L. Brent, United States Operations Mission to Vietnam to C.C. Murray; "Audit Report University of Georgia Contract No. ICAC-1493," 16 January 1963; C.C. Murray to Arthur Z. Gardiner, USOM Director, 12 February 1962; "UGA/Vietnam Program, Fifth Semi-Annual Progress Report, July 1-December 31, 1962," file Letter of Termination, Box 57, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

### CHAPTER III

#### IMPLEMENTING THE COLLEGE CONTRACT

As the University of Georgia project team settled in to life in Cambodia, there was both anticipation and enthusiasm about the project and its potential on the part of the Georgia faculty and the United States Operations Mission (USOM) Agricultural Division in Phnom Penh. In his last official act as USOM Agricultural Division chief, Russel Kilgore summed up the Mission's delight that the contract and project team were at last in place:

We are well pleased with your selection of the team and have full confidence that the team will be able to achieve the objectives of the University, the U.S. Mission, and the Cambodian government. As you well know, the University of Georgia has a real challenge in developing the Agricultural School in Cambodia, but along with the challenge, there is ample opportunity to carry on a people to people program through this fine team of professors. The anticipated benefits to both Georgia and Cambodia, I believe, are almost unlimited. As you know, our full staff supports the objectives of the contract, and have offered, without reserve, any and all possible assistance.<sup>1</sup>

None of the Georgia team had ever traveled to Southeast Asia, so their first experiences in exotic Phnom Penh must have included a certain amount of culture shock. The University of Georgia team and their families spent most of their first few months adapting to new living arrangements and work environments. This included setting up housekeeping; adjusting to the climate, food, and foreign languages (French and Khmer); and acclimating to life in a large, foreign city. Just as the Mission Director Charles Mann had instructed his staff, the University of Georgia team received much assistance and support from USOM during this period:

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<sup>1</sup> Russel E. Kilgore to C.C. Murray, 16 September 1960, file Contract Georgia 1960, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, National Archives College Park (NACP).

The warm and cordial welcome of USOM and the United States Embassy personnel and the Cambodian people made it easier and more pleasant to make adjustments than it might have been otherwise.<sup>2</sup>

Part of the Georgia team's adjustment included getting to know other English speakers in Phnom Penh. This included a fair amount of socializing with USOM staff and other Americans stationed in Cambodia through dinners and receptions.<sup>3</sup>

Prince Sihanouk was a frequent host and guest at the international diplomatic receptions and events. Sihanouk and his wife, Princess Monique, invited the U.S. Ambassador and fifteen senior staff and their families to his villa in Sihanoukville for dining and conversation, swimming, and volleyball. An avid sports enthusiast and participant, Sihanouk would participate in the various international embassies' volleyball leagues, where he would always be sure to play for the winning team. Sihanouk would also engage the diplomatic community in a "traveau manuel" day where he recruited the diplomatic corps, including Deputy Mission Director Peter Cody, to join him in a day of doing manual work on a rural highway:

He with a shovel dug up soil and put it in a basket. The rest of us handed the baskets in a line from other to another to the edge of the road way. At one time I found myself

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<sup>2</sup> "Report for August 1960, H.A. Stoehr," file H.A. Stoehr Monthly Reports 1960-1962, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. Henry Stoehr's August 1960 report on his family's travel to and arrival in Cambodia is typical of other team members: "My wife and I left Athens on Southern Airways August 10, 1960 and arrived in Phnom Penh August 16. We had a most enjoyable trip via Honolulu, Tokyo, Hong Kong, and Bangkok. It was smooth sailing all the way, by 707 jets. We were delighted that our air freight had already arrived and we could set up housekeeping at once. Mrs. Shumate had already engaged a "boyessse" (combination of cook, housekeeper, and laundress) for us and had purchased a huge basket of groceries. We had dinner at the Shumates' that night and breakfast with the Johnsons the next morning. Two weeks later we moved to a nicer apartment in Pochentong." "Cambodia First Semi-Annual Progress Report, July-December, 1960," file Semi-Annual Reports 1960-64, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives; and "Monthly Report, University of Georgia Contract Team, 31 August 1960," file Contract Georgia 1960, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>3</sup> "September Report, UGA/L'ENAES Cambodia Contract, D. L. Branyon," file Donald L. Branyon 60-61, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, NACP. Branyon notes that "On Monday night, September 12, Director and Mrs. Mann had a party for Mr. Russel Kilgore, Agricultural Chief who was leaving; Mr. Carl Van Haeften, the new Agricultural Chief and his wife; and for the Georgia Contract group. We met many of the people connected with USOM and a number of Cambodians. After the other guests left, Mr. and Mrs. Mann, Dr. and Mrs. Savang, Mr. and Mrs. Van Haeften, and my wife and I went to a Chinese floating restaurant on the Tonle Sap River."

receiving dirt from the Chinese Ambassador and handing it to the Russian Ambassador. At the same time a waiter was passing drinks so if the work became too arduous you could stop for a nip. Then a band brought along for the occasion played local dance music. At that point a local young lady was inserted between each foreigner in the bucket brigade. In addition to stopping for a drink you could stop for a local dance. The young lady encouraged you to do so. It was more enjoyable than passing baskets of dirt. All the while Sihanouk kept digging and giving words of encouragement to the rest of us.<sup>4</sup>

Sihanouk was a very public person and integrated himself and his family into daily life in Cambodia in interesting ways. At the movie theater, before movies an image was shown of Sihanouk's mother, Queen Kossamak Nearireak, at which point the audience sang the Cambodian national anthem. Sihanouk's two oldest children were in the Khmer Royal Ballet. His wife was captain of the palace volleyball team that would play the ladies diplomatic teams and at these matches Sihanouk would personally serve soup and cold drinks to players and attendees. Sihanouk played the saxophone and wrote music and he produced, wrote, translated, and acted in stage plays in which he would play the lead role. At public events and dedications, including completion of certain U.S.-funded projects, he would give speeches in Khmer that lasted several hours. Opportunities to see and hear Sihanouk and events in and around Phnom Penh were not uncommon for the Georgia team or Embassy staff.<sup>5</sup>

The children of the Georgia team settled into the American school in Phnom Penh and Jessie Branyon, wife of team leader Donald Branyon, took up a post teaching the third grade at the American school.<sup>6</sup> After just one month in Cambodia, it became apparent to the group that

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<sup>4</sup> Peter Cody, Unpublished Autobiography, 5-7.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Donald Branyon, Jr., interview by author, 9 April, 2009, Athens, Georgia; and Jessie Branyon Scrapbook, personal collection of Donald Branyon, Jr. Susie Diamond, daughter of Georgia team member Sid Diamond was a student in Jessie Branyon's third grade class. "Cambodians Studying in the United States Newsletter, December 1962," file Training -Newsletter 1962 AD, Box 52, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. At some point during her two years in Cambodia, Francis Johnstone's wife taught English to Cambodian students who participated in the training program at the University of Georgia.

communicating with Cambodian colleagues would be difficult without French language skills, so each member of the project team began taking French lessons for an hour per day, four days a week from a retired French army officer.<sup>7</sup>

The Cambodians, USOM, and the Georgia team were cognizant of the vast cultural differences that could lead to misunderstandings between the Americans and the Cambodians and that could ultimately hinder the project's progress. Dr. Savang, Director of the National School, was conscious of the fact that Cambodian standards for certain amenities could be very different from the standards and customs of his new American colleagues and so he worked to improve toilet facilities and install air conditioning in the University of Georgia offices at the National School. As the Georgia group would learn during a meeting with Ambassador William C. Trimble, the Ambassador himself was concerned with how Americans were perceived in Cambodia. Developing in Cambodia a positive image of the United States to counter Communist propaganda was a high priority, and the U.S. government hoped to propagate the image of the United States as a "friendly, dignified and trustworthy partner." Trimble was uneasy about the fact that there was, in his view, an overwhelming American presence in Phnom Penh:

The Ambassador states that four U.S. agencies—the Embassy, USOM, USIS, and MAAG—are now represented in Cambodia by a total of 254 American employees (including 35 contract personnel). This means an approximate ratio of 1 American official for every 11,000 Cambodians. The Ambassador is convinced this large "an American presence" in Cambodia is detrimental to good U.S.-Cambodian relationship.

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<sup>7</sup> "Narrative Summary Report, September 1960, UGA Contract Group to Cambodia, Donald L. Branyon," file Contract Georgia 1960, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, NACP. "Henry A. Stoehr, Narrative Report, September 1960," file H.A. Stoehr 1960-61, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. Stoehr observed, "We have hired a handsome Frenchman, an ex-Army officer, M. Pierre Girardeau, to instruct the group in French conversation for an hour a day four days a week. We have found that an ability to translate written French does not necessarily qualify you to converse fluently. The language barrier can be overcome only by learning the other fellow's language. After all, we can't expect all of these folks to learn English so that they can talk to the few of us, n'est-ce pas?"

Most Cambodians, he avers, identify Westerners with colonialism and may resent—or be suspicious of the motives of—so many American advisors on the Cambodian scene. Moreover, the American community is so conspicuous because it is headquartered almost completely in Phnom Penh, and enjoys such comparatively luxurious living conditions.<sup>8</sup>

It is no surprise that Trimble was concerned with perceptions of Americans in Cambodia. Appointed by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1959, Trimble had arrived in Cambodia in the midst of a political crisis over alleged Central Intelligence Agency involvement in attempts to overthrow Prince Sihanouk and the debacle related to the deterioration of the most visible U.S. aid project in Cambodia—the Khmer-American Friendship Highway. International media attention to the fact that the 132 mile highway connecting Phnom Penh to the port of Sihanoukville was literally falling apart had been an embarrassment to the United States. Compounding the embarrassment was the fact that specific statements from Trimble’s own cables to Washington about the matter were made public. Trimble’s concerns that “the deplorable condition of the highway may deal a severe blow to U.S. prestige and good faith” were leaked to the public and helped fuel a Congressional investigation about this use of taxpayers’ dollars.<sup>9</sup> Trimble had never had an assignment in the Far East and he was sensitive about the U.S. image in Cambodia given these public relations challenges. He was a career officer, having risen through the foreign service ranks, working in various diplomatic posts in

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<sup>8</sup> Confidential Outgoing Message from US. Information Agency, Allen, to USIS Phnom Penh, 15 October 1959, USIS Cambodia Country Plan, file Cambodia Program, Box 41; and Confidential Memo Through Alvin Roseman, Sherwood Fine, Edwin Hough, Ambassador Trimble and the American Presence in Cambodia, 16 June 1960, file Cambodia Administration, Box 33, Cambodia 1955-61, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies 1948-61, RG 469, NACP.

<sup>9</sup> Briefing Memorandum for the Director, D.A. Fitzgerald, Deputy Director for Operations, 31 July 1961, file Cambodia Program Briefing, Box 41, Cambodia 1955-61, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies 1948-61, RG 469, NACP. Congressman Porter Hardy, Jr. from Virginia was heading a Congressional investigation into the matter. Trimble was concerned that “excessive publicity to this distressed project would seriously damage U.S. prestige in South East Asia.” “Cambodia: Impact” *Time* Magazine, 21 July 1961. *Time* reported that Prince Sihanouk tried to drive from Phnom Penh to Sihanoukville: “His car bounced over ruts, thumped into potholes. He turned back in disgust, and took a helicopter instead.”



Spain, Argentina, Estonia, and Mexico, Iceland, London, Brazil, The Hague, and as Deputy Chief of Mission and Minister of Embassy in Bonn, Germany.<sup>10</sup>



Figure 3.1. U.S. Ambassador William C. Trimble with Prince Norodom Sihanouk cutting the ribbon at the inauguration ceremonies of the model elementary school at Stung Treng, one of fourteen elementary schools built using American aid. From the document, *The American Aid Program in Cambodia: A Decade of Cooperation, 1951-1961*, file Programs 1962, Box 52, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>10</sup> Biography of William Cattell Trimble, William Cattell Papers, 1931-76:Finding Aid, Seely G. Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University Library, Princeton, Nj, available from <http://diglib.princeton.edu/ead/getEad?id=ark:/88435/1j92g7452>, accessed 3 September 2009. David P. Chandler, *The Tragedy of Cambodian History: Politics, War, and Revolution Since 1945* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991), 46. Chandler notes that Trimble was one of only two Americans that Prince Sihanouk had ever trusted. The other was the U.S. Military Aid mission director, Brig. Gen. Edward Scherer.

Reiterating the Ambassador's concerns, during their first official staff meeting in Cambodia Donald Branyon reminded his colleagues that they were foreigners in a new country and that the team must be mindful of the new culture:

We were a small group of foreigners in a foreign land and that we are ambassadors of the United States not only in our official work at the National College but in every place where we come in contact with the Cambodian people. To them we are America and we must conduct ourselves in such a way as to win their respect and respect of our country. We must be patient and realize that things move more slowly here than back home. We must move slowly but steadily toward the objectives set out in the survey by Dr. Murray and Mr. Fanning and in the contract with ICA and the Cambodian government.<sup>11</sup>

The University of Georgia team made deliberate efforts to get to know their new Cambodian and American colleagues. The University of Georgia team spent time with USOM Director Charles Mann. Mann was respected by his colleagues as a good administrator and someone who knew Southeast Asia, having worked there since 1951. He had served in the U.S. Army during the war and had held various government foreign service posts in Korea and Vietnam before coming to Cambodia in 1957 as USOM Assistant Director. During his time in Phnom Penh, he had also served as Acting Director before being named USOM Director in 1960.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> "September 1960 Report UGA/L'ENAES Cambodia Contract D. L. Branyon," file Donald L. Branyon, Agronomist, Monthly Reports 1960-1962, Box 61; and "Staff Meeting, University of Georgia Contract Team," 14 September 1960, file Staff Meetings 196060-61, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>12</sup> Charles August Mann in Marquis Who's Who on the Web, 16 September 2009. Peter Cody, interview by author 20 September 2009, Washington, DC.



Figure 3.2. Charles Mann (left) and family with Ambassador William Trimble (center) on the occasion of Mann's swearing-in as USOM Director/Cambodia. Cam- 60-29, file Cam-56 1960 Staff, Box 6, Photographs of AID Activities in Cambodia 1956-1963, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

The Georgia team also became acquainted with U.S. officials in various departments of the Mission and attended the weekly staff meetings of the Agriculture Division, headed up by Carl van Haeften. Van Haeften had just arrived at USOM Cambodia from Spain where he had been Deputy Director and then Acting Director of the U.S. agriculture program. Born in California to Dutch parents, at age thirteen van Haeften returned to the Netherlands with his parents and was in Holland when the Germans invaded in 1940. Van Haeften's studies at the Royal College of Tropical Agriculture in The Netherlands were interrupted by World War II, and he completed his degree after the war. While in college, he joined the underground Dutch Resistance Movement and received a U.S. Medal of Freedom in 1946. After college, van Haeften worked as an investigator for the U.S. Military Intelligence Unit at The Hague and as an Army German youth activities officer for the U.S. Army in Augsburg, Germany. He returned to the United States in the early 1950s and took a position as a foreign student adviser with the University of Maine's College of Agriculture. From there he was recruited into the Foreign Operations Administration agricultural training branch. Known for his very direct communications style, van Haeften was not to be the most popular USOM officer among the University of Georgia team.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Carl Frederick van Haeften in Marquis Who's Who on the Web, 16 September 2009; Peter Cody, interview by author 20 September 2009, Washington, DC; and 1997 Obituary material for Carl Fredrick van Haeften provided by Bobbie van Haeften.



Figure 3.3. Carl van Haeften from the USOM Personnel Roster, 1960. Photograph 60-1163, Staff I American Personnel Roster, 286-Cam-56, file 1960 Staff, Box 6, Photographs of AID Activities in Cambodia 1956-1963, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

Charles Mann set up meetings for the Georgia team with key Cambodian officials, including the Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Plan. The team also set about organizing their offices at the National College and meeting with Dr. Savang and Mr. Koan his assistant. During this time, the University of Georgia team also conducted a full survey and inspection of the National College's facilities, including classrooms and laboratories, the library, and the general grounds. The team organized themselves administratively by appointing its members to

head up various work committees and set a schedule for their own weekly staff meetings every Friday afternoon.<sup>14</sup>

During those first few months, the Georgia faculty made a number of trips to off-site locations, including the Kampot livestock station, the Kampong Cham area where agronomy and horticultural work was being carried out, and Siem Reap. Branyon had asked his team members to reach out to USOM personnel and develop good working relationships with them during this initial period. One of the ways the group hoped to accomplish this was through traveling with USOM agricultural personnel, including van Haeften and Samuel Litzenberger, an Agronomy Advisor in the USOM Agriculture Division. For the Georgia team, these trips served the dual purpose of getting to know their USOM colleagues and allowing them to become acquainted with agricultural and environmental conditions in Cambodia, since the team's vehicles had not arrived yet in Cambodia.<sup>15</sup>

In consultation with Savang from the National School, the Georgia team initiated a plan of work to entail: developing a set of recommendations regarding establishing permanent faculty teaching positions, including qualifications, salary, housing, and retirement; reviewing the current curricula and suggesting changes; classifying books and teaching materials; recommending improvements in hog and poultry houses; establishing agronomy and horticulture

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<sup>14</sup> "Cambodia First Semi-Annual Progress Report, July-December, 1960," file Semi-Annual Reports 1960-64, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives. "Meeting with Minister of Agriculture, Cambodian Government," 15 September 1960; and "Staff Meeting, University of Georgia Contract Team, 14 September 1960," file Staff Meetings 1960-61, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. Committee assignments would be as follows: Johnstone would head Curriculum, Stoehr-Library, Causey-Health, Causey and Diamond-Lab Equipment, Transportation and Office Equipment-Johnson, Traffic Rules-Diamond, Bulletin Board and Black Board-Stoehr and Diamond, Security (Safety)-Johnstone and Johnson.

<sup>15</sup> "Cambodia First Semi-Annual Progress Report, July-December, 1960," file Semi-Annual Reports 1960-64, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives.

plots on the lawn of the College; and planning for the College's new site. By December 1960, most of these activities had been completed.<sup>16</sup>

The Mission, and Agriculture Division Director van Haeften in particular, were of a mind that structural changes in the way agricultural programming in Cambodia was carried out were necessary if the country was to progress. Agricultural functions were separated between two ministries, one of which handled extension and research, and another that carried out regulatory functions. The Americans believed that transferring research and extension in particular to the National College would be more in line with the successful American land-grant model whereby agricultural education, research and extension functions were part of colleges and universities. During fall 1960, van Haeften appointed a committee consisting of Francis Johnstone, USOM Extension Advisor Calvin Martin, and Sam Litzenberger to develop an overall plan for restructuring Cambodian agriculture to be submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture. The plan provided for separating agricultural activities into service and regulatory functions, which would remain in the Ministry of Agriculture, and research and extension, which would be transferred to the National College of Agriculture.<sup>17</sup>

By December 1960, the University of Georgia group was settled in and acclimated to their new homes and work environments.<sup>18</sup> They had become familiar enough with challenges

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Meeting with Minister of Agriculture, 15 September 1960, file Staff Meetings 1960-61, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. In a group meeting with the Cambodian Secretary of Agriculture, Savang, and the Georgia team, van Haeften asked the Minister's opinion of the land-grant model of teaching, research, and extension. Meeting minutes indicate that the Minister welcomed all suggestions and asked for them in writing. Carl van Haeften to Prom Tep Savang, 26 September 1960, file Correspondence Agri. Education, Agri. Div. File, FY 61, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. In a letter to Savang, van Haeften expresses "pleasure that our ideas on coordination between research, education and extension are quite similar."

<sup>18</sup> "Narrative Report, October 1960, Henry A. Stoehr," file H.A. Stoehr Monthly Reports 1960-1962, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. Stoehr contracted Dengue fever in October 1960: "I came down with it exactly five days after being out in the forest with

and opportunities at the National School and were becoming more comfortable interacting with their Cambodian and American colleagues. Along with some of their accomplishments—such as developing a report and recommendations for establishing a full-time college faculty, planting demonstration gardens, developing an assessment of existing and necessary facilities, and initiating English classes for students—the Georgia team had identified some clear challenges to progress. First, although Savang and his assistant Koan were fully cooperative and enthusiastic about the project, the University of Georgia group’s interactions were limited to just the two of them as they were the National School’s only full-time employees. Because the National School’s teaching faculty were full-time government employees in the Ministry of Agriculture, the individual faculty members had very limited time to spend with the Georgia team. Second, right away the language barrier became an issue in communicating with students and staff and carrying out simple tasks. Activities such as instructing students on managing demonstration plots were difficult because of the inability to communicate. The University of Georgia team’s inability to communicate with workmen and staff at the National School meant that simple watering instructions for plots were misunderstood or not followed.

Arguably, the most significant obstacle to making any initial progress on the project was the Cambodian government’s failure to make a decision on the new site for the National School. The entire premise for cutting short the team’s U.S.-based orientation and rushing them to Cambodia had been the (apparent) fact that the school site had already been selected and the Cambodians and USOM were anxious for the University of Georgia group to begin developing the new campus. The University of Georgia team arrived to find that the site selected was under several feet of water and during site visits over the next several months—by plane, boat, and car.

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the survey team. They put me to bed for two weeks. Some say it leaves you subject to weakness after even mild exertion for six weeks. But at last I got my appetite back for all this good food after two weeks.”



The team found the site under water ranging from a few inches in depth to 25 feet. The lack of suitability of this site and the lack of decision about an alternate location for the new National School was troubling for the Georgia team on several levels. Central to the contract's scope of work was developing the full teaching, research, and extension aspects of the National School—work that hinged on developing a new campus with adequate classrooms, laboratories, and farm sites. The Georgia faculty could not complete their specific plan of work until the new site could be developed. This hold-up meant that the team passed their time with more mundane activities such as improving chicken houses and hog pens; preparing lists of parts and repairs needed for the School's equipment and machinery; and preparing lists of necessary books and teaching aids, not exactly the type of work the University of Georgia group had envisioned: As one team member commented:

It appears that all efforts of the team in the areas of planning and active participation are rendered ineffective by the ever-present future tense of “where,” “when,” and “what” regarding the National School. Where is it to be developed, when will decisions be made, and what are we going to have to work with? These questions may appear to be so far above the technician as not to concern him; however, they are so basic that they affect him in a very real way. I would not say that we have not made any progress, but still I could not lift out anything that appears to be progress toward our stated objectives. The things that have been accomplished appear to be of a passing and temporary nature. I cannot produce fruitful work by constantly being so abstract as the present indefiniteness dictates.<sup>19</sup>

This frustration increased when the Cambodian government asked the University of Georgia team to carry out what must have seemed like wheel-spinning work: devising and submitting drawings of buildings, farm plots, and other potential facilities for the new campus, without knowledge of which site would be selected and when.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> “Monthly Report, E.W. Causey, February 1961,” file Dr. E.W. Causey Monthly Reports 1960-1962, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>20</sup> “Meeting with Minister of Agriculture, Cambodia Government,” 15 September 1960, file Staff Meetings 1960-61, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. In

Given that the Cambodians were considering several potential sites for the new campus, van Haeften requested that the University of Georgia team prepare a report evaluating the pros and cons of the various locations. Although they were reluctant to attempt any analysis of the sites since they had neither visited nor studied the locations, the Georgia group did make some general observations about the location of a new campus for the National College and whether the school and the much-needed farm should be on the same campus or in a separate location. First, the group agreed that the Cambodian government must decide what it wanted in a college of agriculture and whether it wanted to continue a more traditional, theoretical approach in its program of study or integrate practical elements into its curriculum—along the lines of U.S. land-grant agricultural programs. The group saw advantages to having the new site include both the university and farm outside of Phnom Penh, advantages such as better opportunities for more practical instruction, the convenience of having the campus and farm together, and overall enhanced research opportunities (for example, the ability to have live animals for clinical veterinary studies). Overall, the group thought that such a set-up would provide a better opportunity to move towards the land-grant concept of coordination of teaching, research, and extension. Separating the campus from the farm would be less convenient, but a system could be established whereby students would alternate for six months or a year between practical work and coursework. The group saw benefits to keeping the main campus in Phnom Penh. Having students at the center of culture and learning in Cambodia, studying among their peers who would be doctors and lawyers, was seen as an advantage, as was the fact that the campus would be more accessible. On the down side, remaining in Phnom Penh could mean continuing the

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this meeting, the Cambodian Minister of Agriculture informed the Georgia team and USOM that 600 hectares of land for the new site was available, but the site was underwater and inaccessible. The group discussed whether dikes or fills might help keep the site dry. "First Semi-Annual Progress Report, July-December 1960; and Narrative Report, October 1960, Henry A. Stoehr," file H.A. Stoehr Monthly Reports 1960-1962, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

tendency of using only part-time faculty members, but moving campus elsewhere would mean higher costs and the need to construct living quarters for faculty.<sup>21</sup>

Although the University of Georgia team started 1961 without any firm commitment from the Cambodian government on a site for the new National College of Agriculture, individual members tried to stay busy carrying out smaller, but nonetheless meaningful projects in their respective areas of expertise. Branyon and Johnstone continued to work with students on research and demonstration plots of vegetables, field crops, and forage crops in the area in front of the College building as a way of supplementing the students' theoretical coursework. Stoehr and Johnstone collected specimens of trees and plants to classify, identify, and preserve for future botany studies at the College, while Eldred Causey opened a veterinary clinic of sorts, where he gave demonstrations for students on castration of boars and treated various sick animals, including tiger cubs, dogs, and cats. Diamond evaluated the potential for livestock growing in Cambodia and prepared a prospectus for a commercial hog production unit suitable for Cambodia. Johnson assisted with redesigning the College's water system and developed plans for a school garage to house its buses and cars.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Van Haeften to Potter, Mann, Cason, 15 December 1960, file Contract Georgia 1960, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. A handwritten note attached to the report from van Haeften notes that he had wanted something different than what the University of Georgia delivered in the report: "I wanted them to prepare a paper for the Cambodians to use before they make a final selection of a site for a new school."

<sup>22</sup> "Second Semi-Annual Progress Report, January-June 1961," file Reports Semi-Annual 1960-64, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives.



Figure 3.4. Photograph from the AID document, *The American Aid Program in Cambodia: A Decade of Cooperation, 1951-61*. University of Georgia faculty member Donald Branyon with Cambodian students at one of the National School's demonstration plots. File Programs 1962, Box 52, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

Frustrated by the lack of action on the part of the Cambodian government in selecting a new school site, in January 1961 USOM Director Mann wrote the Cambodian Minister of Plan, reminding him of the U.S. government's investment in the project—over \$1 million—including

farm and college equipment, none of which could be utilized until the new campus and farm were developed. The funds, which included the University of Georgia contract, were to support the construction of a working college farm and campus facilities, including administration, classroom, and laboratory buildings, two student dormitories, five faculty duplex houses, and landscaping. Mann pointed out to the Cambodians that the University of Georgia contract could not be successfully carried out until the Cambodian government assigned a site for the School and farm.<sup>23</sup>

Now more than six months into the Georgia contract, the Mission was utterly at a loss as to how to move the Cambodians towards a decision on the new site for the National School. The Cambodians' lack of action seemed in direct contradiction to the government's goals for the development of agriculture and a Cambodian educational infrastructure. Indeed, in meetings and correspondence the various ministries involved had expressed full support for the project.<sup>24</sup> The government, at its highest levels, including Sihanouk himself, had acknowledged the development of agriculture and education as critical to Cambodia's economic development.<sup>25</sup> Sihanouk was also eager to develop colleges and universities staffed by Cambodians to counter

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<sup>23</sup> Charles A. Mann to H.E. Tep-Phan, Minister of Plan, 31 January 1961, file Correspondence 442-11-227 FY 61, Agri. Education, Agri. Div. File, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, NACP.

<sup>24</sup> W.M. Shumate to Carl van Haeften, "Quarterly Status Report July 1-September 30, 1960," 5 October 1960, file Report 442-11-227 FY61, Agricultural Education (Agri. Div. File), Box 60; and "September Report 1960 UGA/L'ENAES Cambodia Contract, D.L. Branyon, Chief of Party" file Donald L. Branyon, Agronomist Monthly Reports 1960-1962, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. Shumate, an AID Agriculture Education Advisor, notes that the Georgia team met with the Cambodian Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Plan both of whom offered "full support" of the project. Branyon's monthly report indicates the same.

<sup>25</sup> "Condensed Speech Delivered by Chief of State Norodom Sihanouk on March 20 at Prek Leap School of Agriculture," 23 March 1961, file Reference 442-11-227 FY 61, Agricultural Education, Agr. Div. File, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. In a speech delivered by Sihanouk at Prek Leap School of Agriculture, the Prince stressed the importance of agriculture as the basis for economic development, prosperity, and as a guarantee of independence. He talked of the government's five year plan to increase agricultural production and improve the standard of living of farmers.

what he perceived as the “Communist indoctrination of Cambodian students who go abroad to study, particularly in France.” In fact, Sihanouk had argued for more efforts by the Western bloc, specifically Britain and the United States, to build colleges and universities in Cambodia, equip them with Western equipment, and staff them with British and U.S. faculty.<sup>26</sup> Sihanouk seemed to take a particular interest in U.S. higher education institutions, having visited Kent State University the previous year and the University of Michigan in 1961.<sup>27</sup> In hopes of garnering support for the University of Georgia contract, Ambassador Trimble had even requested that the University of Georgia invite Sihanouk to visit Athens on one of his trips to the United States.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Declassified Secret Foreign Service Despatch from the American Embassy in Phnom Penh to the Department of State, 15 August 1960, file Cambodia Program Briefing, Box 41, Cambodia 1955-61, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies 1948-61, RG 469, NACP. A USOM Public Works Advisor filed an account of a conversation between Sihanouk, the British Ambassador, and the British High Commissioner to India, during a meeting. Sihanouk expressed concern that if he were killed, Cambodia “would immediately go Red” because of the students influenced by French education and French-trained teachers who were Communist-inclined. Sihanouk thought that U.S. or British teachers and universities could “wipe out any communist feeling in the coming generation. If the Governments themselves did not wish to finance such Universities or furnish teachers, he requested that the Ford or Rockefeller Foundations be requested to provide such aid.” The cover of this memo lauds the Public Works advisor’s intelligence gathering, noting: “how great a political and intelligence contribution can be made by an alert, informed technician even outside his own field of professional competence when the latter has gained him the confidence of high dignitaries of the host government.” Declassified Secret Memorandum from USIS-DM Price to Members of the Country Team, Subject “Proposal for a Country Team Project, 25 April 1960, file Cambodia Program Briefing, Box 41, Cambodia 1955-61, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies 1948-61, RG 469, NACP. A USIS officer noted that it would take some time for Cambodia to be able to have personnel qualified to staff universities: “A very casual inspection of the foreign faculty at present shows that a number of the French instructors are leftist or Communist. It may be assumed that some of the disaffected Cambodians returned from Paris are now at work in the Cambodian school system. It is therefore proposed that all elements of the Country Team cooperate in gathering information on Communists or leftists in the Cambodian school system to be presented to the Prince as an ‘Aspect.’”

<sup>27</sup> Kenton Clymer, *The United States and Cambodia, 1870-1969* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 86. Declassified Secret Restricted Country Team Meeting, Ambassador’s Office, 11 January 1961, file Cambodia Program Briefing, Box 41, Cambodia 1955-61, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies 1948-61, RG 469, NACP. Minutes of a Country Team Meeting in January 1961 note that after the visit, Kent State compiled a report “to consider ways and means of giving assistance to Cambodia in the development of its University and to arrange a program of cultural exchange. For the moment it would be preferable for this relationship to develop in a normal way without USG intervention. Nevertheless, the Ambassador suggested that in placing Cambodian students under the Exchange Program, it might be desirable to see that several are sent to Kent State. Mann also suggested that ICA might be asked to keep Kent State in mind whenever it may have needs for the Cambodian program which Kent State might be in a position to assist on.”

The frustrations the Americans in Phnom Penh had with the Cambodians in implementing the agriculture project reflected some of the broader rifts in U.S. Cambodian relations. Dealing with Sihanouk and the Cambodian government was a constant challenge for the Ambassador and USOM. Since the United States had expanded its presence in the country there had been numerous ups and downs in U.S.-Cambodia relations. The rocky relationship revolved around U.S. fears that Cambodia would go Communist and Sihanouk's concerns about threats to his rule from Cambodia's neighbors Vietnam and Thailand and United States involvement in Thai and Vietnamese plots against him. Even though he continued accepting the large quantities of foreign aid that the United States sent his way, Sihanouk remained suspicious of the United States's intentions, and rightly so. The United States was impatient with Sihanouk's neutrality and frustrated when he formally recognized the Communist government in Beijing, but American officials knew that cutting off aid to Cambodia would surely mean "abandoning Cambodia to the Communists." So the United States's official foreign policy at the highest levels was to continue to support Cambodia financially and accept Sihanouk's neutrality, but at the same time it sought to keep its options open, and even, in certain situations, assist dissidents (including Cambodians, Vietnamese and Thais) working against Sihanouk through covert operations.<sup>29</sup> The United States knew of Vietnamese plots to overthrow Sihanouk as early as 1958, and although the United States did not actively participate in them, it did not inform Sihanouk of the coup attempts. Sihanouk believed that U.S. intelligence agents were directly involved in a 1959 coup attempt by Cambodian Sam Sary in collaboration with the Vietnamese

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<sup>28</sup> Telegram from Trimble to Secretary of State, 3 October 1960, file Cambodian Agriculture 1960, Box 33, Cambodia 1955-61, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies 1948-61, RG 469, NACP. The Ambassador noted, "Believe Sihanouk would be flattered at invitation and attention. Also will stimulate his interest in and support of Georgia group's activities in Cambodia." There is no indication that the University of Georgia did issue an invitation. Branyon to Murray, 4 October 1960, file Donald L. Branyon 60-61, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>29</sup> Clymer, *United States and Cambodia*, 64-65.

and Thais. Later that year, Sihanouk put down a plot by Dap Chhuon, Governor of Siem Reap, who was aided by the Vietnamese. Sihanouk accused the United States of being involved directly. Finally, in August 1959 a bomb exploded in the royal palace killing Prince Norodom Vakravan, director of protocol, and a palace staff member. Ngo Dinh Nhu, the younger brother of South Vietnamese President Diem, was implicated in the bombing and Sihanouk strongly believed that the United States was a party to the plot. Although the United States denied involvement in all three incidents, there is convincing evidence that the United States was indeed involved in at least the Sam Sary and Dap Chhuon plots.<sup>30</sup>

Trimble, “fed up with having a crisis every three or four months,” recognized that future coup attempts against Sihanouk were likely to fail and would only serve to further antagonize U.S.-Cambodian relations. Consequently, the United States’s new official foreign policy by April 1960 did not advocate U.S. involvement in seeking a successor to Sihanouk but, rather, called for more sensitivity towards Cambodia’s neutrality and movement towards being a “moderating influence” with regard to Cambodia’s relationship with its neighbors.<sup>31</sup>

Interestingly for the University of Georgia agricultural project with ICA, in late 1959 Trimble suggested to Washington that the United States be more careful in its covert operations in Cambodia. He suggested that Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operatives be sent to Cambodia under cover as employees of ICA, as an assistant Army Attaché, and as an Embassy political officer. This request apparently came to pass as two low-ranking AID officials were arrested by the Cambodians in 1962 and charged with espionage.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 70-76. Clymer, who wrote of the plots 13 years after Chandler had access to more declassified documents and points to strong evidence that the United States was directly involved in both plots. Chandler notes evidence of U.S. involvement in the Dap Chhuon affair but is lacking on U.S. involvement with Sam Sary. Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 99-107.

<sup>31</sup> Trimble quoted in Clymer, *United States and Cambodia*, 79.



This diplomatic rollercoaster and the simmering tensions throughout Southeast Asia could not have gone unnoticed by the University of Georgia team. Sihanouk's frequent and public denunciations of perceived Thai and Vietnamese threats and U.S. involvement in plots against him were widely reported in newspapers and repeated in his many speeches. Additionally, at times the University of Georgia team observed activities around Phnom Penh that seemed to be preparation for a military attack. The University of Georgia group was aware of the potential for military conflict in Cambodia and contemplated the impact on their work and their safety in Cambodia. In early 1961, Branyon wrote to his son, Donald Branyon, Jr.:

The trouble in neighboring Laos seems to be quite serious. We are concerned that it might spread to this country but of course no one knows. I am sure our Embassy has evacuation plans in case of an emergency, so don't worry about us. We are thinking we will be all right.<sup>33</sup>

Despite the ups and downs of Cambodia-United States relations, the University of Georgia team was absorbed in trying to determine how to make progress in its work with the

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 77, 93. According to Clymer, in 1962 the Cambodians arrested two U.S. Agency for International Development officials for espionage and working with Vietnamese and Chinese operatives to overthrow the Cambodian government and damage the Chinese government: Kwang P. Chu, a low-ranking AID employee, and Samuel H.B. Hopler, an AID official. An April 1961 USOM American Personnel Roster lists a Samuel B.H. Hopler (different middle initials than noted by Clymer) as an End Use Officer in the Office of the Controller. Chu is not listed. Arthur Gannon to O.C. Aderhold, 24 May 1961, file Contract Correspondence with local personnel, including Mr. Gannon, Box 57, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>33</sup> Branyon to Donald Branyon, Jr., 10 January 1961, Phnom Penh, Personal files of Donald Branyon, Jr., Athens, Georgia; and Robert J. McMahon, *Limits of Empire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 108. McMahon notes that Kennedy contemplated sending U.S. combat forces to Laos in spring 1961 to put down the Soviet-backed Pathet Lao which had challenged the U.S.-supported Boun Oum government. Branyon to Gannon, 16 November 1961, file Univ. of GA. Corres. 1959-61, Box 57, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. Later in November 1961, Branyon again mentioned tensions in Phnom Penh in a letter to Gannon: "The political situation, so far as lambasting the U.S. and its policies is concerned, seems quiet. At least we have not heard anything the last few days. A good many trenches are being dug and sandbagged in Phnom Penh and other places too, as if an attack were expected. Really we have not seen nor heard anything indicating that an invasion is imminent, but the trenches, etc. do indicate apprehension at least on the part of the Cambodian government. I really do not expect any developments that would endanger us but in case it should become necessary for us to get out I feel that the Embassy has plans that would take care of the situation." Clymer, *United States and Cambodia*, 87-88. During this time, Sihanouk had been antagonized by the Thai Prime Minister who had compared him to a pig, and in October 1961 Sihanouk gave a two-hour speech in which he stated that Thailand planned to invade Cambodia and complained about the United States. Clymer notes that the U.S. made plans to evacuate Americans from Cambodia in case the situation escalated.

National School. The challenges that the group had faced from the beginning of its time in Cambodia—lack of identification of a new site for the National School, language barriers and communications issues, and lack of interaction with the part-time faculty and staff—continued into 1961. USOM Director Mann was well-aware of these challenges and concerned with the project's progress.<sup>34</sup> Visits by two University of Georgia officials—Arthur Gannon, the University of Georgia project campus coordinator, in April and President Aderhold in June—brought about opportunities for the Georgia team, USOM, and the Cambodians to sift through some of these challenges and devise potential solutions. For the Georgia team, these visits also brought to the surface a new and significant wrinkle—the realization that neither Savang at the National School nor the Cambodian ministry officials were fully aware of or in agreement with the University of Georgia contract provisions and scope of work.

Arthur Gannon's two week visit in early April 1961 was a time of "re-examination of methods, objectives, motives and the exploration of areas offering possibilities for doing constructive and useful work in Cambodia." Gannon attended meetings with the University of Georgia team and the Ambassador, Cambodian Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Savang, USOM Director Mann, and van Haeften and others from the Agricultural Division, and USOM staff. Some of the discussions focused on finding a solution to persistent language issues between the University of Georgia team and National College faculty and students. Although from the very beginning, the University of Georgia had been clear about the fact that it could not provide French-speaking agricultural experts, and the Cambodian government had agreed to these terms with the proviso that USOM provide interpreters, there was general unhappiness that the

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<sup>34</sup> Branyon to UGA Contract Team, 16 February 1961, file Contract Georgia FY 61, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. Mann asked Branyon to survey the Georgia team on several questions related to the project, including their views on progress, the number of faculty the School would need, and biggest challenges in dealing with the contract.

University of Georgia team could not speak French. Thus, during these meetings Dr. Savang frequently expressed the opinion that the University of Georgia team should be able to speak French, although neither he nor the USOM would assign an interpreter to the Georgia group. In light of this, the group explored the possibility of adding another person to the Georgia project team—a faculty member from the University of Georgia with some limited agricultural background who was fluent in French. Dr. Savang was very interested in having the person in this proposed position teach English and other courses at the National College, though the Georgia contract clearly stipulated that faculty would not teach courses.<sup>35</sup>

The more days that passed, the more apparent it became to University of Georgia team members that there was misunderstanding and a lack of consensus on the part of the four primary players in the project—the University of Georgia, USOM, the Cambodian government, and Savang at the National School—as to what the goals of the project really were and what could reasonably expected to be accomplished. Nearly a year into the project, Branyon commented that:

I took for granted, and think we all did, that Dr. Savang had a part in working out the terms of our contract, that he understood what it contained and certainly I thought he had a copy. In conference with him yesterday .... [Savang] remarked that he had not known those things were in the contract. Further conversation brought out the fact that he had worked with Mr. Easom, Bill Shumate's predecessor, when a college contract was first discussed and provisions studied. Also he and Shumate had conferred and he had had copies of the E-1 but no copy of the contract. In fact, he said that teaching assistance had been, and is, one of his greatest needs and he thought the contract provided for technicians who could and would teach. Although I mentioned the contract provisions occasionally in our conferences, in thinking back now I think there must have been many occasions when he did not understand why I said we were not supposed, under the terms of the contract, to do classroom teaching, and that in our case a language waiver was included in the contract, etc.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> "Cambodia Second Semi-Annual Progress Report, January-June 1961," file Semi-Annual Reports 1960-64, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives.

<sup>36</sup> Branyon to Gannon, 18 May 1961, file Donald L. Branyon 60-61, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

Given Savang's claim that he had no knowledge of the scope of work included in the contract and the fact that some of the ICA Agriculture Division staff in Phnom Penh who had devised and negotiated the contract with the Cambodian government, including Easom and Russel Kilgore (Division Chief), had transferred and had been replaced by others, it was no surprise that there were varying levels of understanding and support for the project. Georgia team member E.W. Causey elaborated on this and other challenges hindering progress:

It becomes increasingly apparent that our objectives and scope of work as stated in our contract are not in keeping with the wishes of our host. Even if this were not so and if all other complicating factors could be eliminated, the fact that an institution so infantile as the National School has six foreign advisors plus two FAO specialists related directly to it creates many problems. Add to this the fact that the staff of this institution consists of one lone, tired man and the rest of the doers (teachers) are scattered to the four winds, and the basic situation becomes impossible. The solution is not an easy one because (1) the wishes of our host are very elusive, (2) mistakes on our part and on the part of others must be identified and corrected in a society wherein there is little room for one who makes mistakes, (3) their [sic] is little foundation upon which to build and few facts upon which to project plans, (4) there is the ever-present air on our part (U.S.) for urgency in getting the job done while we still have a chance to do it, (5) the needs are so great and varied according to our standards, (6) we are foreigners twice removed—first because we are Americans and this is Cambodia, and secondly because we are trying to act as advisors in what is basically the French system of education.<sup>37</sup>

In a staff meeting with the University of Georgia team and Gannon, van Haeften was not overly optimistic about the project's prospects and hinted at a possible lack of communication between ICA in Washington and USOM in Phnom Penh when devising the original contract:

Regarding the project as a whole, Mr. van Haeften stated that we had a basic job to do—to help Cambodia establish a National College of Agriculture, and that we had to go along and do the best we could with what we had. Our present plans were based on the best knowledge USOM had at the time the plans were being made. Now, after six or eight months, we see that some parts of the plan are not falling into place. Dr. Savang either was not completely tuned in on the project, or has changed his mind since. French was originally required, then it was waived by order from Washington. Dr. Savang did not go along with the idea of instruction in English. The contract specified that Georgia

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<sup>37</sup> "Monthly Report, May 1961, E.W. Causey," file Dr. E.W. Causey Monthly Reports 1960-1962, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

team members are consultants and advisors only; but this assumes there is someone to consult with and give advice to.<sup>38</sup>

Given these challenges, President Aderhold's planned visit for June 1961 could not come soon enough. There was a high level of frustration on the part of both the University of Georgia team and the USOM personnel in Phnom Penh and Aderhold's statesmanship was needed to bring focus and clarity to the project.<sup>39</sup> The official purpose of Aderhold's visit was to assess progress made by the Georgia team, the Cambodian partners, and USOM officials, but his time in Cambodia was also an important way to show support to the University of Georgia team and to emphasize the University of Georgia's institutional commitment to the project.<sup>40</sup>

Aderhold's visit to Cambodia was part of a fifty-day around-the-world odyssey that combined both University business and a summer vacation for the Aderhold family, including his wife, son, and daughter. Along with visiting the Cambodia and Vietnam project sites, Aderhold's trip included stops in Honolulu, Tokyo, Kyoto, Hong Kong, Bangkok, New Delhi, Agra, Tehran, Athens, Rome, Venice, Vienna, Zurich, Frankfurt, Berlin, Dusseldorf, Brussels, Paris, and London. Given the complicated logistics of international travel at the time and the sheer amount of time it took to get from here to there, it is not surprising that Aderhold would combine business-related international travel with much-needed leisure time with his family.

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<sup>38</sup> "Preliminary Draft, Meeting Mr. van Haeften's office," 13 April 1961, file Questions for Discussion with Mr. Mann February, 1961, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>39</sup> Edwin W. Booth to C.C. Murray, 18 May 1961, file President's Trip to Cambodia and Vietnam, Box 57, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. Acting Chief of ICA's Far East Branch notes that the visit will "boost the morale of these people as well as the ICA personnel."

<sup>40</sup> O.C. Aderhold to Deans and Directors, 9 June 1961, file President's Trip to Cambodia and Vietnam, Box 57, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. Aderhold also visited Saigon and met with participants in the University's ICA project in Vietnam. Don and Jessie Branyon to Arthur Gannon, 24 May 1961; and letter from the Aderhold's to Mrs. Weldon and Staff, 17 June 1961, from Venice Italy, file President's Trip to Cambodia and Vietnam, Box 57, C.C. Murray 1960-62, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

The fact that Aderhold was interested in seeing parts of the world he had never visited and wanted to share this with his family speaks to the worldly outlook of the University President who had spent nearly all of his professional life in the state where he was born. From Venice, Aderhold writes about his family's travel experiences including visiting William Tapley "Tap" Bennett, a Georgia native and University of Georgia graduate who was a high-ranking diplomat in the Embassy in Rome and who would later serve as United States Ambassador to the Dominican Republic (1964), Portugal (1966), the United Nations (1972) and NATO (1977):<sup>41</sup>

From Teheran to Beirut are another two thousand miles of sand and dessert, most of which is floating on oil. In Teheran we saw the building of a modern city, but off the main thoroughfares the same filth and poverty as in India. Even on thoroughfares they build open gutters filled with water which the people use for every conceivable activity. We landed in Beirut and saw where our soldiers were stationed a year or two ago in Lebanon. In Athens... in the afternoon we visited Tap Bennett of the new Embassy. Tap invited us to a reception for a visiting dignitary, but it seems that receptions and dinner begin at 11:00 p.m., and we were too tired to stay up that late. The stadium, Hadrian's Gate, and the Temple of Zeus were interesting. The stadium was built like the old stadium and Sanford Stadium. One evening we attended "Aida" in the Baths of Cara Calla. A hurried generalization of Athens and Rome is that they became great historical spots in large part because of availability of marble and granite. There may have been other civilizations as great as those represented by these two cities, but because of the lack of stone no lasting records were left. The flight from Rome to Venice was low and we were able to see much of the country, including the mountains and level agricultural areas. We spent most of yesterday morning in St. Mark's where we attended mass. I have stood and climbed cathedral and palace steps until I am worn out. We have been well except for a few minor upsets. All the food is delicious, it is so rich that Clyde [Aderhold's son] is always talking about getting back to Mattie and Maggie's cooking and to the Varsity.<sup>42</sup>

Over the course of his week in Phnom Penh, Aderhold had numerous meetings with his Georgia colleagues, USOM personnel (including Mission Director Mann and Agricultural Division Chief van Haeften), and Cambodian government officials. Dr. Savang from the

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<sup>41</sup> Biographical Note, William Tapley Bennett Jr. Papers, Richard B. Russell Library for Political Research and Studies, University of Georgia.

<sup>42</sup> Letter from the Aderhold's to Mrs. Weldon and Staff, 17 June 1961, from Venice Italy, file President's Trip to Cambodia and Vietnam, Box 57, C.C. Murray 1960-62, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

National College was in France on personal business during Aderhold's stay in Cambodia and so was not part of meetings and strategy sessions. Overall, Aderhold saw progress being made by the University's team, but he also recognized several difficult problems, "many of which will not be solved for ten years or more," and most of which were of a political nature and out of the purview of the University of Georgia group. Aderhold was determined to drill down to the heart of the issues and challenges and map out a way forward.<sup>43</sup>

In meetings with the Acting Prime Minister, Minister of Agriculture, and officials from the Ministry, Aderhold was able to put to the Cambodian officials direct questions about their wishes and expectations for the project. Question number one on the minds of all was the status of the land for the new National College and farm. The Cambodian government officials assured Aderhold and others that land had been set aside (near the airport) and that the Georgia team should proceed with specific planning for the area. They also indicated that the government was waiting for the city to convey the land, but envisioned no delays and requested that the Georgia team move forward with architectural plans for the site.

Other issues discussed during this important meeting reveal that all parties—the Cambodian government, the Director of the National College, the University of Georgia, and USOM—were not in concert with regard to expectations about the project and its objectives. The Cambodian government officials' answers to some of Aderhold's questions reveal that their ideas for the agricultural college flowed from their experiences with a French education system and certainly did not reflect an understanding of the U.S. land-grant model or a desire to change the way agricultural education was organized to better reflect the U.S. system. It also revealed that amongst the Cambodians there was disagreement about what services were desired from the

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<sup>43</sup> Aderhold to Murray, 5 July 1961, from Phnom Penh, file Confidential, Box 57, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

University of Georgia team. For example, when asked about the agricultural college's organization and mission, the Cambodian officials indicated they wanted "a European type institution" with a four-year program (not a two-year program as originally planned) and instruction in French. The Acting Prime Minister indicated that he wanted American subject matter taught in French during the transition and that he hoped that the University of Georgia would provide French-speaking teachers. The Minister of Agriculture, however, indicated that he wanted the University of Georgia team to provide laboratory and field work, but not instruction. Both Cambodian officials at the meeting indicated that they wanted the training to be in general agriculture so that graduates could then go on to U.S. institutions for specialization.

On the other hand, the National College's Director, Dr. Savang, who was not present at the meeting, had expressed a desire for the University of Georgia team to devise a curriculum with four distinct specialties. When Aderhold posed the question of whether the government's concept of an agricultural college included research and extension, Aderhold's impression was that "none of the natives have much of a concept of a state university or land-grant institution." In fact, the Cambodians indicated that they wanted the research function to be at a separate institution and extension to remain under the Ministry of Agriculture and not be developed as part of the agricultural college.<sup>44</sup>

The day after meeting with Cambodian government officials, President Aderhold and the Georgia team regrouped with van Haeften and Raymond Cason, the Agricultural Division's Deputy Chief, to strategize about how to move the project forward given the meeting from the

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<sup>44</sup> Confidential letter from Aderhold to Murray, 4 July 1961; Aderhold to Murray, 5 July 1961; and "Notes on Meeting Held June 30, 1961," file Confidential, Box 57, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. Memorandum from Carl van Haeften to the file, 3 July 1961, folder Confidential, Box 57, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. Cable from Prom Tep Savang in Toulouse to van Haeften, date illegible, file Contract Georgia FY 61, Box 60, RG Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. Savang was in France with his wife who was ill.



Cambodians. Although some issues were clearer, the differences of opinion amongst the Cambodians themselves meant that there were still many issues left unresolved. For example, what did the Cambodians mean when they expressed a desire for a European-style university? Van Haeften interpreted that as meaning a fixed curriculum with no electives, but the group opined that it could also mean teaching theory only with no practical work, as in France. With the imperfect information available, the group strategized about specific steps that the University of Georgia group could take to move forward.<sup>45</sup>

First, the group agreed to invite a high-ranking delegation of Cambodian officials to the University of Georgia in hopes of giving them a better understanding of the relationship between teaching, research, and extension and the mission of land-grant institutions. Invitations would be extended to the Minister of Agriculture, the Chief of the Ministry's Agronomy Division and the Inspector General from the Ministry (Chhon Saodi, a young man who had been present at the meeting and whom Aderhold and Mann had observed "does most of the thinking for the Minister of Agriculture and the Prime Minister"). Second, on the issue of whether the Georgia team should participate in teaching at the National School, Aderhold strategized that one way to sell the land-grant concept might be to have the University of Georgia faculty do some limited teaching. To solve the problem of the Georgia team not having French language skills, Aderhold conceded to USOM's request that the University bring in a French speaker to serve as a liaison and to translate for the University of Georgia team in the classroom. Third, it was agreed that the Georgia team should move forward with curriculum planning to develop the National College into a four-year institution. Fourth, the group agreed that the University of Georgia would

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<sup>45</sup> Confidential letter from Aderhold to Murray, 4 July 1961; Aderhold to Murray, 5 July 1961; and "Notes on Meeting Held June 30, 1961," file Confidential, Box 57, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. Memorandum from Carl van Haeften to the file, 3 July 1961, folder Confidential, Box 57, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

provide some leadership on the architectural design and planning for the new college. USOM wanted a design that would set the facility apart from the traditional French architecture prevalent throughout the country. Finally, the group decided that the USOM Agricultural Division and the University of Georgia would not pursue any further with the Cambodians the idea of reorganizing agricultural education and agricultural functions within the government in Cambodia. Rather, this issue would be worked at higher levels within the Cambodian government and USOM.<sup>46</sup>

The Georgia team and Aderhold were under the impression that Aderhold's visit had served to clarify some key issues. Indeed, in letters back to Dean Murray, Aderhold seemed reassured by USOM that things would now progress:

USOM people believe that there is clarification developing at the top level for getting the program here moving at a more rapid rate than it has to date. Our team has been slowed in its operation because school officials have been unable or unwilling to make decisions. I am sorry that I did not get to visit with Dr. Savang, who is out of the country, but USOM is of the opinion that our team should move ahead.<sup>47</sup>

A month after Aderhold's visit, however, internal USOM communications indicate less optimism about the project and its progress. Mann, in particular, still saw the potential for more problems ahead. USOM believed that the most urgent problem was the University of Georgia team's low morale and that the solution was a new Chief of Party with greater "leadership abilities." Mann also saw as problematic the fact that Savang had not been able to participate in the meetings. The National School's Acting Director had refused to participate in discussions,

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.; and ICA USOM Cambodia Route Slip from R. Cason to C. van Haeften, 18 July 1961, file contract Georgia FY 61, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. Aderhold stated in meetings with USOM that it was not feasible for Georgia faculty to study French for six months before coming to Cambodia and that future team members would have to study French upon arrival in Cambodia. On AID's version of the "Notes on Meeting" document, there is a handwritten note by Charles Mann on the routing slip that states: "They must study before they arrive, otherwise too late."

<sup>47</sup> Aderhold to Murray, 5 July 1961, file Confidential, Box 57, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

claiming that he lacked the authority to make decisions and his other duties would not allow him to spend any time on the project. Mann noted that upon his return Savang disagreed with some of the official views expressed by the Cambodian officials in meetings with Aderhold. Mann also expressed concern about the fact that the Minister of Agriculture “was not entirely informed on matters pertaining to the school.” Finally, Mann continued to be troubled by the fact that the Georgia team spoke no French, noting:

The language problem continues to be a major issue because it has proven to be an effective roadblock against the establishment of necessary working relationships between the UGA group and the present part time teaching staff. Progress towards developing a new improved curriculum and improving the teaching standards is suffering accordingly.<sup>48</sup>

Throughout the summer and into fall 1961, the lingering concerns about the project’s likelihood of success raised doubts within USOM and at ICA in Washington as to whether the project’s contract with the University of Georgia should be continued. Some of the challenges seemed insurmountable, and within USOM and ICA and between the University of Georgia and USOM finger pointing and assigning blame became the order of the day. Some within the USOM Controllers’ office questioned whether the delay in achieving project objectives was the result of poor planning on the part of the Mission itself. One of the major obstacles was the Georgia team’s lack of French language abilities—how, Controllers wondered, could the Mission staff not have foreseen this and why would it have approved contract personnel with insufficient language capabilities?<sup>49</sup> There had also been within USOM quite a turnover of staff

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<sup>48</sup> ICA Airgram from Phnom Penh (Mann), 3 August 1961, file Cambodia Agriculture 1961, Box 34, Cambodia 1955-61, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies 1948-61, RG 469, NACP. Mann cites the problems with the University of Georgia’s Chief of Party and indicates this was discussed with Aderhold. Aderhold does not mention this in any of his correspondence or notes on meetings.

<sup>49</sup> Van Haeften to Marlin Haas (Controller), 12 July 1961; and cable from Washington to USOM, 31 July 1961, file Agriculture Education Support Materials FY 62, Box 382, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. Airgram from Washington to USOM notes: “ICA/W under impression only limited progress being made under subject contract. Would therefore appreciate soonest cable report on

from when the University of Georgia contract was originally negotiated. In late 1961, Congress passed the Foreign Assistance Act, which reorganized all U.S. foreign economic and military aid. President John K. Kennedy established the United States Agency for International Development (AID) to carry out economic foreign assistance. As part of this process, the administration conducted a review of ICA personnel and 274 employees were not re-hired to AID. The personnel review included ICA employees at the Mission in Phnom Penh, where all staff were “re-evaluated to see if they would make the transition.” Fourteen ICA employees did not make the cut and all but one (who resigned) returned to Washington where they were reassigned.<sup>50</sup>

The remaining program officials within USOM saw enough blame to go around. Advocating for ending the “onerous and burdensome contract which would then permit the mission to better focus its resources,” program officer E.J. Krowitz noted:

Needless to say, no actual teaching was done since, aside from the language barrier; the Georgia personnel interpreted their advisory function as prohibiting teaching. Even so, what advising was done had to be done on the run, so to speak, as the part-time Cambodian faculty did not remain at the school for the whole day. No plan is presented by the Georgia group for correcting this state of affairs. In the second matter of curriculum improvement, a list of new courses were drawn up at the insistence of the Program Office. How these courses qualitatively differed from the existing ones was not explained. As a parenthetical aside, the Georgia curriculum advisor noted that any curriculum drawn from the “ag” school of any U.S. land grant college would do. The main deficiency that I think I have pointed out throughout is lack of definite plans of what the mission wants. Bringing out the same or a new contract group would not solve the problem. These fundamental problems can and should be solved by present mission personnel, particularly the Deputy Agricultural Officer, who, detached from other functions, should obtain definite commitment from the RKG. A contract could be let with an architectural firm in Saigon or the States to supervise construction. Up to this point no contract personnel are needed. No additional year’s financing is recommended. Since no

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progress; problems; RKG cooperation including provision new site; working relationship within Georgia team and with USOM; and steps taken to correct any inadequacies.”

<sup>50</sup> Peter Cody, Unpublished Autobiography, 2009, p. 3; and John M. Richardson, *Partners in Development: An Analysis of AID-University Relations, 1950-1966* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1969), 106.

French-speaking agriculturalists are available from the States, and if the RKG is adamant in their demand for French as a language of instruction, negotiations could be undertaken with FAO or the Belgian consulate to bring French-speaking technicians with experience in tropical agriculture as faculty for the National School of Agriculture.<sup>51</sup>

The Agriculture Division, the unit within USOM ultimately responsible for the contract, continued to argue that adequate planning had been undertaken on the part of the United States, but that the Cambodians themselves were in part to blame for the lack of progress. For example, USOM officials pointed out, the Cambodian government at its highest levels had understood and accepted that the University of Georgia faculty lacked the desired French language ability, but Cambodian officials at the operating level were not informed of this decision and were disappointed that the University of Georgia group lacked such ability. Additionally, the fact that within the Cambodian government solutions to even minor problems could only be made at the highest levels had hindered progress on the selection of a new school site. Mission Director Mann felt that generally, the Cambodian government had not “done its share in creating an atmosphere in which the Georgia group can become effective.” Mann also believed that Savang’s weak administrative and organizational skills coupled with Branyon’s “inability to provide forceful and positive leadership” meant that both sides had “refused to meet problems head-on and have permitted their staffs to flounder.”<sup>52</sup>

For its part, the University of Georgia group in Cambodia remained steadfast in their position that situations and events out of their control were to blame for the lack of progress. The University of Georgia blamed USOM for doing a poor job of selling “the need of higher

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<sup>51</sup> E.J. Krowitz to Peter Cody, “FY 1962 E-1 Development of Agricultural Education, 21 November 1961, file Agricultural Education Support Materials FY 62, Box 382, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>52</sup> Airgram from Mann, “Contract Performance Report,” 31 July 1961, file Cambodia Agriculture 1961, Box 34, Cambodia 1955-61, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies 1948-61, RG 469, NACP.

education in the scientific fields of agriculture in Cambodia” and for not coming to a better understanding with the Cambodians in conceiving the original project. The lack of firm commitment from the Cambodians and a plan of action from USOM, Georgia officials suggested, had become “like the proverbial snowball, and this is a most unsuitable place for a snowball.” USOM’s lack of guidance and inflexibility was a problem for the Georgia team made worse the fact that too many advisors “with too little experience and resource[s], sent into a foreign situation too early to attend to the birth of a mutation of unknown character.”<sup>53</sup>

In spite of its official evaluations of the project, in which USOM had cited “limited progress to date in attaining overall objectives,” and “barely satisfactory performance” of the University of Georgia group as a whole (though it did recognize some cases of “excellent” performance by individual members of the team), and after several formal assessments of the project, in December 1961 USOM did recommend extending the University contract through June 30, 1965. Probably the main reason for USOM’s willingness to continue the project was the University’s obvious commitment to it and the Georgia team’s willingness to “do whatever may be required to bring about a more rapid achievement of project objectives.” USOM also recognized that “several” members of the University of Georgia team had “made excellent use of their time and have now reached the point where their contributions will become increasingly effective.”<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Monthly Report E.W. Causey, November 23-December 22, 1961, file Dr. E.W. Causey-Monthly Reports 1960-1962, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>54</sup> ICA Airgram from Mann, “Contractor Performance Report,” 13 July 1961, file Cambodia Agriculture 1961, Box 34, Cambodia 1955-61, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies 1948-61, RG 469, NACP. Mann suggests that USOM “press University of Georgia to locate future replacements of UGA group with a sufficient proficiency in French...the UGA group members must be capable of an [sic] willing to meet formal classes when such is seemed necessary. The University of Georgia should be reminded that recruitment of staff for the UGA group is not limited to current staff members of that institution. The desirability of recruiting, insofar as possible from among the staff of the University of Georgia, is acknowledged.”

USOM's renewal of the University of Georgia contract, however, was contingent on several changes that would need to occur. First, USOM and the University would jointly redefine the project's scope of work and develop a more realistic set of project objectives. Second, as agreed during Aderhold's visit, the University of Georgia would identify a French speaker to join its team in Phnom Penh to serve as interpreter for the University of Georgia group and as an English language instructor at the National School. Third, Georgia would replace all personnel currently in Phnom Penh with new faculty and reduce the overall number of faculty on the project. Fourth, the Georgia team would focus on developing a four-year curriculum plan for the National School in keeping with the Cambodian government's desire to have a fixed, general curriculum that provided students with general agriculture training equivalent to that of a four-year U.S. Bachelor of Science degree. Finally, the University of Georgia team would focus efforts on developing plans for design, layout, and construction of the new National College campus, as the Cambodians had at last identified 250 acres of land for the new campus and farm near the Pochentong Airport (though legal rights to the land had not yet been secured).<sup>55</sup>

With its mission newly clarified, the Georgia team spent the remainder of 1961 working to meet these new project objectives, particularly objectives relating to developing a new curriculum for the National School and designing the physical campus and farm of the National

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid.; "Third Semi-Annual Progress Report, July-December 1961," file Semi-Annual Reports 1960-64, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives; and "Document For Consideration by Joint Ministry of Plan/USOM Meeting," 11 August 1961, file Meetings USOM with MIN/PLAN, 61 + 62, Box 386, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. The U.S. government had already experienced difficulties and delays in obtaining approvals from the Cambodian government to move forward on several other construction projects. Based on delays it had experienced with constructing the Kouk Trap Agriculture Station, USOM had identified 13 complicated procedural steps and apparent roadblocks within the Cambodian government that would need to be overcome before construction could be put out to bid. These included document misrouting and delays in getting signatures and approvals within ministries.

School. As head of the team's curriculum committee, Johnstone led the curriculum and program development work. Working closely with Dr. Savang, the Georgia team collected data on courses currently offered at the National School, the curricula at similar U.S. institutions, and the educational background of National School students. To bolster these efforts, the University of Georgia brought in two additional curriculum experts, Robert Wheeler, the College of Agriculture's director of instruction, and Edward Warren, University of Georgia professor of animal husbandry, who had been working on the University's agricultural project in Vietnam.<sup>56</sup>

To move along the development of plans and layout of the new school and farm, Aderhold engaged the services of Richard Aeck of Aeck Associates in Atlanta, the architect who had developed the plans for the recently completed \$14 million Science Center on the campus of the University of Georgia in Athens. During his time in Cambodia, Georgia team member G.I. Johnson had already spent significant time and energy inspecting the proposed site, conducting a topographical survey, developing detailed plans for each building, planning overall campus layout, meeting with personnel from USOM's Public Works division, and meeting with Savang and others at the National School about the needs of the new school relative to classrooms, laboratories and other facilities. Aeck's specific architectural expertise would be useful in further refining plans.<sup>57</sup> Ultimately, Aeck would spend close to a month in Cambodia working with

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<sup>56</sup> "Second Semi-Annual Progress Report, January-June 1961" and "Third Semi-Annual Progress Report, July-December 1961," file Semi-Annual Reports 1960-64, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives. The Georgia team had already developed a detailed curriculum and development plan for the National School earlier in 1961 based on original assumptions of what the Cambodians wanted—a basic two year curriculum, a curriculum that included a third year for government officials, and a longer term four-year program with opportunities for specialization. It was thought by the University of Georgia team that this curriculum would "support the Kingdom's policies of increasing opportunity and prosperity for all its people."

<sup>57</sup> "Third Semi-Annual Progress Report, July-December 1961," file Semi-Annual Reports 1960-64, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives; "Monthly Report August 23-September 22, 1961, G.I. Johnson," file G.I. Johnson Monthly Reports 1960-62; Translation of Memorandum from Director, National School to Messrs the Experts for National School, 11 September 1961, No 345-E/22/D, file Miscellaneous 1962 Georgia Contract (University of Agriculture); and National School of



USOM and the University of Georgia team on a plan for campus of the National School and, using the four-year program plan for the National School developed by the Georgia team, devised a plan based on USOM's requirements, Cambodia's climate, and locally available building materials.<sup>58</sup>

After his return from Cambodia, in a meeting with Aderhold and Gannon, Aeck relayed a number of stories and observations about U.S.-funded construction projects there. Aeck was "amazed at the poor construction and waste of money" when asked to look over plans for other buildings constructed by USOM. He noted that plans for a hospital erected by USOM were "terrible" and criticized the tendency to "pick up everything that might be good in America and put it down in Cambodia." When Aeck asked the question as to who designed the hospital, he was told that the design was what the doctor had wanted. Aeck suggested that USOM tell the doctor "he had better stick to doctoring and get an architect to build." Aeck relayed another story about a visit to a building erected by USOM and occupied by Cambodian officials. A Cambodian in the building, on hearing that he was an architect, had a temper tantrum and "almost went berserk."

The Cambodian said that the architects and contractors got all the money. The Cambodian would go over and kick the wall and the plaster would fall. He would go to another part of the room, pound his fist, and something else would break loose. The interpreter was embarrassed. He told Mr. Aeck he had difficulty translating some of the language.

Aeck relayed to Aderhold and Gannon that he was convinced that some of the U.S.-constructed buildings were going to fall down. He was amazed at the construction of the USOM building

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Agriculture, "Official Report Meeting of September 13, 1961," file Space Requirement 1961 Georgia Contract, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>58</sup> "Third Semi-Annual Progress Report, July-December 1961," file Semi-Annual Reports 1960-64, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives; Richard L. Aeck to C.C. Murray, 8 December 1961; and "Brief Notes on Conference in Dr. Aderhold's Office with Mr. Aeck," undated, file Mr. Aeck, Box 49, C.C. Murray, 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

itself and was convinced that “one small bomb dropped anywhere in the vicinity would cause the whole building to collapse, and it did not have to be an atomic bomb.” Aeck visited a Russian-built hospital in Cambodia, against USOM’s wishes, to compare construction techniques and quality. Aeck noted that the hospital was impressive, that the plan was bad, the construction was not good, but infinitely better than the American hospital. Aeck wondered how such poor design and construction would affect the plan for the National College of Agriculture. Mann’s idea was to build the whole college at one time, costing \$20 million, but Aeck thought that the United States did not have the talent, facilities or the skilled labor to build all of the college at one time, that it should be spaced over a period of time. Aeck was so concerned over the inefficiency and waste of American funds that he had even thought of writing Senator Russell. Aderhold, however, advised against that, suggesting that it was necessary to look at the overall program and accomplishments. Aderhold referred to the Friendship Highway in Vietnam which “had cost so much and went nowhere,” had received much criticism, and “would make an ideal jet landing strip for the Russians.” On the other hand, Aderhold recalled making a trip on the highway and finding a number of small manufacturing plants that were being established, and that this was an example of where one should look at the picture as a whole.<sup>59</sup>

Despite his criticisms of U.S.-constructed facilities in the country, Aeck remained interested in designing and constructing the National School. Throughout the project, Aeck kept in touch with the University of Georgia on its progress and Murray observed that he would like to see Aeck’s firm get the contract to build the National School.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> “Brief Notes on Conference in Dr. Aderhold’s Office with Mr. Aeck,” undated, file Mr. Aeck, Box 49, C.C. Murray, 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>60</sup> Transcript of Telephone call between Murray and Aeck, 13 April 1961, file Contract Correspondence, Box 57, C.C. Murray, 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

Perhaps interested in regaining some of the momentum after Aderhold's visit earlier in the year, Mann invited Dean Murray and J.W. Fanning to travel to Cambodia in early 1962 to "assist in making a careful reappraisal of our cooperative effort."<sup>61</sup> This visit was considered important because the Mission was still wrestling with what to do about the University of Georgia contract and how to remedy the fact that progress had been limited. Although USOM had identified weaknesses in the University of Georgia group specifically, weaknesses that the Mission believed were contributing factors that stymied progress, privately the Mission admitted that all of its agricultural projects "abound with problems." This was a particular concern for van Haeften, for as the Agricultural Division Chief with primary responsibilities for implementing all U.S. sponsored agricultural activities in Cambodia, the fact that there were myriad issues across all agricultural projects would have not reflected positively on either him or his Division, even though some of the projects were "inherited" from USOM personnel who had moved on to other posts.<sup>62</sup> Significantly, many of the challenges associated with USOM agricultural projects were in fact well-known within USOM, even if they had not been previously laid out on paper. Among the challenges were the fact that USOM had often unilaterally determined the nature and scope of projects, that project agreements did not clearly define responsibilities of all parties, that there were administrative weaknesses within the Cambodian government, that there was inadequate fiscal management on the part of the Cambodians which had led to unauthorized use of funds, and that there was a dearth of technically trained Cambodian personnel available for project activities. To avoid the kinds of

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<sup>61</sup> Mann to Murray, 28 December 1961, file Trip to Cambodia and South Vietnam-March 14-April 10, 1962, Box 57, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. Fanning did not make the trip to Cambodia.

<sup>62</sup> Van Haeften to Cody, 22 January 1962, file USOM Meetings with MIN/PLAN 61+62, Box 386, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

problems in the future that USOM was experiencing on the University of Georgia project, van Haeften defined a series of steps that included drafting more meaningful project agreements that clearly defined US and Cambodian commitments and specific project activities; more discussion between USOM, contractors, and appropriate Cambodian agencies in developing projects; and not initiating projects until they were requested by the Cambodian government.<sup>63</sup>

With nearly two years of project work having been undertaken, USOM and the Georgia team concurred that Murray's two-week visit in April 1962 had served to bring about a clearer understanding between the University of Georgia, USOM and the Cambodians as to the objectives for the development of the National School and the future role of the University of Georgia in that work. For the first time, the University of Georgia and USOM believed that the various ministries of the Cambodian government—Agriculture, Plan, and Education—agreed on and, perhaps more importantly, in meetings had articulated a coherent philosophy of agricultural education for the country. The Cambodians' idea for the new school reflected recommendations the Georgia team had developed in 1961 and 1962, namely that it would be an agricultural institution that would accept about 180 students annually with a total enrollment of 500-600 students. There would be a set, two-year curriculum with options for an additional two years toward the B.S. or a third year towards the Diploma. The university would provide academic and practical training for careers in government or the private sector, in-service training for government officials, and practical training for farmers. Further, the Cambodians had accepted the advice of the University of Georgia and USOM and conceded that once the new agricultural university was up and functioning, it would be moved from the Ministry of Agriculture to the Ministry of Education. The Cambodians also decided that faculty for the new university would

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

be selected from its current staff and from National School students who would study at the University of Georgia.<sup>64</sup>

Dean Murray's visit to Cambodia bore additional fruit relative to some major project sticking points. As a result of meetings with the Cambodian government, the Cambodians also certified in writing that it had made available 100 hectares of land for the National School within Phnom Penh and had authorized more than 300,000 riels to develop the site. The University of Georgia's role in the project was clarified. All parties agreed that the Georgia team would be immediately reduced to four people: a Chief of Party who was an "educational statesman," an administrative assistant, an English language instructor proficient in French, and a secretary. These staff along with periodic short-term advisors would carry the University of Georgia contract while the National School was being constructed and, once the new campus was available for occupancy, the University of Georgia team would be re-staffed with a larger project team.<sup>65</sup>

Murray returned to Georgia optimistic about the Cambodia contract and with the belief that the Georgia team had been productive, despite the adverse circumstances under which it had been working. Murray also was of the belief that the University of Georgia had much to contribute to agricultural education in Cambodia and that such work could benefit Cambodia's long-term development:

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<sup>64</sup> Department of State Airgram from USAID Phnom Penh, "Development of Agricultural Education Project Progress Report," 10 May, 1962, file Univ. of GA. Corres. 1959-61, Box 57, Cambodia Agriculture; and Branyon to Mann, 9 February 1962, file Agricultural Education Support Material FY 62, Box 382, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>65</sup> Department of State Airgram from USAID Phnom Penh, "Development of Agricultural Education Project Progress Report," 10 May, 1962, file Univ. of GA. Corres. 1959-61, Box 57; Translation of letter from Cambodian Secretary of State for Agriculture to the Director of the United States Agency for International Development for Cambodia, 15 May 1962, file Construction FY 1962, 442-11-227, New National School, Box 60; and "D.L. Branyon Monthly Report," March 21-April 20, 1962, file Donald L. Branyon, Agronomist Monthly Reports 1960-1962, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

I believe that we are at a stage in our program where things will move at an accelerated pace. I am most appreciative of the fine work which you and all the members of the team have done and the time which it has taken to develop working relationships with the people there and for them to develop confidence in us relative to our real interest and sincerity of purpose and at the same time for them to conceive an educational philosophy and concept within which we and they can work cooperatively and effectively.<sup>66</sup>

I believe that our session with the Ministry of Agriculture and that staff along with our group will prove most valuable. It seems we have reached a mutuality of interest and commitments regarding the things which are necessary in the immediate future and the implications which they have for long range planning and development. It was particularly gratifying to me to see emerging in the minds of the people in the Ministry of Agriculture a concept and philosophy regarding the nature and scope of a basic program of agricultural education, the needs incident to its development and what such an institutional program will mean to the agricultural, economic and social development of the country.<sup>67</sup>

Murray also thought that his meetings with USOM would lead to a better overall working relationship between the University of Georgia and USAID:

I had several conferences with Mr. van Haften, Director Mann and Ambassador Trimble. I believe that as a result of these conferences we will experience a little smoother working relationship with USAID.<sup>68</sup>

In some cases it was necessary to be very frank and positive on some basic principles of administration and the proper recognition and relationships which must prevail between our team and UGA.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Murray to Branyon, 19 April 1962, file Trip to Cambodia and South Vietnam-March 14-April 10, 1962, Box 59, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>67</sup> Murray to Mann, 20 April, 1962, file Trip to Cambodia and South Vietnam-March 14-April 10, 1962, Box 59, C.C. Murray 1960-62, 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>68</sup> Murray to Johnstone, 19 April 1962, file Trip to Cambodia and South Vietnam-March 14-April 10, 1962, Box 59, C.C. Murray 1960-62, 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>69</sup> Murray to Branyon, 19 April 1962, file Trip to Cambodia and South Vietnam-March 14-April 10, 1962, Box 59, C.C. Murray 1960-62, 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. Peter Cody, Unpublished Autobiography, 2009. According to Cody, USOM staff referred to Dean C.C. Murray as "Cee-Squared," denoting the two "Cs" of his first and middle name.

## CHAPTER IV

### BRINGING THE WORLD TO CAMPUS

The University of Georgia's Cambodia project contract with the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) included undergraduate training in agriculture and forestry at the University of Georgia for a group of Cambodian men. The idea, at least on the part of AID, was that these men would return to Cambodia and become full-time faculty members who would staff the National College of Agriculture. Building such participant training programs into their university contracts was commonplace for AID and viewed by the United States as a critical part of building the capacity of local institutions. In its 1964 report to Congress, AID noted that the objective of directing resources to such training was "not only to improve the technical, professional and managerial skills and knowledge, but also to introduce attitudes and values essential to development activities and to increase an appreciation for the need for social as well as economic growth, and to demonstrate insofar as possible that these are inseparable." Training in agriculture was a priority for AID, such that between 1952 and 1966 AID funded some 1,400 participants from Africa, Latin America, the Far East, and Near East and South Asia to pursue degree training in the United States in agricultural fields.<sup>1</sup>

For AID in Cambodia, training participants in the United States was one piece of its larger program of helping to build an educational infrastructure that had been virtually non-existent under French rule. Along with developing the National School of Agriculture under the University of Georgia contract, AID was also supporting the development of a technological

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<sup>1</sup> Committee on Institutional Cooperation, *Building Institutions to Serve Agriculture: A Summary Report of the C.I.C.-A.I.D. Rural Development Research Project*, (LaFayette, IN: Purdue University, 1968), 181-183.

institute in Phnom Penh that would provide four-year degrees in civil, electrical, and mechanical engineering and a national school of arts and trades to train Cambodians as electricians, mechanics, surveyors, and wood and metal workers. As in its program to develop the National School, AID funds supported curriculum and program development, as well as the development and expansion of physical facilities for these new institutions. Training future faculty members to staff these institutions was consistent with the Cambodian government's desire to have Cambodians, rather than French or other foreigners, staff its educational institutions. The United States was willing to invest in developing this human resource capacity by funding young Cambodian men to pursue degrees at U.S. institutions. In 1961 there were seventy-six Cambodians studying in the United States: forty-six studying agriculture, twenty-six studying industrial arts, and four studying public health.<sup>2</sup>

This was a substantial financial investment on the part of the United States. Between 1953 and 1962, the United States had obligated more than \$2.1 million in short-term and degree training for nearly 900 Cambodians—359 in education, 317 in agriculture, 54 in public health, and 151 in other various fields. United States' objectives regarding participant training evolved during this time. While early Cambodian participants were mostly involved in short-term training programs of less than two months in other Asian countries, by 1960 the majority of participants were undergoing four-year degree training in the United States. Additionally, from 1960 on, there were fewer annual participants in training, higher training costs per participant (\$833 prior to 1956 and \$1,193 by 1960), and more overall funding allocated for participant

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<sup>2</sup> United States Agency for International Development, Phnom Penh, *The American Aid Program in Cambodia, A Decade of Cooperation, 1951-1961*, file Programs 1962 AD, Box 52, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, National Archives at College Park, Maryland (NACP). The scholarships awarded by the United States consisted of tuition, travel expenses to and from the United States, funds for books, room and board, and "a modest sum of pocket money."



training.<sup>3</sup> This shift reflected the United States heavy emphasis on building within Cambodia the physical infrastructure for secondary and tertiary education and the human resource capacity to staff the new institutions. Of the \$23.9 million allocated for FY 1962 for economic assistance, by far the largest share was allocated for education, which included participant training programs and the development of five higher education institutions.<sup>4</sup>

Certainly, educating Cambodians at U.S. universities would serve to build modestly the country's human resource capacity in education and was consistent with United States goals in Cambodia and Cambodia's long-range development plans for building a national education infrastructure. For Ambassador Trimble, however, training a cadre of young men who would likely return to Cambodia and become future leaders served another important foreign policy interest—ensuring that Cambodia's orientation was more to the West than to the East. Along these lines, Trimble sought ways to stretch the funds allocated to him by AID in Washington in order to increase the number of Cambodians studying in the United States. In 1961, the Mission strategized that the United States might only have a few more years to send Cambodians to U.S. institutions, since once Cambodian universities were functional, the government would likely institute policies to keep its students in the country for university training. The Cambodians had recently set new restrictions on the numbers of students sent to France, so the United States hoped to capitalize on this by encouraging the Cambodians to send to the United States the students who would have otherwise gone to France. The Mission considered proposing to the Cambodian government that it supplement funds that the United States had budgeted with the funds the Cambodians would have used to send the students to France. The Mission was

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<sup>3</sup> Ten-Year Summary of Participant Training-1953-1962, USAID/Cambodia, July 1962, file Participants, Box 386, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>4</sup> "1962 United States Economic Assistance to Cambodia," file Programs 1962 AD, Box 52, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

concerned that such a “conspicuous” effort by the United States to substitute itself for France would be “deeply resented” by the French.<sup>5</sup>

Between 1961 and 1963, thirteen Cambodian students were selected and attended the University of Georgia under the AID National College project studying forestry (four), general agriculture (two), agronomy (two), agricultural engineering (two), food technology, horticulture, and pre-veterinary studies.<sup>6</sup> Ten of the Cambodian students entered the University of Georgia straight from high school in Cambodia, two were graduates of the National School and received some transfer credit, and one student was a National College graduate and had several years of work experience with the Ministry of Agriculture.<sup>7</sup> Of the students, one student returned to Cambodia without finishing his program and twelve graduated from the University of Georgia; seven with bachelor’s degrees, four with bachelor’s and Master’s degrees, and one with the bachelor’s, Master’s, and Ph.D. degrees.<sup>8</sup>

For the University of Georgia project team in Cambodia, identifying and selecting the first group of students who would study in Athens under the contract was not an easy process and by June 1961 was already off-schedule by several months due to factors that were, for the

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<sup>5</sup> Declassified Confidential Minutes of Restricted Country Team Meeting, 5 April 1961, file County Program, Box 41, Cambodia 1955-61, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies 1948-61, RG 469, NACP.

<sup>6</sup> “Participants from Cambodia Registered-Fall Quarter 1963-64 in the College of Agriculture and School of Forestry,” 15 October 1963, file Georgia Contract, Box 106, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. “Eighth Semi-Annual Progress Report January 1-June 30, 1964, prepared by G.I. Johnson, Final Report,” file Reports Semi-Annual 1960-64, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives. After the agricultural project contract was terminated in 1964, AID continued to fund the 12 students who were studying at the University of Georgia under the original contract.

<sup>7</sup> G.I. Johnson, “General Statement Concerning UGA/Cambodia Participants,” 24 June 1964, file Participants-General letters, etc. Re. participants, Box 128, C.C. Murray 92-081, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>8</sup> Data from University of Georgia Office of the Registrar, 2009; “Individual Participants,” file tables (list of participants and totals) 1961-66, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives.

most part, beyond its control. First, the initial group of Cambodian participants selected by the Ministry of Education to participate in the program did not want to be obligated to teach at the National School upon their return to Cambodia. Since the purpose of the program was to develop a qualified full-time group of faculty at the National School, University of Georgia and USOM staff were reluctant to approve the Cambodian government's choice of participants.<sup>9</sup> Second, within the Cambodian government, there was disagreement about the group of students who would be sent to the University of Georgia. Although the Ministry of Education approved a group of students to start classes in January 1962, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs rejected some of the students for reasons unknown.<sup>10</sup> Third, there was generally a limited pool of students from which to choose. To be considered, the student must have been less than thirty-three years of age, physically fit and "of good moral character," and have already finished his first baccalaureate and be able to become proficient in English after several weeks of pre-departure English language training at the Binational Center in Phnom Penh. Some students were never able to achieve the required level of English proficiency.<sup>11</sup> Of all of the AID scholarships for study in the United States, the field of agriculture was the least popular with Cambodians. So,

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<sup>9</sup> Donald Branyon to Raymond Cason, Deputy Chief, USOM Agriculture, 20 June 1961, file Contract Georgia FY61, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. The University of Georgia team suggested to USOM that USOM review the list of Cambodians currently in the United States under AID sponsored programs to determine if there were any students who might be potential full-time instructors at the National School.

<sup>10</sup> "Monthly Report, August 22-September 22, 1961, D.L. Branyon," file Donald L. Branyon Agronomist Monthly Reports 1960-1962, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>11</sup> "Monthly Report, July 1961, Donald Branyon," file Donald L. Branyon Agronomist Monthly Reports 1960-1962, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. When Branyon indicates that the students have completed their first baccalaureate he is likely referring to the French system of baccalaureate in which students in their last year of high school take the baccalaureate qualification, which is needed for college or university. Letter from Charles A. Mann to H.E. Tep Phan, Minister of Plan, 20 April 1962, file ProAg 442-11-227 AC 1963 University of Agriculture, Box 57, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

participants with the highest grades and levels of English language proficiency pursued scholarships to study medicine, law, and engineering, not fields related to agriculture.<sup>12</sup>

By October 1961, several Cambodian men emerged from the pool of applicants with the academic record and English proficiency to participate in the program of agricultural degree training at the University of Georgia. On November 4, 1961, eight young men departed Cambodia for Georgia. En route to Georgia, the group would spend one to three months in Washington, DC, studying English and American culture at Georgetown University or George Washington University.<sup>13</sup> Their orientation would include an introduction to the “American way of life,” which focused on these features of life in America: Leadership is Everybody’s Business; Public Education is a Basic Factor in Development; There is Dignity in Work; Progress Requires More than Natural Resources; the Community is the Basic Unit For Group Action; the Individual is Governed by Law; and the Family Unit is the Basis of Our Society.<sup>14</sup>

The first group of eight Cambodian men sponsored under the National College contract arrived in Athens in January 2, 1962 and joined some 132 other international students from 43 foreign countries already studying at the University of Georgia. With 11 other AID-sponsored Cambodians already on campus studying agronomy, extension, agricultural education, horticulture, and forestry, the eight Cambodians studying under the National College contract would make Cambodia the most numerous international student population, with 19 total students. The Cambodian students were among the ranks of the sixty-three other foreign students

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<sup>12</sup> Branyon to Gannon, 2 November 1961, file Vietnam Correspondence 1961-62, Box 57, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>13</sup> “Monthly Report, September 20-October 21, 1961 D.L. Branyon Agronomist” file Donald L. Branyon Agronomist Monthly Reports 1960-1962, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>14</sup> “Some Foundations of the American Way of Life,” USDA-AID Committee on Basic Understandings to Supplement Technical Training, file 9-1 Orientation & Reception, Box 110, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

who were studying in agriculture or forestry-related fields, most of whom were funded by AID. Apart from those supported by AID, foreign students at the University of Georgia received scholarships or support from a variety of sponsors—government and private organizations alike—including Rotary, the Ford Foundation, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Institute of International Education, and their sponsoring governments.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> “Training of Cambodians in Other Countries: The USOM Participant Program FY 1961,” file Participants, Box 386, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP; and *University of Georgia Annual Report 1961-62*, Administrative Part 1<sup>2</sup>, Foreign Students, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. The 11 Cambodian students already on campus were sponsored by AID but outside of the National College contract. After the Cambodians, the largest foreign student groups were Syrian and Indian with 9 each, and Iraq and Iran with five students each. Thirty-three of the total foreign students were sponsored by AID.



Figure 4.1. A photograph from the AID document, *The American Aid Program in Cambodia: A Decade of Cooperation, 1951-61*, shows the eight Cambodian participants at the airport departing Phnom Penh for the University of Georgia. Front row from left, Duong Sok San, You Sambath, Nouth Bun Chhoeun, Keo Sarik, Sin Meng Srun, Trang Meng Kry, Yim Youvaing, It Sareth. Back row from left, Donald Branyon, and E.W. Causey from the University of Georgia; and Raymond Cason from the AID Agriculture Division. File Programs 1962, Box 52, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

The newly-arrived Cambodian students were assisted with settling in by Arthur Gannon, the campus contract coordinator, and by the staff of the University's foreign student office.<sup>16</sup> By 1960, 673 foreign students had studied at the University of Georgia and it ranked in the mid-tier of U.S. universities in total foreign student enrollment. The steady growth over the post-World War II years in its foreign student enrollment had prompted the University of Georgia to establish an office to serve the needs of international students and scholars. With thirteen international students on campus in 1946, Dean of Men William Tate added responsibilities for foreign students to his newly hired Counselor to Women, Dolores Artau.<sup>17</sup> Artau was well-suited to serve the University's international student population. Fluent in French and Spanish, Artau had studied abroad in France and Algiers and during the war served in the censorship unit of the Office of War Information in Miami. The University had recruited Artau from Georgia State College for Women in Milledgeville, where she was a Spanish instructor and advisor.<sup>18</sup> By all accounts, Artau took her professional duties seriously—she was active in the National Association of Foreign Student Advisors (NAFSA), attending their annual conferences and professional development training sessions geared towards administrating of foreign student programs—but also established deep personal connections with students that lasted beyond their years of study at the University. As tokens of their appreciation and affection for her, her foreign charges had given her so many mementos from so many countries that her office was described

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<sup>16</sup> Ou Thuok, interview by author, 6 April 2009, Falls Church, Virginia. Arthur Gannon, for instance, met them at the train station in Athens after their overnight train trip from Washington, DC.

<sup>17</sup> *University of Georgia Annual Report 1959-60*, Administrative Part 1<sup>2</sup>, Report of the Foreign Student Program, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia; and Dick Pettys, "Artau Serves Alien Charges, Helps Enhance American Plan," *Red and Black*, 12 November, 1964, p. 5. In a 1964 interview, Artau noted that she was made advisor to foreign students in 1947 after Dean Tate had a "run-in" with a Puerto Rican student: "The boy had caused a little trouble and pretended not to understand Dean Tate. He called me into his office and said he knew the boy was faking because he had entered school on the G.I. Bill. So he told me to tell the boy in Spanish that 'I know that you know what I am saying' which I did and the boy grinned and confessed."

<sup>18</sup> "Mortar Board Taps Honorary Member, Breaks Precedent," *Red and Black*, 18 April, 1947, p.1.

by those who entered it as a veritable international souvenir shop and was even featured in an article in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. Indeed, after forty-four years of service to the University, Artau's retirement plans in 1972 included visiting as many of her former students around the world as she could.<sup>19</sup>

Artau and the staff in the Foreign Student Office served the broad needs of the University's international students. For example, Artau and her staff member were the first point of contact for foreign students wishing to enroll in the University and the foreign student office played a variety of roles, including assisting with enrollment and registration, coordinating home stays and host families, handling disciplinary cases, and serving as advisor for the various international clubs and foreign student groups on campus. The office also coordinated international and cultural events on campus and in the community, including "The World Comes to Athens" radio program and the annual United Nations Model Assembly.<sup>20</sup>

So, by 1960, with an administrative infrastructure to support foreign students and a professional staff dedicated to international education activities, the University of Georgia's commitment to internationalize was taking shape. Along with the AID contracts in Cambodia and Vietnam, the University had success with accessing federal funds to support other kinds of international education activities. The foreign student office coordinated the University's participation as a host site for a Modern Language Institute, funded by the U.S. government's

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<sup>19</sup> "Artau Shows Versatility as Dean and Diplomat," *Red and Black*, 4 January, 1968, p.7; and "Whitehead, Artau Tell Retirement," *Red and Black*, 21 June 1972, p.1.

<sup>20</sup> *University of Georgia Annual Report 1961-62*, Administrative Part 1<sup>2</sup>, Foreign Students, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia The foreign student office was also the primary point of contact for contracting organizations such as the Bureau of Educational Affairs of the U.S. Department of State, which sponsored foreign student study at the University of Georgia. The 1961-62 Annual Report notes the types of behavioral issues that Artau had experienced among international students: "Along with increased numbers of foreign students have come additional problems involving terminations of some students. These terminations are in three categories—deep emotional disturbance, unacceptable social conduct, poor academic performance."



National Defense Higher Education Act (NDEA).<sup>21</sup> By 1962, the University of Georgia was receiving some \$85,000 in support for its participation in NDEA. The University of Georgia's participation in this project was no doubt aided by Artau, who by training was a linguist and who had taught Spanish before arriving at the University.<sup>22</sup>

The University of Georgia's participation in an NDEA-funded language project is significant. When NDEA was authorized by Congress in 1958, the Act represented a major increase in the role of the federal government in higher education and a clear statement about the role of education in national security preparedness. After World War II, there was heightened federal interest in the link between education and foreign affairs, as well as recognition of the need to understand the languages, culture, and political and economic systems of other parts of the world. Through the Marshall Plan and its increased international presence around the world, the United States needed a cadre of university graduates who were knowledgeable about the politics, culture, and languages of other parts of the world. The launch of Sputnik in 1957 was the catalyst for direct federal support of programs that would ensure the United States not only could compete internationally, but could also keep pace with the scientific and technological advances of other nations, namely the Soviet Union and China. NDEA's Titles III, VI and later Title XI provided financial support for both k-12 and higher education, focusing on strengthening math, science, and foreign language programs, and provided funding for student aid, graduate fellowships, and research programs. U.S. higher education institutions received funding for science and math programs and to develop centers for modern language teaching,

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.; and *University of Georgia Annual Report 1969-60*, Administrative Part 1<sup>2</sup>, Foreign Students and Cover Letter from Dolores Artau, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia

<sup>22</sup> *University of Georgia Annual Reports 1959-60, 1960-61, 1961-62*. In fiscal year 1959, the University received \$15,000 from NDEA, \$40,000 in fiscal year 1960, and \$85,000 by fiscal year 1961.

particularly languages deemed necessary for business and industry and national security interests, and resources to support fellowships for advanced foreign language training.<sup>23</sup>

Participation in NDEA, the presence of increasing numbers of international scholars and students on its campus, and participation in AID development projects placed the University of Georgia amongst its national peers in terms of number of international ties and partnerships with the U.S. government in federal support for international activities. That the University had an organizational infrastructure and staff dedicated to support international work and that it had pursued federal funding for AID development work and NDEA programming is indicative of the fact that President Aderhold viewed international programs as an important part of his institution building efforts.

Since becoming University president in 1951, Aderhold had made deliberate and strategic efforts to move the provincial southern institution towards modern university status. His priorities, including expanding external research funding, enhancing faculty salaries and support, and building the physical infrastructure, were designed to transform the University into one with national standing.<sup>24</sup> Federal funding for international programs and an international presence in a strategic part of the world clearly was in keeping with the University's institutional ambitions at the time. The University's international mission and activities served to expand its reach beyond the geographic boundaries of the state to engage with the broader world and its many challenges. Indeed, the University's international work was of such significance at the time that it was one of the few programs highlighted in Aderhold's transmittal of the University's 1960-61

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<sup>23</sup> Nancy L. Ruther, *Barely There, Powerfully Present: Thirty Years of U.S. Policy on International Higher Education*, (New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2002), 44, 60-61.

<sup>24</sup> Thomas G. Dyer, *The University of Georgia: A Bicentennial History, 1785-1985* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1985), 284.

Annual Report to the Chancellor and Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. In his introduction, Aderhold insisted that the state of the world and the institution's land-grant mission required the University to engage internationally.

The basic concepts which have led to the flourish of Western Civilization are seriously questioned and challenged. The idea of individual freedom and intelligent, self-disciplined enterprise has impressed the thinking people of the world. But the more material outgrowths of the American ideal have also impressed, and in many instances, these symbols of success are being used by ruthless enemies to exploit human and natural resources to serve selfish purposes. America has been shocked and embarrassed by failure to achieve satisfactory peace after World War II, by failure in Korea, and by the emergence of China as a powerful nation. Great areas of the world are restless and in conflict. A group of University representatives are working today in Cambodia and Vietnam where conflict and violence are beyond the bounds of academic discussion and result in bloodshed and terror. On the other hand, much of what is termed the "Free World," certain parts of Europe and the United States, seem complacent. It is against this background, inevitably, that a public, land-grant university must examine its progress. It is the awareness of this background and its relationships with higher education that leads the institution to examine more carefully, plan more rapidly, and approach needs more urgently.<sup>25</sup>

This highly politicized statement at the beginning of a routine annual report of the University is significant in that it situated the work of the University of Georgia within the larger geo-political context of Cold War foreign policy. Aderhold laid out in this introduction the idea that although most of the world was impressed with American and western values and material productivity, enemies of the "free world" were using this materialism to criticize and challenge the United States, likely referring to Communist China and the Soviet Union's emphasis on collectivism. In referencing foreign policy "failures" in Europe, Korea, and China, Aderhold positioned the work of the University of Georgia in Cambodia and Vietnam as a necessity within the context of a dangerous and uncertain world. Aderhold believed there was a role for the land-grant university and its knowledge in reducing the conflict and chaos of the present world.

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<sup>25</sup> *University of Georgia Annual Report 1960-61*, Administrative Part 1<sup>1</sup>, Introduction.

The eight Cambodian students who arrived on campus in January 1962 could not have been prepared for the fact that they were entering an institution on the outer edge of becoming a modern university, situated in a distinctly traditional southern town with all of the complexities and contradictions that this entailed. Although Aderhold was advancing the University of Georgia's physical infrastructure, academic standing, and available resources, the University had not by any means shaken the binds of its deeply southern roots and provincial outlook. For several years, public schools and the University had been at the center of the state's resistance in coming to grips with changes being brought about by the civil rights movement. Even into the mid-twentieth century Georgia's politics were rabidly anti-integration, as reflected in the state's Constitution, which disallowed integration of public schools. Acts of the state's General Assembly, including the 1951 appropriations bill that authorized the state to cut funding to any white University System institution that admitted black students, left no questions about the State's interest in keeping education segregated. Direct pronouncements of such by Georgia's governors pandered to the segment of Georgia's electorate who wanted segregation to remain the defining characteristic of public education, and public life for that matter, in Georgia. Indeed, Herman Talmadge (Governor 1947, 1948-55) proclaimed "As long as I am Governor, Negroes will not be admitted to any white schools" and Ernest Vandiver (1959-63) pledged "We will not knuckle under. We will not capitulate. I make this solemn pledge. When I am your governor, neither my three children, nor any of yours, will ever attend a racially mixed school in the state of Georgia. No, not one."<sup>26</sup>

Neither the repeated attempts to legislate segregated higher education by the Georgia General Assembly nor the escalating political rhetoric from the state's elected officials could

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<sup>26</sup> Robert A. Pratt, *We Shall Not Be Moved: The Desegregation of the University of Georgia*, (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press), 8, 53-54. 67; Dyer, *University of Georgia*, 307.

prevent the eventual official desegregation of the University of Georgia. In a single week in January 1961, rulings by a federal district court judge in Georgia, the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, and the United States Supreme Court opened the doors to the University's first two black students, Hamilton Holmes and Charlayne Hunter. Although the January 11, 1961 enrollment of Holmes and Hunter meant that the University of Georgia was officially desegregated, for all practical purposes the University and Athens were still like most public institutions and towns in the South: rigidly segregated. In Athens, which on the surface seemed a quaint, quintessential college town, restaurants, bars, and movie theaters remained segregated and the specter of the Ku Klux Klan loomed over the city. Although the presence of the University meant that a segment of the population of Athens was perhaps more educated, cultured, and held more progressive views on the issue of desegregation, Athens was also home to a significant population of low-paid white laborers, some of whom had much less-sophisticated views of race and who viewed integration as a threat to their own socio-economic status.<sup>27</sup>

Anti-integration sentiment and racism extended to the campus as Holmes and Hunter's first day of classes ended with a violent on-campus riot, with between 500 and 2,000 students shouting and throwing bricks and bottles at the dormitory where Hunter was housed and ending with the police using tear gas and fire hoses to control the rioters.<sup>28</sup> The University's faculty, most of whom had stayed in the background and silent during the political and legal debates around desegregation of the University, rallied after the riots with a majority of faculty joining in

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<sup>27</sup> Pratt, *We Shall Not Be Moved*, 100.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 94.

signing a resolution condemning the riots and insisting that Holmes and Hunter be reinstated (the University had suspended them after the riots for their own “protection”).<sup>29</sup>

Although no equivalent levels of violence or protests erupted after the January 11 incident, the environment for blacks on campus remained separate and often hostile. Still, the only blacks allowed on campus were those who were students or who were employed at the University, and blacks were not permitted to sit with whites at University football games. It was not uncommon for black students at the University of Georgia (who by fall of 1962 numbered eight) to be harassed even on campus with racist taunts, threats of physical violence, and jeers. Although Holmes and Hunter were befriended by some white students, these students themselves often became the target of hostility.<sup>30</sup>

Ironically, the same level of hostility from their fellow students, the town, or the state did not extend to the 132 international students studying at the University of Georgia during the 1961-62 academic terms from countries including Cambodia, India, the Philippines, Indonesia, Iraq, Iran, Yemen, Egypt, and Pakistan.<sup>31</sup> These students enjoyed a much more welcoming environment than did black students who were actually Georgia-born citizens, a welcome driven perhaps by simple curiosity of visitors from far-off lands or the fact that their presence was temporary. Often, residents were eager to display their self-proclaimed Southern hospitality to foreign visitors and there existed, certainly on campus, the idea that foreign students added a cosmopolitan nature to an otherwise provincial institution. From an educational perspective,

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 106.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 123.

<sup>31</sup> *University of Georgia Annual Report, 1961-61*. Administrative Part 1<sup>2</sup>.

international students also had perceived value to the core aspects of a liberal education by allowing opportunities for development and understanding of other cultures and traditions.<sup>32</sup>

Even as early as the late 1940s, there were deliberate efforts to make foreign students feel welcome on the part of organizations and individuals on campus, in Athens and across the state. Campus fraternities and sororities played important roles early on in fostering a welcoming environment for foreign students. In 1947 and 1948, there were instances of sororities hosting dinners to welcome foreign students and in 1948 some fraternities and sororities on campus entered into official relationships with the Institute of International Education and the International Rotary Club to officially “adopt” foreign students by providing them with room and board, textbooks, and expenses related to their matriculation.<sup>33</sup>

Churches and religious organizations on campus were also key in organizing events and opportunities to integrate foreign students into University and “southern” life and foster a campus appreciation of the cultures the students represented. Denominational campus groups, including the Baptist Student Union, often hosted Southern-style events for the University’s foreign student population.<sup>34</sup> During Christmas, Athens’s First Methodist Church would host the entire foreign student population in an American-style Christmas carol church service.<sup>35</sup> The Cosmopolitan Club, the first student-run organization for foreign students (established in 1947)

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<sup>32</sup> “Thirty Foreign Students Give Campus Cosmopolitan Flavor,” *Red and Black*, 9 November, 1951, p. 14; and Pratt, *We Shall Not Be Moved*, 122. Pratt also notes that darker-skinned international students were generally well-received as long as they “accented their foreignness” by keeping their traditional dress attire and accents.

<sup>33</sup> “International Party Honors Campus Foreign Students,” *Red and Black*, 28 February, 1947, p. 7; and Dick Bullock, “Fraternities, Sororities Plan Foreign Student Adoption,” *Red and Black*, 3 December 1948, p. 3.

<sup>34</sup> Lyn Ketterson, “Foreign Group to Meet Friday,” *Red and Black*, 11 May, 1951, p.1.; and Pratt, *We Shall Not Be Moved*, 123. Campus-based religious organizations also played a role in the University’s desegregation Pratt notes that the campus Presbyterian center, Westminster House, had been a safe place for black students and a forum for discussing race relations

<sup>35</sup> “Foreign Students Honored by Carol Service Sunday,” *Athens-Banner Herald*, 24 December 1962, p.1.

had close ties to campus-based religious organizations.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, one of the AID-sponsored students from Cambodia, Sin Meng Srun, became its treasurer.<sup>37</sup> In the early 1950s, the University of Georgia Religious Association (UGRA), a campus group with the mission of promoting programs of worship, study, and action on a non-denominational, campus-wide basis, frequently held receptions, suppers, and events for foreign students, including presentations on topics such as “You and Your Religion.”<sup>38</sup> During the 1950s, UGRA was an annual co-sponsor with the Cosmopolitan Club of the World University Service banquet annual dinner for foreign students, as well as lectures on Southern culture, economics, and history.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> “Foreign Club Begins on Athens Campus,” *Red and Black*, 24 October, 1947, p. 3. Artau and a representative from the Voluntary Religious Association served as the Cosmopolitan Club’s first advisors.

<sup>37</sup> “New Cosmopolitan Club Officers,” *Red and Black*, 12 November 1964, p. 6.

<sup>38</sup> “80 Attend UGRA Reception Honoring Foreign Students,” *Red and Black*, 10 October, 1952, p. 2; and Gene Carroll, “UGRA to Honor Foreign Students with Supper Meeting Tuesday Night,” *Red and Black*, 6 October, 1955, p. 12.

<sup>39</sup> “Cosmopolitan Club Represented by Students from 32 Countries,” *Red and Black*, 29 November, 1956, p. 8; and “Cosmopolitan Club to Sponsor Meet,” *Red and Black*, 28 April, 1950, p. 1.





## ***New Cosmopolitan Club Officers***

New officers of the Cosmopolitan Club are (L-R) Ichiro Nakagawa of Japan, vice president; Gordon Hain of Dayton, Ohio, secretary; Isabella Busch of Germany, president; and Sin Srun of Cambodia, treasurer. The Cosmopolitan Club was established

to bring together students from all parts of the world and to promote a better understanding between them. The next meeting will be Saturday, November 14. An extensive cultural program is planned for the year.

Figure 4.2. November 12, 1964, p. 6. *Red and Black*

Civic organizations often joined the University in supporting foreign students during longer holiday breaks. Starting in 1957, the University of Michigan and University of Georgia began receiving support from the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and ICA to host Christmas holiday activities for foreign students from their own universities and across the United States. At the University of Georgia, the international students spent their Christmas break at the campus conference center, the Georgia Center for Continuing Education. Civic organizations often participated in the programming for the students. The Monroe, Georgia As

You Like It women's literary and historical society organized opportunities for students to visit their homes. The Pilot International Club in Athens organized and hosted a New Year's Eve party. The Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs assisted in organizing holiday programs for the students, including field trips to various industries like General Motors, taking in American movies, a visit by Santa Claus (played by the University's Dean of Men, William Tate), and presentation of gifts such as copies of the novel *Gone With the Wind*.<sup>40</sup>

These kinds of efforts extended beyond campus to the broader state. In 1949, a time when Jim Crow laws prevailed in Georgia, a charter bus carried thirty-six foreign students from fifteen nations and nine colleges and universities across Georgia on a multi-day tour of the state's cities, towns, and major landmarks. Sponsored by the University of Georgia and the Georgia Department of Commerce and led by Dolores Artau, the student tour included stops in Atlanta, Newnan, Warm Springs, Macon, Valdosta, Waycross, Savannah, Augusta, and other towns, and even a visit with Governor Herman E. Talmadge. Couched as a "gesture of hospitality and international good will," the foreign students' travel was paid first by private contributions from citizens across the state and lodging and meals along the way were provided by civic and church organizations. A student editorial associate with the *Red and Black* campus newspaper who participated in the tour was struck by the hospitality of his fellow Georgians:

I have been trying to analyze the most infinite values that were received by everyone who took part in it. Someone expressed the purpose of the tour as 'an opportunity for the people of Georgia to get a look at foreigners, and for foreign students to look over Georgians.' Everywhere the tour group was received with open arms—in cities, hamlets, or the backwoods. Loose purse strings in Georgia families and industries made the trip possible. Hospitality in the way of open homes, lavishly served meals, and plain old friendliness gave the students a lasting impression of Georgia—and America. In meeting Georgia citizens directly, being entertained by them, observing them in homes, in churches, and at work, the students learned as they never would otherwise how

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<sup>40</sup>Martha McElveen, "Foreigners Celebrate Xmas at Center," *Red and Black*, 9 January 1958, p.2; "Foreign Students' Yule is Club Topic," *Walton Tribune*, 9 December 1964, p.7A; and "Foreign Students Coming: University Invites 150 for Christmas," *Atlanta Constitution*, 10 December 1963, p.8.

Americans live—and, as one of them expressed it, “why America holds the dominant position in the present-day Occidental world.” Miss Dolores Artau, who largely made the trip possible through her salesmanship and belief in an ideal, became the sweetheart of 36 different souls. To her are due the congratulations of everyone interested in showing off Georgia and in proving that the world is still and always will be “a small place.”<sup>41</sup>

Even though there were plenty of efforts to understand other parts of the world, stereotypes and an utter lack of worldliness still extended from the small towns of Georgia into the rarified environment of the University. A 1950 series of photographs in the *Red and Black* depicted activities from the Art Students League annual theme party, “Primitive Africa.” The photographs show students made-up in black face as “natives” from Africa who try to cook in a pot like a “roast chicken” those costumed as English traders and sarong-clad women.<sup>42</sup> Equally, gestures of warmth, acceptance, and Southern hospitality towards international students studying at the University of Georgia did not signal a change in attitude on the part of most Georgians on the issues of segregation. The seeming contradiction between the welcoming environment on campus in the 1950s for even the darkest of foreign students, and the rabidly segregationist attitudes about blacks and higher education on the part of most Georgians, was noted by some campus observers. Hence, Bill Shipp, University student and managing editor of the *Red and Black*, observed with a notable lack of political correctness in 1953:

There is absolutely no logic in excluding the Negro from the white man's way of life, especially at a University. Yesterday I strolled across campus, spoke to a Chink I knew, bummed a cigarette from a Jew and ate supper with a Kraut. And I thought what a miserable system it is when a university allows students of every race, creed and color--except black--to roam its campus and mix with us Anglo-Saxon protestants while the southern Negro, a born U.S. citizen, is placed in a separated group as if he were a leper.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Raleigh Bryans, “A Foreign Affair,” *Red and Black*, 23 September 1949, p.4.

<sup>42</sup> “African Antics,” *Red and Black*, 10 November, 1950, p. 7.

<sup>43</sup> Bill Shipp, “The Color is Black,” *Red and Black*, 8 October, 1953, p. 4. The editorial pages of the *Red and Black* published in 1953 a series of opinion pieces critical of the efforts to stop Horace Ward’s admission to the School of Law. Under pressure from the Board of Regents and the University, Shipp and the paper’s managing editor resigned their positions and left the University.

Arriving almost exactly one year after Holmes and Hunter had integrated the University of Georgia, the eight AID-sponsored Cambodian students had been briefed on segregation but they were not prepared for the “Whites Only” signs that remained on some parts of campus.<sup>44</sup> Back in Cambodia, USOM staff were well aware of the central role of the University of Georgia in the state’s segregation issues, and they had concerns. Requesting a brief from Washington, USOM Director Mann was troubled by the University’s “integration problems,” particularly given the University of Georgia’s high profile in Cambodia, its association with USOM, and the fact that news of integration issues in the United States received wide press coverage in local press in Cambodia.<sup>45</sup> Both ICA in Washington and the mission in Phnom Penh followed closely legal developments on the issue during December 1960 and January 1961. Along with concerns about the press attention in Cambodia, ICA and the Mission contemplated the impact of the United States Civil Rights Commission’s proposal to restrict federal funds for higher education to institutions that did not discriminate on ICA funding for the Cambodia project.<sup>46</sup> Throughout the life of the student training component of the University of Georgia’s Cambodia project, AID personnel and even Ambassador Sprouse himself would show continued uneasiness about how Cambodian students would fare at southern institutions.<sup>47</sup> In one instance, an AID staff member

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<sup>44</sup> Sin Meng Srun, interview by author, 24 July 2008, Phnom Penh.

<sup>45</sup> Mann to Washington, 20 December 1960, file Cambodia Agriculture 1960, Box 33, Cambodia 1955-61, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies 1948-61, RG 469, NACP.

<sup>46</sup> Airgram from ICA/Washington to USOM Phnom Penh, 12 January 1961, file Cambodia Agriculture, Box 34; and Edwin A. Hough, Cambodia Desk Officer to Charles A. Mann, 18 January 1961, file Cambodia Administrative, Box, 33, Cambodia 1955-61, Office of Far Eastern Operations, Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies 1948-61, RG 469, NACP.

<sup>47</sup> Declassified Confidential Country Team Minutes, 10 April 1963, Phnom Penh, file Country Team Minutes, Box 11, Cambodia 1958-1963, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, General Records of the Development of State, RG 59, NACP. The minutes include the following: “The Ambassador also reminded the CT that if any incident involving a Cambodian student in the South arose it would affect all our participant programs.”

in Cambodia advised a Cambodian student studying in Mississippi and who was interested in pursuing an M.S. degree at the University of Georgia that “I would definitely not encourage you to remain in the South. You should look to the north or to the west for your future university.”<sup>48</sup>

In perhaps a contrast of perspectives, others from inside Southeast Asia but with personal relationships with Aderhold and the University saw events differently. From Cambodia, Donald Branyon wrote to Aderhold in May 1961 of the pride he had in the way Aderhold and the University handled the “turbulent and trying times.” Similarly, Aderhold received correspondence from friends in Southeast Asia complimenting his handling of integration. Hence, one friend wrote:

Just a note from far away Laos to congratulate you and your staff for the splendid manner in which you performed during the recent crisis over the issue of integration. I am sure your influence was no little part and that your effort is reflecting much credit on the University of Georgia as well as the state at large. Very few Georgians realize the extent and coverage of events such as you experienced in Athens, in other parts of the world. I was amazed at the space and attention given to the event by the big daily papers here in Indo-China.<sup>49</sup>

Interestingly, even Prince Sihanouk himself had an opinion on the issue of segregation, which he expressed after he expelled AID from Cambodia in 1964. Perhaps to antagonize the United States, Sihanouk invited “negroes” in the United States to call upon Cambodia for moral and political support. He noted:

So far as the Negro problem in the U.S. is concerned, I gave instructions to our foreign minister at the UN General Assembly to make a plea for our Negro brothers in America.

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<sup>48</sup> Samuel C. Litzenberger, Agronomy Advisor, to Huon Chhun Huor, 29 March 1963, file USAID-Phnom Penh, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>49</sup> Branyon to Aderhold, 17 May 1961, file President’s Trip to Cambodia and Vietnam, Box 57, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia; and Letter from Lee Fry in Laos to O.C. Aderhold, 2 April 1961, file International Cooperation Agency-Correspondence in Connection with Aderhold Visit to Cambodia and Vietnam, Box 78, O.C. Aderhold 97-100, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

It's a question of right and justice. We don't think it's interference in U.S. affairs, but a world problem of discrimination.<sup>50</sup>

In terms of day-to-day interactions, the Cambodian students studying at the University of Georgia were, for the most part, considered white. Having been given a general orientation about issues of segregation in their pre-departure orientation back in Cambodia and advised by campus coordinators Arthur Gannon and later G.I. Johnson upon their arrival, the Cambodian students knew they were to use the same facilities and visit the same businesses as their white student counterparts, but they did not grasp why. They knew to take the Yellow Cab, amusingly—the taxi service for whites—and were told the locations of the four theaters where whites saw films. As curious as Georgians might have been about them, some of the Cambodians wanted to understand why certain parts of town were off-limits:

After a few years we got curious, so we went to the black neighborhoods and they looked at us like we were extra-terrestrials. They didn't know what to make of us. We weren't black, we weren't white, and we spoke English with a funny accent.<sup>51</sup>

The Cambodian students at the University of Georgia may not have experienced the blatant discrimination that their fellow black students experienced, but some misunderstandings did occur. The 19 Cambodian students studying in 1962 sent a letter to Dean Murray requesting that they not have interactions with a particular staff member in the College of Agriculture who served as academic advisor to the students and who, according to the students, made remarks like “I do not like Cambodians,” “The Cambodians are very impolite,” and “I do not like the people

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<sup>50</sup> “Interview with Prince Sihanouk,” 9 January 1965, published by Cambodian Ministry of Information, Phnom Penh, the Cambodian National Archives. The interview, conducted by African-American journalist William Worthy, appeared in the *National Guardian*, a leftist newspaper published in New York.

<sup>51</sup> Sin Meng Srun, interview by author, 24 July 2008, Phnom Penh; and Airgram from AID/Washington, 29 October 1963, file 9-1 Orientation & Reception, Box 110, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. In 1963, AID introduced a new pre-departure orientation pamphlet entitled “Perspectives on Civil Rights in the United States,” which described “the gains we have made toward legal protection to all citizens, regardless of race, religion or color. The Negro problem is discussed in particular and adequate education, improved housing conditions and full employment are listed among the goals to be achieved.”

of this country.”<sup>52</sup> On ventures off campus in other parts of Georgia, there were the “looks up and down” by “redneck farmers” and language issues such that, in one instance, some Cambodian students’ attempts to purchase a bushel of apples from a roadside fruit vendor resulted in miscommunication, misunderstanding, and an accusation of racism by one of the Cambodian students.<sup>53</sup>

Some of these misunderstandings may have resulted from the language barrier, others the product of the increasingly strained relationship between the United States and Cambodia. A series of incidents in 1963 and 1964 led to an eventual break in diplomatic relations between Cambodia and the United States. Central to the severing of relations was the involvement of Americans and American planes in South Vietnamese bombing raids along the Cambodian border. The effects of deteriorating foreign relations between the United States and Cambodia were apparently felt by Cambodian students on campus. One student, It Sareth, wrote a letter to the editor of the campus newspaper expressing irritation at the questions he was being asked by American students about a particular instance of a U.S. plane involved in border bombings that was reportedly shot down by the Cambodians. A clearly annoyed Sareth wrote that “the same and other fellows have irritated me by asking the same questions over and over and also have put

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<sup>52</sup> Letter from Cambodian students to C.C. Murray, 9 April 1962, file Contract Correspondence with Local Personnel, including Mr. Gannon, Box 57, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. The students wrote to Murray that the comments by the staff member were “very hurtful to us and to the honor of our country.”

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.; Ou Thuok, interview by author, 6 April, 2009, Falls Church, Virginia; and Sin Meng Srun, interview by author, 24 July 2008, Phnom Penh. Sin Meng Srun did not recall any instances of discrimination. Thuok relays that upon learning of the story, Arthur Gannon, who was elderly and frail at the time, was so dismayed that he purchased a bushel of apples and hauled them to the student’s dorm room with an apology.

blame on me. I told them, as I am neither Chief of State of Cambodia nor Secretary of Defense, to write to my Prince Sihanouk who will give them detailed information.”<sup>54</sup>

Excursions around the state and to rural Georgia in particular resulted in many positive experiences for the Cambodian students and allowed them to see firsthand the application of their classroom instruction in experiencing American and southern culture. During the summer, the Cambodian students took part in practical experiences, including working on and visiting farms, agribusinesses, and forestry operations and visiting local high schools and cooperative extension offices. Students spent time with farmers and their families in small towns like Thomson and Monroe, towns that rarely saw foreigners. They experienced the daily life of small-scale farmers and the business aspects of agriculture industries, including poultry and beef cattle. Time spent in one-on-one interactions with farmers seemed to be particularly meaningful for the students.<sup>55</sup> This was particularly true when the students had opportunities to interact with farmers and their families, as noted by student Trang Meng Kry:

Mr. Hutchenson who was a popular county agent in Thomson brought me to the McCorkle family that I stayed for my farm week-end. Mr. McCorkle was one of McDuffie counties [sic] best farmers and also was an efficient manager of his farm. His sons shared in the work in the home and on the farm. The McCorkle family furnishes the management, and most of the work on their farm are [sic] aided by the colored people. The McCorkle family was so interested about Cambodia. Mostly we had a little conversation referred [sic] to our countries and our religions during or after dinner.<sup>56</sup>

The Cambodian students also attended the annual 4-H Club Congress in Atlanta where they sang songs, square danced, and participated in tractor pulls with other young people from

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<sup>54</sup> It Sareth Letter to the Editor, *Red and Black*, 1 December 1964, p.4; and Kenton Clymer, *The United States and Cambodia, 1870-1969* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 125.

<sup>55</sup> Summer 1963 Activities Reports by students Minh Thien Voan, Chhim Sun Him, It Sareth, Yim Youvaing, Trang Meng Kry, Uk Tinal, Suong Sok San, You Sambeth, file name illegible Box 57, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>56</sup> Summer Report 1963, Trang Meng Kry, file name illegible, Box 57, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.



around Georgia. At the Rock Eagle 4-H Center in Eatonton, the Cambodian students were among eighty-one students from twelve nations who participated in a week-long seminar on Effective Communications. Here they attended seminars on holding the attention of an audience, how people learn and respond to new ideas, and why people resist new ideas. The students practiced communicating by delivering individual speeches on such topics as Activities of American Youth in the Field of Agriculture.<sup>57</sup>

For the most part fascinated by their new experiences, the young Cambodian students acclimated to American life quickly. Being assigned to dormitories and rooms with American roommates, spending time with American families at holidays and on weekends, and joining the Cosmopolitan Club and the forestry fraternity, in the case of student Sin Meng Srun, helped the students to overcome any bouts of homesickness. Several faculty members and their families “adopted” the Cambodian students and hosted them for meals and many weekends. The students adjusted to life in a small southern town as best they could and improvised when necessary. With a lack of restaurant choices in Athens and tired of a diet of hush puppies, deep-fried catfish, collard greens and “grits three times a day—breakfast, lunch, and dinner,” on many weekends the students would “take the bus to Atlanta, check into a hotel, and eat Chinese food all weekend.” The students sometimes found humor in the confusion that their “foreignness” would create among their fellow American students. As a practical joke, the Cambodian students would call the central dormitory telephone and say “Hello, this is Him [Chhim Sun Him]. May I speak to You [You Sambath]?”<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Sin Meng Srun, interview by author, 24 July 2008, Phnom Penh; and Vickey Butler, “Participants from Cambodia Registered-Fall Quarter 1963-64 in the College of Agriculture and School of Forestry,” 15 October 1963, file Georgia Contract, Box 106, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. Of the Cambodian students listed, all but two lived on campus in dormitories, including Lipscomb, Reed, Tucker, and Morris Halls. All of the Cambodian agriculture contract students lived in dormitories.

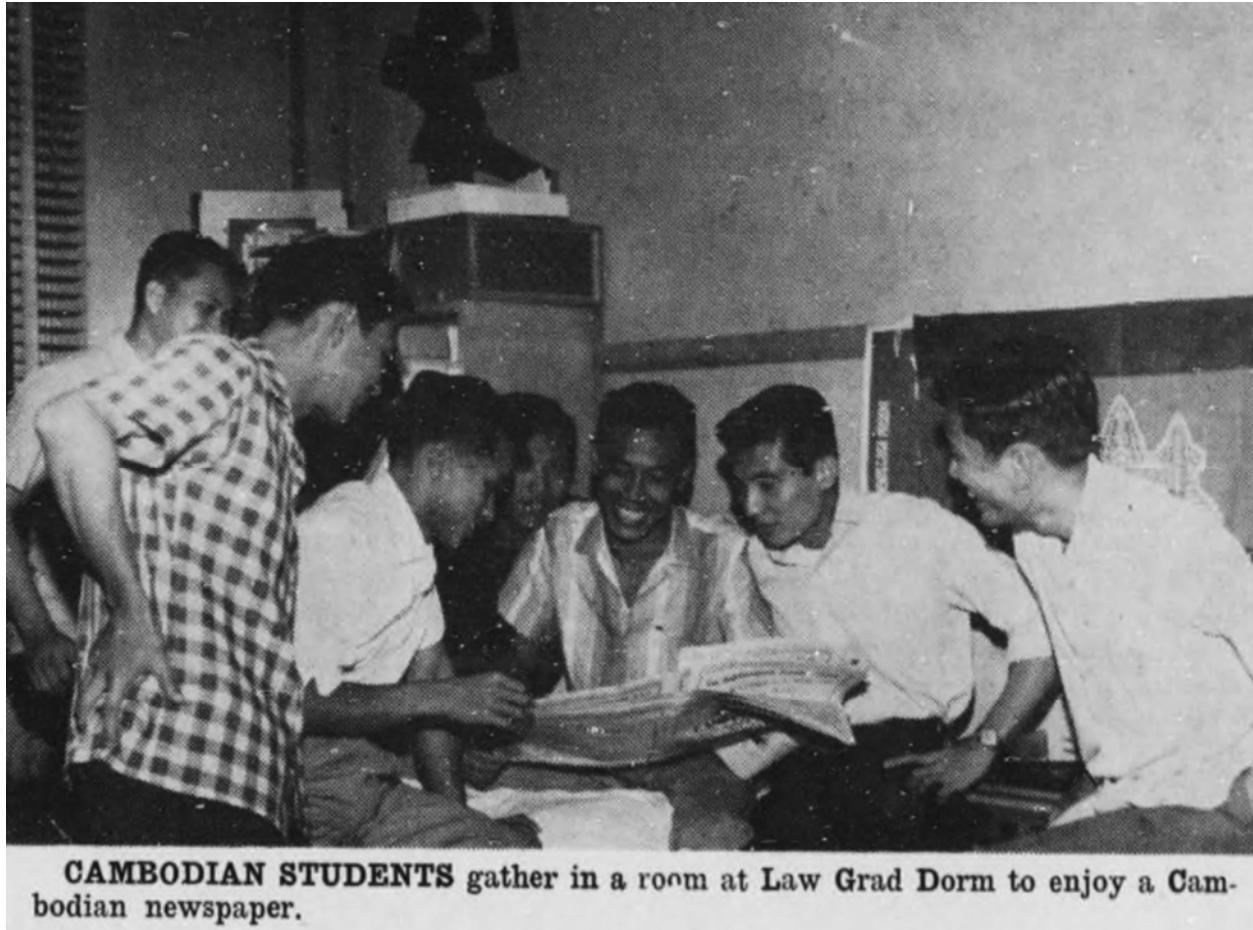


Figure 4.3. May 2, 1962, p. 3, *Red and Black*

Occasionally, there were times when the Cambodian students ran afoul of cultural norms or a specific rule or policy related to their program. For example, some of the Cambodian students had difficulty adjusting to rules in the dormitories. Missing Cambodian food, a group of students purchased food and tried to cook in their dormitory, which was not permitted.<sup>59</sup> A recurring issue among the Cambodian students studying at the University of Georgia was their desire to purchase and drive cars. It had become increasingly common at the time for University

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<sup>59</sup> Ou Thuok, interview by author, 6 April 2009, Falls Church Virginia.

of Georgia students to have cars on campus—something that the foreign students immediately noticed.<sup>60</sup> AID's contract with the University, however, prohibited participants from owning or operating automobiles while in the United States. Violation of the policy could include termination of the student's program and the return home of the participant. The restriction resulted from AID's past experience with insurance laws and from legal troubles of students who been in car accidents. Even though the Cambodian students were required to sign a form stating that they understood the policy and were given written reminders from the University, several were found to be operating cars.<sup>61</sup> The issue was a major concern of AID and identified as such in a report on an inspection visit by AID to the University in 1962, which found at least four Cambodian students either owning or driving cars.<sup>62</sup>

The Cambodian students faced other challenges, some of a more personal nature and some that affected their academic studies. The University received a complaint from the local welfare department about one Cambodian student's "social relationship" with a client of the welfare department. AID personnel found some of the Cambodian students at the University of Georgia lacked certain social graces (eating habits, apparel, and toilet) and that University personnel were reluctant to correct the students. Another student's "poor attitude" and academic performance were attributed to the fact that he lived off-campus and the ways in which he spent

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<sup>60</sup> Marilyn Johnson, "Foreign Students Impressed by Student Cars, Campus Life," *Red and Black*, 13 October, 1950, p. 11.

<sup>61</sup> Arthur Gannon to Cambodian participants, 22 March 1962; and C.C. Murray to all AID sponsored students and UGA-Cambodia contract participants, 11 October 1963, file Participants-General letters, etc. Re. Participants, Box 128, C.C. Murray 92-081, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>62</sup> "Official Trip Reports by Dr. S.C. Litzenberger," 16 August 1962, file Participants-General letters, etc. Re. Participants, Box 128, C.C. Murray 92-081, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia; and C.C. Murray to C.L. Orrben, 29 August 1962, file C.L. Orrben, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. In a written response to the report, Dean Murray acknowledges the problem of students driving cars, but notes that it is being handled "in the most effective way possible." Murray also contended that responsibility rests with AID for informing students of this role before they arrive on campus.

his time when not in class. A “defensive attitude” was cited for the reason one student remained on academic probation.<sup>63</sup> Another student’s academic probation resulted from his spending “too much of his time during the summer with pleasant companions rather than his books.”<sup>64</sup>

Even some of the more focused students ran into academic difficulties. On their own, adjusting to the need to be disciplined about their studies, and learning the processes of the University’s quarter system proved difficult for some students.<sup>65</sup> Several students also continued to struggle with English throughout their program. Most of the students were straight out of high school in Cambodia where French was the dominant foreign language, so even after intensive English in Cambodia and at Georgetown University, most needed extra assistance with English at the University of Georgia.<sup>66</sup> Even with extra English language training and an academic counselor assigned to them, some of the Cambodian students still struggled. In 1962, nine of the nineteen students studying at the University of Georgia, including two of the agricultural college contract students, were either on, or had been on, academic probation. Chemistry, Physics, and Botany courses seemed to give the students the most trouble.<sup>67</sup> Not all of the students struggled academically. Over the course of their studies, at least three Cambodian students, including two

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<sup>63</sup> “Official Trip Reports by Dr. S.C. Litzenberger,” 16 August 1962; and G.I. Johnson to J. Dennett Guthrie, International Agricultural Development Service-Washington, 18 August 1964, file Participants-General letters etc. Re. Participants, Box 128, C.C. Murray 92-081, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia; and Letter from C.C. Murray to Lawrence H. Thie, Agricultural Training Section, AID Washington, 8 May 1962, file UGA Correspondence, Box 57, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. Students with cited problems were at the University of Georgia under a regular AID contract, not the National College contract.

<sup>64</sup> Airgram from AID/Washington to Phnom Penh, 18 October 1963, file name illegible, Box 57, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>65</sup> Ou Thuok, interview by author, 6 April 2009, Falls Church, Virginia.

<sup>66</sup> Thuok and Srun, interviews by author. The students had different levels of language preparation before arriving in Georgia. Ou Thuok, who had learned English in Cambodia by listening to Voice of America, had three months of English language training at Georgetown. Sin Meng Srun spent six weeks in intensive English in Phnom Penh before arriving in Georgia. Thuok and Srun interviews.

<sup>67</sup> “Official Trip Reports by Dr. S.C. Litzenberger,” 16 August 1962, file Participants-General letters, etc. Re. Participants, Box 128, C.C. Murray 92-081, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

National College contract students, made the Dean's List, which required at least fifteen hours of coursework and an average for the quarter of ninety or above.<sup>68</sup>

The Mission in Phnom Penh had serious concerns about the academic performance of the Cambodian students studying at other institutions in the United States. USOM acknowledged that, beginning in 1959 when the Mission first started sending Cambodian students to U.S. institutions, there were problems attracting sufficient numbers of qualified candidates. This, along with the fact that the pre-departure English language training was not adequate in the early days of the programs, meant that some Cambodian students came to the United States ill-prepared for academic success. Although the majority of the students studying in the United States made passing grades, some failed and were sent back to Cambodia. The Mission worried that these students, who would return to their countries in shame, were worse off than had they never been selected to participate and, as a result, likely to become bitter and develop anti-American attitudes. In response, the Agriculture Division developed and implemented standards related to qualifications and selection of participants and the general administration of the participant training programs. For example, along with achieving at least the first baccalaureate in the French system, students would need to meet certain academic standards, undergo screening by the Mission, and score at least seventy-five on the standard English test administered by the Bi National Center in Phnom Penh.<sup>69</sup>

These new standards for the participant training program may have been a result of Samuel Litzenberger's surprise visit to the University of Georgia to evaluate the student

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<sup>68</sup> G.I. Johnson to Eugene Marble, 25 June 1963, file name illegible, Box 57, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP; and Inter-Office Communication from Johnson to Murray, 25 March 1964, file G.I. Johnson, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>69</sup> "Agriculture Division's Participant Program," 8 October 1962, file 2.1 Agriculture, Box 109, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

programs and his subsequent report of his findings. AID's recommendations mirrored two of Litzenberger's specific findings. First, AID recommended that future participants be placed at small colleges in the United States rather than large universities. Specifically, AID believed that students enrolled in smaller institutions received more personal attention and guidance, fared better academically, and were less likely to become "lost in the multitude." The Agriculture Division lobbied for students to be placed first in American junior colleges, and then be moved after two years to a larger college or university. Litzenberger, in his report on his August 1962 visit to the University of Georgia, recommended that "slower" students be sent to junior colleges rather than to the University. He noted that American universities are "setting up higher requirements to keep enrollment down. They just cannot handle the increased number of students with existing facilities, personnel and funds." Second, in setting out new operating procedures, the Mission wanted to guard against having too many Cambodian participants at a single institution so as to avoid the "formation of a Cambodian colony" and to give the students "wider and more varied experiences." On his site visit to Georgia, Litzenberger had noted that there were too many Cambodian students enrolled in the University and that this was retarding students' progress.<sup>70</sup> This had been an earlier concern of USOM Director Charles Mann, who had thought that the eight Cambodian students at the University of Georgia were sufficient. He instructed the Deputy Chief of the Agriculture Division to advise the University of Georgia to place other Cambodian students studying under the agricultural college contract at U.S. institutions other than the University of Georgia.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid.; and Litzenberger Trip Reports, 16 August 1962, file Participants-General letters etc. Re. participants, Box 128, C.C. Murray 92-081, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>71</sup> Branyon to Van Haeften, 10 January 1962, file Univ. of Ga. Corres. 1959-61, Box 57, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. There is a handwritten note from Charles Mann to Raymond Cason on the Branyon memorandum requesting that Cason "make sure that plans

Litzenberger's report of his visits to U.S. universities with Cambodian agriculture participants—the University of Georgia, University of Florida, Louisiana State University and A&M College, Mississippi State University, and the University of Arkansas—may have prompted the USOM's Agricultural Division to develop standards and guidelines around the program. Interestingly, Litzenberger's directed his harshest criticisms at the University of Georgia, where he found too many Cambodian students, lack of enforcement of AID's automobile policy, that the Cambodians' living allowances were allowing them extravagant lifestyles (vacation trips, private apartments, cars), reluctance on the part of University personnel to correct social graces, and a general feeling that the University could not support any more Cambodian students.<sup>72</sup>

In fact, Litzenberger had no positive observations at all about the Cambodians' experience at the University of Georgia. By contrast, he noted that the University of Florida “has no place for anything but the best prepared and scholastically capable students,” that only students who could handle this academic rigor should be sent to Florida, and that the Cambodian students enrolled there were doing “quite satisfactorily.” At Louisiana State University and A&M College, Litzenberger noted that its Agronomy division was in a position to do an excellent job of training Cambodian men. Similarly, he found Mississippi State to “exhibit every sign of being a very progressive educational institution for both American and foreign students.

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are in fact being made by the U. of G. to place students in other universities. There are about as many in Georgia now as there should be.”

<sup>72</sup> Litzenberger Trip Reports, 16 August 1962, file Participants-General letters etc. Re. participants, Box 128, C.C. Murray 92-081, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

If additional transfers are contemplated at other institutions, consideration should be give to this institution for at least two more students.”<sup>73</sup>

Dean Murray was not happy with Litzenberger’s observations. He was troubled that Litzenberger arrived on campus unannounced at a time when Murray was in Washington attending the USDA-AID College Contracts Meeting. Murray also disagreed with several of the report’s conclusions. He took particular issue with Litzenberger’s observation that the University could not handle an increased number of students with their existing personnel, facilities, and funds. Murray argued that the counseling program for Cambodian students was better and more effective than that of small institutions and that the institution had committed the housing, laboratory space, and faculty to the Cambodian program. He also found erroneous Litzenberger’s statements that all contract and student business was not handled by one central office. Rather, in a letter to AID Rural Development Branch Chief, C.L. Orrben, Murray explained that the contract’s Campus Coordinator was located fifteen steps from his own office and that all matters related to the Cambodian contract, including student issues, were run through the Dean’s office.<sup>74</sup>

Even as the United States had committed several hundred thousand dollars to training Cambodian agricultural students, Ambassador Sprouse and others at the Mission in Phnom Penh

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<sup>73</sup> Litzenberger Trip Reports, 16 August 1962, file Participants-General letters etc. Re. participants, Box 128, C.C. Murray 92-081, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia; and Rose M. Hassemer, Secretary to Donald Branyon, 2 July 1962, file Donald L. Branyon 60-61, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. Arthur Gannon’s secretary wrote to Branyon about Litzenberger’s visit: “He [Litzenberger] was a little concerned about some of them considering their poor scholastic records. He was also most concerned about the cars. Two admitted to him that they had cars and I understand he laid the law down to them. However, Dean Murray has given them deadlines to sell cars and they say they sell them when a week or two later they are seen still driving them. At one time there were four cars in the group—one in our Georgian group. I don’t know what the solution is. Mr. Gannon seemed to think that if some would be sent home, that it would end present and future problems in regards to owning automobiles.”

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.; and Murray to Orrben, 20 August 1962, file C.L. Orrben, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.



wondered if the returning Cambodia students' U.S. degrees would be recognized by the Cambodian government and whether the students would be placed in the National School and other governmental leadership positions as intended by the United States. One issue was that the Cambodians, accustomed to the French system, did not understand the U.S. bachelor's and Master's degree system. When the first three Cambodians returned from the United States with fresh bachelor's degrees in agriculture, there were reports that the men were not placed in positions equivalent to their levels of education. This troubled the Americans as they thought that, if true, this would affect the morale of all Cambodian students in the United States and dry up the pool of future students. Although the United States intended for the returning Cambodian students to become faculty at the National School and officials within the Ministry of Agriculture, the Mission had never been able to discern from the Cambodian government what its intentions were for the students. In April 1963, Ambassador Sprouse asked his staff to inquire with the Minister of Agriculture about his intentions for the returning students and to "hit hard" to make sure the students' advanced as far as possible. Additionally, the Mission set about making a case for equivalence of degrees relative to the French system.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Declassified Confidential Country Team Minutes, 17 April 1963 and 31 July 1963, file Country Team, Box 11, Cambodia Files 1958-1963, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, General Records of the Department of State, RG 59, NACP; and E.J. Krowitz to Peter Cody, 21 November 1961, file Agricultural Education Support Material, Box 382, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

## CHAPTER V

### THE END OF A FRAGILE PARTNERSHIP

The site visit to Cambodia in the spring of 1962 by University of Georgia Agriculture Dean, C.C. Murray, and the movement on the project that followed brought renewed hope that progress could begin to be made on the University's project in Cambodia. All sides were in agreement about a scaled-back project team consisting of three people and a cohort of short-term personnel. The University of Georgia agreed to this reduction in staff with the idea that when prospective teachers returned from their degree training at the University of Georgia and the new school buildings were constructed, the University of Georgia's team in Cambodia would be enlarged again. There was also progress on the site for the new school as the Cambodian Minister of Agriculture had presented plans for the location of the agricultural school to the Council of Ministers and there was a new project agreement between the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) and the Cambodian government that brought focus to the development of agricultural education in Cambodia. Work on the new school site progressed as boundary and utilities surveys were made by the University of Georgia team.<sup>1</sup>

Both the University and AID agreed that a positive step forward was the arrival in Cambodia of an English language instructor who would serve the project. Robert George, a thirty-four year old Navy veteran from Eatonton, Georgia, arrived in Phnom Penh in early March with plenty of international experience under his belt. Fluent in French, George had been with Coca-Cola since 1955, primarily working in the corporation's international offices in Germany

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<sup>1</sup> "Fourth Semi-Annual Progress Report, January 1-June 30, 1962, UGA/Cambodia Program," file Reports Semi-Annual 1960-64, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives.

and then as District Manager for Coca-Cola in Southeast Asia (Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and South Vietnam). In 1960, George had returned to a position in Coca-Cola's Atlanta offices for "medical convalescence" after an automobile accident. George had graduated from the University of Georgia in 1953 with a degree in French and had received a Fulbright award for a year of study at the University of Strasbourg in France.<sup>2</sup> Since George had never worked directly for the University of Georgia, Aderhold and Murray thought it important to prepare George as if he were a regular employee of the University. George was sent to Washington for pre-departure orientation and to visit the American Language School at Georgetown University to become familiar with their teaching methods and materials. Additionally, Aderhold and Murray made a special point to meet with George before he left so that when he arrived in Phnom Penh, "he could say he knows the University and its top personnel."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Robert Stevens George, "Application for Federal Employment," file Participants Biographical Data, 1961-63, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives.

<sup>3</sup> Inter-Office Communication from O.C. Aderhold to Dean Murray, 21 February 1962, file Contract Correspondence, Box 57, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. Aderhold believed it would a "psychological advantage" to George if he could say he knew the University's top personnel. Aderhold references criticism the University received on its Vietnam project because some of its personnel there were not previously University employees and knew nothing about the University. Arthur Gannon to Dean Murray, 9 February, 1962, file Vietnam Correspondence, Box 57, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

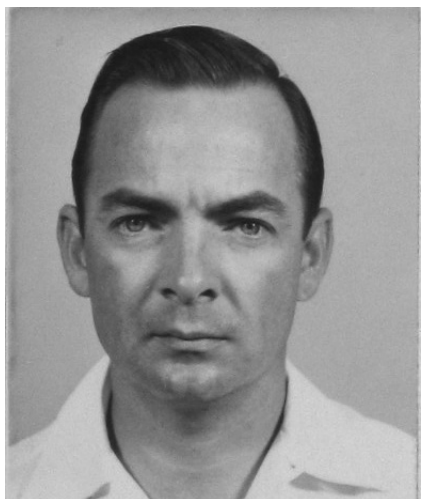


Figure 5.1. Robert George. 1553, file 286-Cam-90, 1962 Staff, Box 11, Photographs of AID Activities in Cambodia, 1956-1963, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park.

The summer of 1962 was a time of transition and personnel changes for both the University of Georgia project and the Mission in Cambodia. Philip D. Sprouse was appointed Ambassador to succeed William Trimble. Sprouse, a career foreign service officer, was no stranger to Asia or to the political complexities of Indochina. Sprouse had served for fourteen years in various foreign service posts in China, including working for General George C. Marshall in Chungking and Nanking. After the late 1940s, Sprouse, like all of the State Department's China experts during the McCarthy years, was "exiled" from posts in China for having "lost China" to the Communists. From 1950-52, Sprouse served in the Embassy in Paris where his job entailed monitoring political developments in Indochina. He was appointed Ambassador to Cambodia by President John F. Kennedy on June 28, 1962. Having seen the "morass" in Indochina from which the French were being ejected, Sprouse was not an advocate

of the United States sending ground troops to Asia. Sprouse was considered by those who worked with him to be a “first rate” foreign service officer and diplomat:

He was demanding and hard working and expected superior hard work from his staff but he was eminently fair and congenial. He was also a bachelor as were the French, Australian and Japanese Ambassadors. An unusual situation.<sup>4</sup>

Sprouse took up his post at a particularly tumultuous time in the ever-chaotic United States-Cambodia relationship. Prince Sihanouk’s personality—at times overflowing with personal charm and charisma and at other times confrontational and edgy—was reflected in his relations with the United States.<sup>5</sup> Sihanouk continued to suspect United States’ involvement in assisting Cambodian dissidents who sought to overthrow him and who were operating from the territory of Cambodia’s historical enemies Thailand and Vietnam. During Sprouse’s first month on the job the Cambodians arrested two AID officials as part of an espionage ring. Sihanouk was also irritated by the incidences of cross border attacks on Cambodian villages as fighting intensified between South Vietnam and the Viet Cong. In some instances, American personnel were present during attacks on suspected Viet Cong bases in Cambodia. During this time Sihanouk also became annoyed when he requested increased funds from the United States to expand Cambodia military, and Washington obliged with funds for 3,000 additional troops but refused to pay their salaries and day-to-day support for political reasons. It is notable that this

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<sup>4</sup> Philip D. Sprouse, “Oral History Interview with Ambassador Philip D. Sprouse,” interview by James R. Fuchs, 11 February 1974, transcript, Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, Mo., available from <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/sprousep.htm>; accessed 3 September 2009; Peter Cody, Unpublished Autobiography 2009, p. 9; and David P. Chandler, *The Tragedy of Cambodian History: Politics, War, and Revolution Since 1945* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991), 132. Chandler notes that Prince Sihanouk and Trimble had excellent relations but that Sprouse was a “fastidious bachelor” and “hardly Sihanouk’s type.”

<sup>5</sup> Chandler, *The Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 119.

increase in military aid riled the Thais and South Vietnam, and so they continued to support Cambodian dissidents.<sup>6</sup>

The United States was aware that Prince Sihanouk had considered on previous occasions severing diplomatic relations. In 1961, the Embassy had even developed tentative plans for the evacuation of Americans from Cambodia. The United States believed that as long as Sihanouk felt he needed U.S. aid, diplomatic relations between the two countries would continue, and so Washington continued providing most everything Sihanouk requested, within reason.<sup>7</sup> The United States was also keenly aware that its relations with Cambodia were heavily dependent on how the United States fit into Sihanouk's constant balancing act necessary to maintain power. Along with the need to develop Cambodia's economy, Sihanouk was mindful of the need to consolidate his own power and to constantly ward off threats from Thailand and Vietnam, anti-royalist Cambodians operating in neighboring countries and Cambodia, and the threat from the far left which was growing in strength and numbers.

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<sup>6</sup> Kenton Clymer, *The United States and Cambodia, 1870-1969* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 91-94.

<sup>7</sup> Clymer, *The United States and Cambodia*, 88, 90.



Figure 5.2. Prince Norodom Sihanouk, U-2124-CM 765, Cambodian National Archives.

Along with Trimble's departure, the other significant leadership change at USOM was that Charles Mann was replaced as Director of AID by Curtis Campaigne. Mann had been reassigned as Director of U.S. operations in Laos—a “central Cold War battleground.”<sup>8</sup> A lawyer by training, Campaigne was new to the foreign service. Campaigne had served in the U.S. Marine Corps during the war, achieving the rank of corporal. He had been associate counsel to the International Paper Company from until 1953 when he left to become executive director of the World Veterans Fund. He later served as Secretary General of the World Veterans Federation from 1954-61. Campaigne was described by colleagues as congenial, easy to work with, and with no ambitions of advancement within AID. Having never served in the foreign service, Campaigne was not accustomed to the organizational culture of AID and relied heavily on his staff in the Mission in his decision making.<sup>9</sup>

As the University of Georgia prepared for its own personnel transitions in Cambodia, the process of appointment and approval of a new project team resulted in a clash between Athens and Phnom Penh, perhaps an omen of other impending problems. Nominating the new University project team members was under Dean Murray's purview. Two of Murray's three candidates for the new University project team—Jack C. Thompson and Anna Victoria “Vickey” Butler—sailed through security clearance and review by Washington and AID in Cambodia. One nominee, Betsey Powell, met with significant resistance from AID in Cambodia.

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<sup>8</sup> Robert J. McMahon, *Limits of Empire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 108; and T.D. Allman, “In Laos, A.I.D. Marches On,” *New York Times*, 25 February 1972, p. 39. Mann would serve in Laos until 1965 when he would become AID Director in South Vietnam. The *New York Times* article about AID programs being used as a cover for Central Intelligence Agency activities in Laos, identifies Mann as the “genial, perennial A.I.D. Director in Laos... whose ability to attune A.I.D. activities to the requirements of U.S. intervention had made him A.I.D. director in South Vietnam, Cambodia, and the Congo.”

<sup>9</sup> Curtis Campaigne in Marquis Who's Who on the Web, 16 September 2009; Peter Cody, interview by author, 20 September 2009, Washington, DC; and Peter Cody, *Unpublished Autobiography* 2009, p. 9.



Thompson, a forty-six year old associate professor of agricultural economics at the University of Georgia, was Murray's candidate for Chief of Party. Thompson was a U.S. Army veteran, having served in the South Pacific. He had a Ph.D. from Cornell and had taught courses on agricultural marketing and finance at the University of Georgia since 1956.<sup>10</sup> As a boy, he had worked in his father's citrus nursery in Florida and Murray thought that Thompson would have the leadership skills necessary to advance the University's objectives in Cambodia:

Dr. Thompson has a rich experience in teaching and research as a member of our staff. He has a good philosophy and concept of agricultural education and will be in a position to evaluate and appraise objectively the needs and the program currently underway as well as that envisioned by the new institution.<sup>11</sup>

Thompson was accompanied by his "charming" wife and two daughters. Murray wanted Thompson to arrive in Cambodia as prepared as possible and so instructed Thompson to travel to Washington for pre-departure orientation, to spend time talking to each of the nineteen Cambodian students studying at the University of Georgia, and to read everything he could on Cambodian government, customs, religion, and way of life.<sup>12</sup>

Thompson was joined by Vickey Butler who would take over from Mrs. Johnson as Secretary. Butler, fifty-six years of age and an Athens native, was one of the University's "top

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<sup>10</sup> Jack Conrad Thompson, "Application for Federal Employment," file Participants biographical data, 1961-63, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives.

<sup>11</sup> Murray to van Haeften, 16 May, 1962, file UGA Correspondence, Box 57, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, National Archives at College Park, Maryland (NACP). Chapter V from this point on includes a number of lengthy quotations and leans heavily on the language of the project participants. The participants own words are more powerful than the author's description of their intent and meaning.

<sup>12</sup> Arthur Gannon to Cambodia Participants, 25 May 1962, file Vietnam Correspondence, Box 57, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. Gannon asks the students to meet with Thompson to tell him "a little about your country, your people, and your school over there." Gannon to Thompson, 22 May 1962, file Contract Correspondence, Box 58, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia; and Draft Letter from Charles A. Mann to Cheng Heng, Secretary of State for Agriculture, 19 June 1962, file UGA Correspondence 1959-61, Box 57, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

secretaries.” She had worked for eight years as secretary to the director of the University’s Georgia Center for Continuing Education. Her international experience included week-long vacation trips to Guatemala and Jamaica.<sup>13</sup>

Dean Murray assumed that the third nominee for the University’s project team position of Assistant to the Chief of Party, Betsy Powell, would be approved as well. Part of the problem that arose with Powell’s nomination was the difference in opinion between Athens and Phnom Penh as to the exact title and duties of the third position. Murray nominated Powell as Assistant to the Chief of Party, which met with resistance from AID Cambodia, and surprisingly, from Branyon, the University’s own Chief of Party in Phnom Penh. At forty-eight years of age, Powell had for fifteen years directed the University’s home study program, which was run out of the Georgia Center for Continuing Education. She had a Master’s degree in Comparative Literature from the University of Georgia and had been active in the National University Extension Association. Powell had studied in Germany before the war and she later worked for the Red Cross during the war. During her time in Europe she was able to travel widely and she acquired some French and German language capability.<sup>14</sup>

AID Agriculture Division Chief Carl van Haeften, in reviewing Murray’s nomination of Powell, thought that Murray’s interpretation of what the position entailed was different from what AID intended. Van Haeften saw the position as less administrative and more technical, requiring the person to play a large role in physical development of the new school site. Van Haeften thought the University of Georgia was unduly focused on the administrative aspects of

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.; and Anna Victoria Butler, “Application for Federal Employment,” file Participants biographical data, 1961-63, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives.

<sup>14</sup> Elizabeth Powell Application for Federal Employment; and C.C. Murray to Carl van Haeften, 16 May 1962, file UGA Correspondence, 1959-61, Box 57, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 268, NACP.

the position rather than the technical requirements of the job. AID in Cambodia saw the job as more of an Assistant Chief of Party (rather than Assistant to the Chief of Party) position appropriate for someone with a background in engineering and with responsibilities including physical development of the school farm and working with the architects, engineers, and construction contractors.<sup>15</sup>

Branyon expressed his own concerns about Powell's nomination in a lengthy letter to Dean Murray. Making particular note of Powell's reputation as a "very capable and efficient lady," Branyon emphasized that the Mission staff were "very strong in their opinion that this position should be filled by a man, preferably someone with practical farm (agronomy) and agricultural engineering experience ... who can lay out fields, ditches, plots, the farm, etc.; who knows something about construction."<sup>16</sup>

Undeterred by either AID or Branyon's opposition to Powell's appointment and annoyed at their questioning his nomination, Murray addressed concerns about Powell's appointment in a letter to van Haeften. Dean Murray noted that Powell had already been cleared by former AID Director Charles Mann before he departed for Laos. Noting his conversations in Phnom Penh with van Haeften and Mann, and later conversations with Mann in Washington, Murray reminded van Haeften of the agreement the three had reached on the composition of the new project team. Murray noted specifically that the Powell position should be responsible for gathering data that could be used to improve production efficiency in agriculture, lay out program objectives for the new National College, and provide short courses and workshops for

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<sup>15</sup> Van Haeften to C.C. Murray, 28 May 1962, file Miss Powell's Appointment, Box 57, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>16</sup> Branyon to Murray, 29 May 1962, file Miss Powell's Appointment, Box 57, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

Cambodian farmers. Betsey Powell's vast experience in "educational work of an extension nature," argued Murray, fully qualified her for this position. Murray disagreed with van Haeften and Branyon's notion that the position should be filled by someone with engineering expertise, nothing that if routine engineering work was needed, it ought to be provided by the AID Division of Public Works. Murray's recollection of the agreement about the project team was that the new group would not include any specialists besides Robert George, the English teacher.<sup>17</sup>

Neither Murray's nor van Haeften's understanding of the composition of the project team reflected an agreement and project document that AID, the University, and the Cambodians had outlined on Murray's last trip to Cambodia. This document prescribed that the position would be called Administrative Assistant and would "assist the Chief of Party in such manner as directed including especially the preparation of reports, the maintenance of commodity files, keeping of budgetary records, and the efficient operation of the office. He will supervise the work of the secretary on a daily basis."<sup>18</sup>

Even though Powell reluctantly gave up hope for an assignment in Cambodia, Dean Murray continued to pursue her appointment through late summer 1962.<sup>19</sup> Murray convinced AID in Washington to accept his definition of the position in question and AID Washington lobbied Phnom Penh to concur.<sup>20</sup> In the end, AID in Cambodia would not approve Powell's

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<sup>17</sup> Murray to van Haeften, 8 June 1962, file Miss Powell's Appointment, Box 57, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. Murray also notes that van Haeften's position on the matter at such a late date was "disturbing."

<sup>18</sup> AID Airgram, 10 May 1962, file Material from 1962 Cambodia Conference, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>19</sup> Powell to Murray, 30 June 1962, file Miss Powell's Appointment, Box 57, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. In this handwritten note to Murray, Powell noted: "I don't think I need to burden you with my disappointment anyway! That's nobody's business but mine. Hope you can keep me on your list of experts. The job you want done seems quite interesting as I'd like to do it-may as a short term 'expert.' And thanks sincerely for trying. I do appreciate that."

appointment and disagreement over what the position should be called and its duties led it to remain unfilled throughout the rest of the project.<sup>21</sup>

Betsey Powell's appointment was not the only part of the transition that did not go as Dean Murray had hoped. The plan was for Jack Thompson and Vickey Butler to arrive in Phnom Penh in early July so that they could meet and be briefed by current University team members before they completed their assignments and returned to Georgia. These plans fell through as the Cambodians were slow to clear the new project team.<sup>22</sup> When Jack Thompson arrived in Phnom Penh in late July, the remaining University of Georgia team member, Robert George, helped Thompson settle in, find his way around the city, and become familiar with his administrative responsibilities. Thompson's initial observations were that Cambodia was "much prettier and pleasanter" than he had anticipated.<sup>23</sup> Although his predecessor, Donald Branyon, was not in Cambodia when he arrived, Branyon left Thompson a few suggestions outlined in a letter. First, he suggested that Thompson read the "confidential" file which was "must reading" and that Branyon left with Robert George. Branyon also suggested that Thompson get to know

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<sup>20</sup> Memo from AID Washington to Phnom Penh, 6 July 1962, file UGA Correspondence 1959-61, Box 57, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 268, NACP.

<sup>21</sup> Cablegram from Phnom Penh, 26 June 1962, file Material from 1962 Cambodia Conference, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. AID in Cambodia thought the University of Georgia had not completed adequate plans for the school's development such that the position should be an Assistant Chief of Party who was "capable of moving ahead vigorously with school farm development and also provide required liaison with architects and engineers and contractors."

<sup>22</sup> Branyon to Murray, 2 July 1962. Branyon notes that although the Cambodian government had not formally approved the appointments, the Minister of Agriculture had told van Haeften that he personally concurred.. Branyon to C.C. Murray, 11 July 1962, file Donald L. Branyon 60-61, Box 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. The Cambodians cleared Thompson on July 6, 1962

<sup>23</sup> Thompson to Murray, 30 July 1962, file Jack Thompson, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

Raymond Cason, an “awfully nice chap” and who was the AID Deputy Chief of Agriculture who was the designated liaison between the University and AID.<sup>24</sup>

Vickey Butler arrived in Phnom Penh one week later, decidedly upbeat about her new home:

My first impression of this lovely country began as I looked down from the plane and saw scores of beautiful green embroidered squares as far as eye could see. These squares were separated by bands of coffee colored ribbon, which I later learned ‘twas none other than the overflow of the Mekong River. You’ve heard, of course, that the band was at the Airport when we landed ...not to greet Victoria Thompson and me, but the illustrious Prince Norodom Sihanouk. But, Dr. Thompson, Bob George, and Mr. Savin were there to greet us and to take me to Apartment #201 in Tan Pa, which had been “readied” for my arrival, even to flowers. Tehi, Edna’s former servant, was also there waiting. I looked Tehi and the apartment over, fell in love with both, and was off to Bob George’s apartment for a delicious lunch.

Butler also felt welcomed by other USOM and AID staff and was invited to participate in several of their social events:

Yes, there are many social affairs that are compulsory. We have enjoyed a buffet-dinner at the van Haeften’s honoring the Campaignes, and are looking forward to Saturday with Dr. and Mrs. Savang. I attended a tea at Mrs. Campaigne’s last Saturday, which was for single people only. On Sunday evening, Mrs. Cherry Stubbes, Budget Fiscal Officer at the Embassy, had a little dinner party for me at the MAAG Club. She had people from the Embassy. She had also invited me to go with her to a tea Saturday afternoon at the home of a very wealthy Chinese family. She said they had expressed a desire to meet me. (It could be because they have two children in school at Toccoa Falls Institute). I’ve merely mentioned these social affairs, so you would know your team members were being given the proper attention (since you are more familiar with this Post than we). We attend church every Sunday morning, and I have attended a mid-week Bible Study course. (the preacher and his wife pick me up).<sup>25</sup>

As for her work, Butler was enthusiastic about learning her new job, complimentary of her new colleagues, and of the belief that the project was important for Cambodia’s development:

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<sup>24</sup> Branyon to Thompson, 12 July 1962, file Donald L. Branyon 60-61, Box, 61, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>25</sup> “Newsletter from Phnom Penh” from Vickey Butler, 20 August 1962, file Vickey Butler, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. Toccoa Falls Institute was a bible college located in Toccoa, Georgia.

I have read the various End-of-Tour reports with great interest. And, I have studied the countryside eagerly as Bob Georgia has taken us on some drives; and I've looked into the faces of these warm and friendly people. I am of the opinion that we have an important assignment here that there is much the University can do for this country in developing its future. I am also of the opinion that the first team did an excellent job in establishing a beachhead—a strong one—and that any team to follow will be grateful for all the fine work they did.

Your selection of Dr. Thompson as Chief-of-Party was a stroke of genius. He is well qualified for this responsibility. He sound reasoning, deliberation, and dignity command the respect of all who come into contact with him. Bob George is doing an outstanding job teaching English here at L'ENAES. He is very popular with his students; has a lot of patience with them, and is so conscientious in his teaching. Then, too, he is invaluable to us new people, for he knows his way around.

Now, to my duties. You must know that I have had my head buried in the files, and in the Job Analysis—to determine what is expected of me out here. I shall do my best to take care of duties within my province in the best manner possible. I am pleased to be a member of this team. Even though we are small in number, we shall endeavor to move this project along as fast as is possible and in accordance with the Agreement. I am awed by the magnitude and the far-reaching benefits of such a program.<sup>26</sup>

There is no indication that before they departed for Cambodia, Thompson or Butler were aware of the controversial evaluation of the University's contract performance to date. Dean Murray was first made aware of this evaluation in early June 1962 by C.L. Orrben, the AID Washington Acting Agricultural Officer for the Far East. In a letter to Murray, Orrben briefly mentioned some of the major issues identified in the evaluation, which Orrben had received in an Airgram from AID Phnom Penh. Interestingly, Orrben assumed that AID Cambodia staff had briefed Murray on the evaluation during Murray's last visit to Cambodia during the Spring. As to the performance of the University of Georgia, Orrben outlined the major issues:

As to the performance of the contract group, they made a brief statement that it had been only fairly satisfactory during the first year but there has been some improvement since then. Some of the difficulties they mention were lack of understanding and agreement on the basic program of the Georgia group. They blamed this mainly on the weak leadership of the Director of the National School of Agriculture and your team leader, inferring that neither carried forth the program with any vigor. The Airgram ends by saying that

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

although the Georgia team got off to a slow start, they have laid considerable groundwork and made preparation for good and continued effort.

Orrben also passed along criticism directed towards the University's procurement of demonstration materials with contract funds but without approval from AID and the fact that the materials were sitting in a warehouse for a long period of time. The evaluation was positive about the participant training program at the University of Georgia, even suggesting it be expanded.<sup>27</sup>

Murray's response to Orrben was characteristically direct, though it does not appear for some two months after Orrben's letter, a most uncharacteristic delay in responding on Murray's part. Orrben's letter to Murray has several handwritten notations by Murray and Murray noted in his letter to Orrben that he read Orrben's letter about the evaluation several times. Murray's response is carefully thought-out and detailed in its point-by-point rebuttal of the criticisms of the University of Georgia project team. More importantly, Murray's response provides significant insight into his management and leadership style, his deep conviction that the University of Georgia's involvement in this project could help advance Cambodian agriculture and education, and his frustration with the Mission in Phnom Penh and with its Agriculture Division.

Murray conceded that the University's performance during the project's first two years did not meet his expectations. This was the result, however, of the fact that the Mission "fumbled the ball miserably," which was "inexcusable." First, noted Murray, even after the University's project team arrived in Phnom Penh, the Mission failed to inform either the Cambodian Ministry of Agriculture or the National College of Agriculture that the project even existed. This accounted for the project's slow start, not a lack of initiative or interest on the part

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<sup>27</sup> C.L. Orrben to C.C. Murray, 4 June 1962, file C.L. Orrben, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.



of the University's Chief of Party or the Director of the National College. Second, Murray argued that the Mission's changing requests of the University's staff based on the "personal thinking and ambition" of the Mission's Chief of Agriculture (van Haeften) were not in keeping with the University's contract and had hindered progress. Third, Murray noted that even though the agricultural qualifications of the University's project team were far superior to those of AID Agricultural Division staff, the AID's Mission's "domineering and over-lording" attitude toward the University of Georgia team had hindered progress and made for confusion about specific roles:

The frustration, sudden changes in pace and the multiplicity of requests (which have changed daily at times) made by the Mission to the UGA staff has been confusing and has made it impossible for our team to respond because of inconsistencies in requests, and in some cases such requests have been clearly outside of our contract responsibilities. We will not assume the responsibility for Mission effort outside of our contract.

Despite his sharp criticisms of what he saw as the failings of Mission staff, Murray was hopeful hope that the Mission and new University of Georgia project team could work together to benefit Cambodia:

I hope my recent visit there and the discussions and planning it afforded will be of help in the future in delineating and defining our responsibilities. I further hope and believe that understanding which we reached while I was there and the staff relationship of the Mission, the College, and my staff will be such that we can move ahead at an accelerated pace in the development of an enlarged curriculum, the construction of a new, modern college and afford meaningful academic training on this campus for prospective Cambodian students who will occupy positions in the new college. I am most anxious for the University of Georgia, though AID and its Mission in Cambodia, to develop attitudes and working relationships which will be most effective and fruitful in assisting Cambodia in the development of a top-flight program in Agricultural Education which will be of real assistance in the economic growth and educational advancement of Cambodia. We entered into this contractual agreement with our eyes open and with a sense of dedication and commitment which we shall discharge fully and completely. In doing this, it is our purpose to be cooperative and to work harmoniously in the interest of our broad national objective in assisting Cambodia.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Murray to Orrben, 1 August 1962, file C.L. Orrben, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

The problems of the University contract continued to accumulate. On the very day that Vickey Butler wrote to Dean Murray of the convivial social occasions she had spent with USOM officials, Jack Thompson wrote to the Dean of his grave concerns about the project and the University's relations with the Mission. Thompson clearly brought a more direct, no-nonsense management style to the Chief of Party position than had his predecessor and Thompson very quickly reached a number of conclusions about the state of the project, which he articulated to Murray. Thompson outlined how he thought that since the previous University team had departed, van Haeften had been "systematically attacking every phase of their work" and how he thought that van Haeften "would like to oust all University of Georgia personnel on the assumption that the project would be given to him." Thompson also advised Dean Murray to give up on advocating for Betsey Powell's appointment, since the AID Agricultural Division would not support her in her work.<sup>29</sup>

Rather than engaging in backhanded complaining about the Mission, on the same day Thompson wrote to Murray he also sent a letter to the new AID Mission Director, Curtis Campaigne, rebutting the criticisms Thompson had heard about the work of the Georgia team since his arrival. The complaints listed and addressed by Thompson include criticisms of the University project team's plans for the new school (that the buildings planned were too large and elaborate), criticisms about sending all Cambodian students to the University of Georgia for training, and failure of the University of Georgia team to provide realistic assessments of

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<sup>29</sup> Thompson to Murray, 20 August 1962, file Jack Thompson, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia; and Murray to Thompson, 6 August 1962, file Jack Thompson, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. Murray informed Thompson that he had written to the new Mission Director, Curtis Campaigne, about Miss Powell and had even met with Campaigne in Washington, DC before Campaigne departed for Cambodia. Murray advised Thompson that Powell had her passport ready and had taken all necessary inoculations and that she could be in Cambodia by fall. Murray asked Thompson to discuss her appointment with Campaigne. Murray noted that Campaigne had told him he would be in touch about Powell, but Campaigne never followed-up.

Cambodia's need for trained agricultural personnel. Regarding the criticisms of the Georgia team's site plans for building for the new school, Thompson argued that the all of the University of Georgia team were trained in agriculture, not engineering or architecture, and that AID's Public Works Division should have been responsible for submitting plans and specifications. He noted, however, that the former AID Director, Charles Mann, and the ranking Cambodian official had signed off on the Georgia team's suggested plans and so any talk of scaling back the plans would mean starting over with the approval process. On the issue of too many Cambodian students being sent to the University of Georgia for training, Thompson argued that since the University had a group of faculty who had been in Cambodia, there would be more support for the Cambodian students at Georgia and that bachelor's degree training at Georgia was as good as undergraduate training at any land-grant institution. Regarding the claim that the Georgia team had not planned for and estimated Cambodia's need for agriculturally trained men, Thompson reminded Campaigne that there was no current statistical data to help estimate Cambodia's needs.<sup>30</sup>

Perhaps the most important part of Thompson's letter to Campaigne related to AID's criticisms of the 100 hectare site the Cambodian government had selected for the new agricultural school. Thompson thought that suggesting any changes to the site or plans for it would mean serious delays on the part of the Cambodian government. Thompson was sensing that AID was backtracking on the original plans to construct a new agricultural college in Cambodia. Over the course of fall 1962, scaling back the scope of the plans for the new agricultural school—thus scaling back the University of Georgia's role in the project—was the

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<sup>30</sup> Thompson to Campaigne and attachment, 20 August 1962, file Jack Thompson, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. First page of attachment is missing.

topic of at least fourteen letters and memos exchanged among Thompson, Murray, AID in Cambodia and Washington, and the Cambodians.

Throughout fall 1962, AID would put forth a multitude of reasons why the agriculture project should be scaled back. Agriculture Division staff argued at various times that the plans designed by the Georgia team were too expensive, that the Cambodians would likely never commit the necessary funds, and that the site that the Cambodians had selected was unsuitable because of its tendency to flood and its proximity to the airport. AID wanted to forego developing a new site and work with existing agricultural facilities and properties including the current National College of Agriculture, Prek Leap School for extension agents, and the Stung Mean Chey Livestock Station outside of Phnom Penh. From AID's perspective, the United States and AID needed a quicker "win" on the project.

Curtis Campaigne, Mission Director, informed Thompson that the Cambodians had called for an overall national budget reduction of 20 percent and reduction in their capital outlays. The country had a growing deficit in their foreign trade balance, increasing costs of services and a static level of income. Campaigne had decided to renegotiate the agricultural education project to bring it "into harmony with the intent and capabilities of the RKG as seen at the present." In Campaigne's view, obtaining full buy-in from the Cambodians required bringing the project into "more modest lines."<sup>31</sup> At Campaigne's request, Thompson reluctantly devised alternate plans for a Cambodian college of agriculture that would use existing facilities and land rather than require a new facility and site. For Thompson, there was no good alternative to be devised from using existing facilities because there simply was not adequate land available at these facilities for practical training and experimental plots, perhaps the most

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<sup>31</sup> Campaigne to Thompson, 6 September 1962, file Dev. Ag. Ed. Support Contract, Box 383, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

important part of agricultural training. For the University of Georgia, this kind of piece-meal approach would not significantly improve Cambodia's agricultural development and was short-sighted at best.<sup>32</sup> Thompson also did not accept AID's argument that expanding existing sites would save money:

I fail to see any legitimate reason why USAID should construct expensive buildings for a College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries in the absence of a suitable site with adequate land area specifically committed for the development of the college.<sup>33</sup>

Throughout September and October, AID worked on several drafts of a letter to the Cambodian Secretary of State for Agriculture which included three alternate proposals for the development of agricultural education. Moving away from constructing a new facility on a new site, AID proposed to the Cambodians three potential alternatives to the existing plan of developing a new agricultural school. The alternatives included reorganizing the curricula and programs of study and using in different combinations existing facilities, some of which would be expanded to include dormitories, additional classrooms, and laboratories. AID tried to sell their new proposals based on the cost savings—some 300,000,000 riels—that would be realized by the Cambodian government by eliminating the need to purchase and prepare new property. Additionally, AID argued that developing and utilizing existing facilities would allow new agricultural programs to get off the ground sooner as a new facility would not be ready until 1967.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid.; and "Alternate Proposals for College of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries" by Jack Thompson, 26 September 1962, file National School FY/63, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>33</sup> Thompson to Campaigne, 3 October 1962, file Development Agriculture Education Support Materials, Box 383, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>34</sup> Campaigne to H. Seng, Secretary of State for Agriculture, 17 October 1962, file Development Agriculture Education Support, Box 383, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, NACP.

Given the abundance of challenges, some officials within AID's agriculture division and program offices advocated for terminating the contract with the University of Georgia and focusing efforts on expanding the number of Cambodian participants at the University of Georgia (perhaps to appease the University). This was the direction AID was taking with its contract with Ohio University to develop an Institute of Technology in Cambodia. The fewer American university personnel on the ground in Cambodia the less hassle for AID staff.<sup>35</sup>

Internal Mission documents indicate that AID thought that they could make a strong case to the Cambodians for diminishing the scope of the project based on the reduced financial commitments of a scaled-back project. Drafts of discussion points for a meeting with the Minister of Agriculture include requests that the Cambodians consider such options:

While the United States stands ready to honor its commitments, we believe it to be in the interest of the RKG to review once more the scope and objectives of the Pro Ag with a view towards eliminating any expenses not deemed essential for the attainment of the ultimate objective. We believe it to be feasible to reduce RKG financial commitments by as much as 90% for developmental costs and perhaps 50% in annual recurring costs of operation and maintenance without abandoning the long range objectives of the present Pro Ag. We do not propose reductions in U.S. financial commitments unless revised plans would call for a reduction.<sup>36</sup>

Within AID's Agricultural Division in Phnom Penh, internal documents indicate that part of the strategy for reducing the scope of the agriculture college may have also been to reduce the scope of or even end the University of Georgia contract. Van Haeften, in a memo to Campaigne about various alternatives to be presented to the Cambodians, advocated for moving away from developing a college in the U.S. land-grant model:

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<sup>35</sup> J.M. Whelton to R.A. Cason, Acting Chief Agriculture Division, 1 November 1961, file Agriculture Education Support Material, Box 382, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, NACP; and Peter Cody, interview by author, 20 September 2009, Washington, DC.

<sup>36</sup> "Points for Discussion with Minister of Agriculture," 19 September 1962, file National School of Agriculture FY/63, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, NACP.

With the retraction of the RKG from the plan to develop the property at Pochentong, we find it advisable to revise the scope of the project from that of creating a land-grant college-type institution to that of upgrading the present National School, which is a pre-service training center for the Secretariat of Agriculture.

In the margins of this paragraph, there is a handwritten notation “GA Contract?” perhaps indicating that eliminating the development of land-grant college would call into question the need for the University of Georgia, a land-grant institution, and the University contract.<sup>37</sup> A second version of the same memo further elaborates on why the land-grant model would not work in Cambodia and van Haeften’s belief that the Cambodian government itself did not want a land-grant model and did not support the project:

With the school included, the Ministry roughly parallels that of a U.S. state land-grant college when the Kingdom is compared to a medium-sized state. The position of Secretary of State for Agriculture compares roughly to that of the dean of agriculture of a state university. The principal institutional difference in the two systems is this: In 1862 Congress provided for the establishment of land-grant colleges for teaching the agricultural and mechanical arts and subsequently delegated to them the institutional functions of agricultural research and extension. In 1953, the RKG created the Ministry of Agriculture, subsequently delegating to it the institutional functions of teaching, research and extension. Presently, the senior officials of the Ministry have an interest in the school, both because they are employed by the school and because they employ its graduates. Our FY62 project agreement (with which we do not agree at this time) calls for creating a new institution, separate and apart from the present social institutional structure of the Ministry of Agriculture. It would employ a staff independent of the Ministry. They would also conduct agricultural research separate and apart from the Ministry. (A bid to conduct the extension work was rejected by the RKG.) The project agreement does not indicate what would happen to the National School when the new American style institution got into operation. The hope has been expressed in the Mission that it would just wither away. The director of the School said it would be changed into a girls’ high school. The point is that the dream of this new institution has faded. The host government has expressed the desire not to support it. The proposition at hand is to improve on what they have—a pre-service training program operated by and for the Ministry of Agriculture. Our aim should be to bring the about even closer integration of the School into the Ministry. No significant structural changes would be involved. This would require only the clarification of the responsibilities of the directors

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<sup>37</sup> Van Haeften to Campaigne, 2 October 1962, file Development Agriculture Education Support Materials, Box 383, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, NACP. Campaigne could have made the notation. There is also a handwritten note on the cover, “Mr. Cody, Program,” indicating that this could have been Peter Cody’s copy and his notation.

of the curricula in relation to the school. This would achieve the objectives of the Mission with the minimum social upheaval.<sup>38</sup>

It seems that van Haeften also had a plan for carrying out the alternative development of agricultural education in Cambodia that involved International Voluntary Service (IVS) affiliates rather than those from the University of Georgia. AID frequently contracted with IVS through flexible contracts for short-term personnel. His idea was to recommend to the Cambodians a curriculum with about half as much practical and applied work as a U.S. program of study and use IVS workers to do the practical instruction. Van Haeften thought that eventually IVS workers could be replaced by the Cambodians who had studied in the United States.<sup>39</sup>

Although there is no indication AID ever informed the University of Georgia of specific interest in ending the contract with the University, the Georgia team in Cambodia and Athens knew that something was afoot. Serious communication and trust issues had developed between the University of Georgia team and the AID Agriculture Division in particular, which the Georgia team saw as deliberately working against the University of Georgia's efforts. The University and the Agriculture Division clearly did not have the sort of working relationship required to move forward an ambiguous project in such a complex political and cultural environment as Cambodia. In a letter to Campaigne, van Haeften's supervisor, Thompson expressed his frustrations, outlined a case for building the new school, and questioned van Haeften's judgment:

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<sup>38</sup> Van Haeften to Campaigne, 2 October 1962, file National School of Agriculture FY/63, Box 60, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. Memo has handwritten notation "Clyburn." There is no indication as to whether this longer version of the memo or the shorter version cited previously was given to Campaigne.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.



I have done as well as I am able to give you my considered judgment on the New College of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, but I realize that responsibility for the decision must ultimately be yours. I see no compromise on his [van Haeften] stand at all. Basically, this proposal plans to commit the USAID Mission to virtually the same expenditures incorporated in the full-scale plan developed by the first group from the University of Georgia, but the Agriculture Division Chief studiously and persistently avoids requesting the commitment of any land to be developed other than the most inadequate site of L'ENAES. I would like to call your attention to the fact that you have only two opinions on which to base your judgment, the Agriculture Division Chief's and mine. The technicians in the Agriculture Division are subordinates of the chief and their vote is not a free vote. My predecessors from the University of Georgia had an opportunity to vote on this same proposal and unanimously disapproved. I fail to see any legitimate reason why USAID should construct expensive buildings for a College of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in the absence of a suitable site with adequate land area specifically committed for the development of the college.<sup>40</sup>

Thompson obviously did not have tremendous confidence that AID was doing everything it could to help to make the University of Georgia's work successful. Beyond van Haeften, Thompson thought that he was not getting the full picture from other AID staffers. In his letter to Campaigne, Thompson wrote:

According to Mr. Cody there is some possibility that an investigating team from Washington will be sent out here if this question is not settled before the middle of this month. This could not reflect on you since the problem obviously developed during an earlier administration.

On Dean Murray's copy of Thompson's letter to Campaigne, Thompson hand wrote:

The investigating team from Washington was a little bluff from Mr. Cody. It is really a routine inspection and covers all of the AID projects.<sup>41</sup>

Murray agreed with Thompson that moving away from the original project's goals of building a new agricultural school capable of meeting Cambodia's long-term agricultural needs

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<sup>40</sup> Thompson to Campaigne, 3 October 1962, file Development Agriculture Education Support Materials, Box 383, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>41</sup> Thompson to Campaigne, 3 October 1962, file USAID Phnom Penh, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

was neither strategic on the part of AID nor in the best interest of Cambodia. He also placed blame for changing course on the Agriculture Division and van Haeften:

When I was there last March I had some very frank discussions with Director Mann, Mr. van Haeften and with the Minister of Agriculture and his staff. At that time I discovered that there was a lack of appreciation on the part of the Mission in terms of the work which had been done by our team. I am convinced that our team did the best possible job under the circumstances, and in light of the shifting emphasis and changing of pace proposed by Mr. van Haeften. I spent much time in talking with Carl about this and emphasized the need for laying out clearly a long-range plan for the development of a top-flight College of Agriculture, and that it was a matter of practical necessity to work untiringly in the accomplishment of such an objective. I pointed out to him that the matter of proposing varying alternatives was confusing to the people in responsible positions in the Cambodian government and that if such a procedure was continued, it would be logical for the Cambodian officials to raise questions about our sincerity of purpose and our real intentions. It is apparent from your letters that the Ag Division is still floundering in terms of charting a definite course to follow in the accomplishment of a meaningful objective for the Mission, and particularly as it relates to the role to be played by UGA as a part of the Mission effort.

Murray also considered that AID might be changing course on the University of Georgia project because of failures in other areas:

My concern, which I am sure coincides with yours, is that the UGA will be in a position to make a real contribution rather than to be used by the Mission in covering up, or masking some commitments and activities which apparently, as the situation now exists, might be looked upon with some misgivings. For example, it may well be that the Mission is now becoming sensitive about the tremendous amount of money spent in carving out of the wilderness the livestock station under contractual agreement with IVS. If this is the case, they may want to tie the livestock station into the College and thus be in a better position to justify the expense of the station as an adjunct for to teaching.<sup>42</sup>

Regardless of why AID was changing course, Murray suggested to Thompson that the University should hold to its original goal of building Cambodia's agricultural capacity, but also be flexible and work under the assumption that plans will change and compromises may need to be made:

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<sup>42</sup> Murray to Thompson, 28 September 1962, file Jack Thompson, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

Even though we find ourselves in a perplexing and difficult situation, I hope that all of us will exercise a spirit of mutual understanding and appreciation of the need for revising and adjusting long-range plans and objectives in light of present circumstances. We cannot put ourselves in the position of dictating to the Mission or the Cambodian government. We must, however, at all times keep uppermost in mind what our responsibilities are and to exercise the best judgment possible in carrying out those responsibilities. Many compromises and adjustments will have to be made. Some of these will result in making serious sacrifices as far as ideal planning, programming and execution is concerned. All that we can do, under the circumstances, is to counsel and advise as best we can in light of our experience and ideas as to what the position of the Mission should be relative to the development of an effective and meaningful program in Agricultural Education.

Murray advised Thompson that the University of Georgia should still put forth its best effort, even if the compromises included a scaling back of the original plans for the agricultural school's development, until a time when it was clear that the University's contributions would not aid Cambodia's agricultural development:

Of course, it is possible to rework the physical plant and the curriculum at the present location of the National College and thus improve the services rendered by that institution. If this is deemed to be a matter of practical and necessary expediency, in light of the resources available through the Mission and RKG, we will have to go along with this decision and do the best we can. We have the satisfaction, however, of having had a team on the ground and having had a commitment on the part of the Mission and RKG of last spring which represents to us the best way to develop a real institution to serve the needs of Cambodia. We are on record in this regard. In the event that these long-range plans must be held in abeyance due to the lack of funds, then we must do the best job we can with what we have and the conditions under which we have to work. This leaves us in the position of being able to exercise cool-headed judgment and reach a decision as to whether or not we feel that our efforts are justified. In the event that it seems that we cannot make a real contribution in the building of a quality institution of which we can be proud, and thus make a real contribution to the agricultural and economic advancement of Cambodia and which will be in the long-range interests of our country, we then find ourselves in the position of deciding what course of action we should take. Developments in the next few months will be revealing.

Murray also referred to a broader evaluation of the work of the Cambodia Mission that was being undertaken and that might have been beneficial to the University of Georgia's work there and to his confidence that the new AID Director, Curtis Campaigne, would approach the University's involvement objectively:

It is apparent that a real thorough evaluation is now being made of the USAID Mission program with the objective of tying together the efforts in several locations and programs into an overall agricultural program of teaching, research, and extension which will best serve the needs of Cambodia. This may prove to be an extremely valuable step. This is a logical step for the new Director to take. Mr. Campaigne has a difficult task. He is an able man who will be objective and as decisive as possible.

Finally, Murray offered Thompson some encouragement about what the contract can achieve and expressed confidence in Thompson's abilities to lead the University of Georgia's efforts. He also reiterates his belief that the University has a role to play in U.S. Cold War foreign policy in the region:

We entered into this contractual arrangement with our eyes open and with the faith and commitment to do the best possible job. Furthermore, the University of Georgia believes that contractual arrangements, such as ours, represent one of the best ways that our country can develop institutions and programs in the less well developed countries that will pay the richest dividends in years to come. I have the utmost confidence in you, and I am sure that you will exercise your best judgment in representing this institution. Please be assured that you have my full and wholehearted support.<sup>43</sup>

After writing Thompson, Murray was quick to share his thoughts about the project's status with AID in Phnom Penh and Washington. Murray gently reminded Campaigne of agreements about the direction of the project made before Campaigne arrived in Cambodia:

I recall most pleasantly two visits which we had in Washington prior to your leaving for your new assignment. During these visits we had the opportunity to talk informally and to exchange some ideas and points of the view relative to the work there. I believe that I mentioned my visit there last spring. I was very well pleased that some understanding and agreements were made relative to the work of the Mission and the role of the University of Georgia working in concert with the Ministry of Agriculture and the National College of which it is a part. I have indicated to him [Thompson] that you are now making a careful study and re-evaluation of future plans and that such planning now is being predicated upon financial limitations as now viewed by RKG as well as the USAID Mission. I have also stated to Dr. Thompson that you are a fine, dedicated man, that your approach will be objective and that you would be as decisive as possible.

Murray repeated his belief that agricultural development will be central to Cambodia's economic prosperity. He also subtly criticized AID's apparent plan to scale back development of the

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<sup>43</sup> Murray to Thompson, 28 September 1962, file Jack Thompson, Box 49, C.C. Murray, 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

agricultural school while maintaining existing resource commitments to developing engineering and technology schools

The future economic growth and development of Cambodia must be predicated upon increasing its production efficiency in agriculture. Therefore, it seems to me that the matter of allocating resources is of tremendous importance. The commitment of vastly more resources to engineering and technology in light of present developments of the country would, it seems to me, be inadvisable.

Murray ended on a positive note, assuring the AID Director that the University of Georgia would be as cooperative as possible in helping AID meet its objectives in Cambodia:

It shall be our purpose to work cooperatively and harmoniously with you and your staff in this program. We want our efforts to be productive and hope that we may be helpful in the development of a program that will be beneficial to Cambodia and that will reflect favorably upon the United States and contribute its part toward the social and economic well-being of Cambodia and the free working toward accomplishment of this objective, I will be glad to assist you in every possible way.<sup>44</sup>

Ironically, after all of the deliberations and tension surrounding AID's proposal of alternatives to building a new agricultural school, the Ministry of Agriculture rejected AID's alternative proposals in favor of the original project agreement—to construct a new agricultural school—even though the Cambodians admitted they could not commit land at that time.<sup>45</sup> Van Haeften drafted for Campaigne's signature a terse reply to the Cambodia Secretary of State—a letter that was apparently never sent to the Cambodian government. The letter reveals the Agriculture Division Chief's complete frustration with the agriculture project, including the Cambodians' failure to identify a site for the school, the lack of progress in identifying enough Cambodian students to undertake degree training in the United States, and the rejection of the proposed alternatives for expanding the National School:

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<sup>44</sup> Murray to Campaigne, 2 October 1962, file USAID-Phnom Penh, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>45</sup> Campaigne to Murray, 29 October 1962, file USAID-Phnom Penh, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library Rare, University of Georgia.

I cannot possibly agree with your statement that the construction of physical facilities must be given first priority. In my opinion first priority must be given to the development of a sound and realistic plan for the development of the new school consistent with the financial, human and physical resources available to your government. I have not yet seen a plan that has been approved by your government that meets these requirements. The effectiveness and success of any undertaking, whether it be a private commercial firm or a school, depends upon the dedication and ability of its staff. I feel certain you will agree with this statement and I also believe you will agree that as of this date no realistic plans and very little progress has been made towards providing for an adequate staff for the new university's facilities which are called for in the FY 62 project agreement. In fact your government has woefully fallen short of meeting even its agreed commitments with respect to nominating men to undertake academic training in the U.S. in order to prepare them for future teaching positions in the agricultural university. It is our firm opinion that the construction of physical facilities rates the lowest priority and should be undertaken only after all other relevant factors for the development of a new university have been resolved. In your letter you refer to the fact that you believe your government intends to go through with the purchase of the land. It is not the purchase of the land that causes us concern, rather the commitment your government has made with respect to the development of that site which includes the protection against flooding, provision of major irrigation and drainage canals, construction of access roads and construction of facilities for hooking up to city water, electricity, and sewage systems.

In the draft for Campaigne, van Haeften was notably annoyed by the compliments that the Cambodian Secretary for Agriculture bestowed upon the Georgia team. Van Haeften had accused Jack Thompson of secretly working with Dr. Savang, National School Director, in drumming up Cambodian opposition to AID's alternative proposals. Van Haeften may have hoped that these statements would make their way back to Savang:

While I note with pleasure that you appreciate the services of the University of Georgia contract professors, I have been disappointed that their services were hardly utilized during the past two years. I have on file numerous reports indicating that the professors were themselves sincerely disappointed that most of their recommendations to the Director of the school went unheeded and that the few practical classes they did attempt to teach were poorly attended.

Finally, van Haeften suggested that Campaigne offer this firm rebuke to the Cambodians:

I have noted with dismay that many of our past efforts in Cambodia to assist your government in developing her agricultural resources have been based on some rather loose understandings which have resulted in much wasted effort and small gains. Our efforts to-date in the field of agricultural education are unfortunately no exception. As of

June 30, 1962 the United States had spent nearly one million dollars and obligated another one and one half million dollars for the improvement of the National School of Agriculture. The improvement of the training of the students has definitely not been commensurate with these expenditures. Equipment and materials valued at some \$170,000 were provided in previous years. A large part of these materials was intended for student practical training. It is discouraging to note that much of this equipment remains unused and stored in the school warehouse even though it could be effectively used for student training at the present institution. Economic development cannot take place on the basis of wishful thinking. To the contrary, priorities must be established and adhered [sic] to and sacrifices must be made if called for. While our disappointments with regard to the agricultural education project in themselves are sufficient to cause me serious concern as to what the next steps should in fact be, our disappointments in other agricultural sectors leave me no choice other than to assure myself that the funds which I administer are properly utilized from now on.<sup>46</sup>

It was also during the fall of 1962 that Jack Thompson communicated back to Athens that in his mind, a “routine” audit of the University of Georgia project that was underway was anything but routine. Thompson was most critical of van Haeften’s behavior and statements about the Georgia project. Thompson was of the opinion that van Haeften had “instigated, by adverse criticism of the work of the UGA, a comprehensive audit of UGA Contract accomplishments.”

The Audit should prove to be beneficial if a fair evaluation is given. However, I am quite sure it was instigated in a hostile spirit. The Chief of the Agriculture Division may never have indicated during the period the First Team was in Cambodia that he intended to try to have the Contract cancelled. During one of the meetings with the Director, he said to Mr. Campaigne “I have advised you already to cancel the University of Georgia Contract, because I don’t think we are getting our money’s worth.” Mr. Stuart Barron, former Deputy Director, also spoke disparagingly of the University’s performance. Both of these adverse opinions have undoubtedly created doubt in Mr. Campaigne’s mind, and the complete audit of accomplishments under the UGA Contract is the result.<sup>47</sup>

Additionally, Thompson had observed van Haeften “attacking” the plans for the college prepared by the first Georgia team, accused Thompson of leaving information to the Cambodians and

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<sup>46</sup> Van Haeften to Campaigne, “Proposed reply to the Secretary of State for Agriculture regarding Agriculture School,” 31 October 1962. file Univ. of GA. Corres. 1959-61, Box 57, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. Letter has handwritten note: “Draft not sent.”

<sup>47</sup> Thompson to Johnson, 15 November 1962, file USAID Phnom Penh, Box 49, CC Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

advising them contrary to Mission policy, and advising Robert George that “the University of Georgia Contract is about finished now, but we will still need English teachers if you are interested.”<sup>48</sup>

Jack Thompson was not fond of Carl van Haeften. Thompson’s accounts of van Haeften’s behavior and statements occupy the most space in Thompson’s letters back to Athens. Clearly, Thompson had singled out van Haeften as the root of Georgia’s troubles in Cambodia. Some of the incidences seemed like petty almost amusing disagreements:

Actions of the USAID Agriculture Division....indicate that they assume they are already in charge of the College project. They are developing curricula, planning the layout of the College farm, and working on may detailed plans for the school development. At the Agriculture Division meeting on April 19, I asked Mr. van Haeften, on what basis he was going ahead with work on the curricula and farm development. I reminded him that both of these areas were functions of the UGA Team. He first claimed that he was in charge of these matters. I reminded him of the Amendments to the Contract which said that I should work with him on educational matters and under him only on matters of policy. Then he said these were matters of policy. I asked if there was anything which he would not consider to be a matter of policy. At about this point, he jumped up, strode out of the conference room and switched off the light as he went out leaving everyone there in the dark.<sup>49</sup>

At other times, Thompson portrayed van Haeften as more malevolent and dangerous to the University of Georgia:

Since my arrival Mr. van Haeften has been openly working to cancel the UGA contract. He has insinuated on occasions that we were useless and that our time was about up. My general impression of Mr. van Haeften is that he is building a personal bureaucratic empire, with little regard and no feeling of responsibility for the way he handles taxpayers’ money. At the very least, he needs restraint by having his work evaluated by a competent specialist in agriculture.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Thompson to Murray, 1 May 1963, file USAID Phnom Penh, Box 49, CC Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>50</sup> Thompson to Murray, 2 April 1963, file USAID Phnom Penh, Box 49, CC Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.



At one point, Dean Murray was so taken aback after reading Thompson's account of van Haeften's behavior that he immediately telephoned C.L. Orrben at AID in Washington and read the letter to him. As a transcript of their conversation indicates, the project's AID man in Washington was equally concerned about the stalemate that had developed between Thompson and the AID Agriculture Division in Phnom Penh:

*Dean Murray:* Clem, how are you doing?

*Mr. Orrben:* Fine, just sitting here right now.

*Dean Murray:* Well, hang on to your chair. You remember the conversation I had with you and Mr. Huff last week in your office?

*Mr. Orrben:* Yes.

*Dean Murray:* Well, I have a letter addressed to Mr. Johnson, our campus coordinator, from Jack Thompson, which I want to read to you. [Dean Murray then read the entire letter with the exception of the first paragraph].

*Mr. Orrben:* Van Haeften has really taken on something hasn't he?

*Dean Murray:* Yes he has. To me this situation has reached the point that if some changes aren't made over there, we might as well close up shop. If you are going to let that Dutchman run the show over there you don't need us.

*Mr. Orrben:* It does look that way. You can't fight something like that. But Dean, I still think we need you over there.

*Dean Murray:* Well, under different conditions, I believe we could do a good job. Do you want me to send you a copy of this letter?

*Mr. Orrben:* Yes. I won't do anything here until I receive it.

*Dean Murray:* I'll have in the afternoon mail. I just thought you might like me to read it to you first.

*Mr. Orrben:* I appreciate your calling. Thanks.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> "Long distance call from Dean Murray to Mr. C.L. Orrben," 21 November 1962, file C.L. Orrben, Box 49, Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

Unlike the relationship between the University of Georgia and the AID office in Cambodia, the relationship between AID Washington and the University of Georgia was positive and supportive. Dean Murray clearly had very cordial working relations with his Washington point of contact, C.L. Orrben. Throughout the project there had been many instances of Orrben and others at AID in Washington passing along information to Murray that was useful to the project. Murray believed he could speak frankly with Orrben about the troubles the University of Georgia had with AID in Phnom Penh, and he often did. In correspondence to the Georgia team in Cambodia, Murray often mentioned that Orrben was a “friend” to the University of Georgia and a “good personal friend” who was doing everything he could to promote the University’s role in Cambodia.<sup>52</sup>

President Aderhold and Dean Murray would have been well known to many in Washington’s federal government circles, including at AID and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)—relationships that were less important to the career foreign service officers in far away Phnom Penh. Under David Bell’s leadership, AID had directed significant resources towards the development of university technical assistance projects in agriculture and rural development. In 1962, AID had partnered with USDA and the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC) on developing an administrative infrastructure to promote and support agricultural projects.<sup>53</sup> Both Aderhold and Murray worked closely with USDA and were very active in NASULGC, serving on various organizational committees throughout the years.

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<sup>52</sup> Murray to Thompson, 7 March 1963, file USAID Phnom Penh, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia; and Murray to Butler, 20 August 1963, file Vickey Butler, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>53</sup> John M. Richardson, *Partners in Development: An Analysis of AID-University Relations, 1950-1966* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1969), 127.

Additionally, Georgia was an agricultural state with a powerful U.S. Senator, Richard B. Russell, Jr. Neither AID nor USDA was immune to political pressure and Murray used this to his advantage. At one point when Murray became particularly frustrated with actions of AID in Cambodia, Murray told AID in Washington that he would ask University President Aderhold to make President Kennedy and Secretary of State Dean Rusk, a Georgia native, aware of the situation. This threat seemed to help for a brief time at least as Thompson wrote back to Murray on one occasion that “there is perhaps more of a realization that the Mission in Cambodia does not operate entirely independent of the United States Government” and on another occasion “At the moment, the Mission group, including Mr. van Haeften appear friendlier. This, I take to be the result of fear of Senator Russell, and I believe it is only a superficial exhibition.” During another project stalemate, Murray contemplated informing Senators Russell and Herman Talmadge of the problems the University was having in Cambodia.<sup>54</sup> In another instance, in a staff meeting that included Jack Thompson Campaigne indicated that he thought Cambodian students should not be sent to Southern institutions. After the meeting, Campaigne tried to assure Thompson that he did not include the University of Georgia in this category and that he “was afraid some of our southern senators might hear about this policy of not sending participants to the South.”<sup>55</sup>

Bell’s directive within AID to more fully and effectively the expertise and resources of land-grant universities in its technical assistance work was not popular among the Agriculture Division in Cambodia. Van Haeften responded to an Airgram from AID Washington directing

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<sup>54</sup> Murray to Thompson, 2 February 1963; Murray to Thompson, 7 March 1963; Thompson to Murray 19 March 1963; and Thompson to Murray, 2 April 1963, file USAID Phnom Penh, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>55</sup> Thompson to Murray, 1 May 1963, file USAID, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

more involvement of land-grant universities with a polite “no thank you.” He argued that for Cambodia, the planning and development of the agricultural program should be left completely with AID personnel who are more experienced and knowledgeable of local conditions. He proposed that short-term university personnel would be ineffective as they required too much time getting oriented to the country’s politics, economy, officials, farmers, etc. Van Haeften also thought that universities would be unable to assist should AID have need for experts because the best faculty would not be able to interrupt their semester schedules. He anticipated that AID Cambodia would not have the need for any university personnel—either long- or short-term—in the near future.<sup>56</sup>

University of Georgia personnel spent the remaining months of 1962 wondering whether the contract would continue to be one the twenty-nine active university technical assistance contracts in agriculture and rural development.<sup>57</sup> Even in their mundane weekly correspondence about project administrative matters or in Thompson’s many letters to Murray in which he outlines his frustrations with the Mission, both Thompson and Murray frequently ended their letters by reminding each other of why the University of Georgia was Cambodia. Dean Murray often implored Thompson to keep sight of the big picture and Georgia’s long-range ambition of helping to build a land-grant style agricultural college that will serve all of Cambodia:

We have been dedicated and committed to work toward the long-range objective envisioned in our contract. Some people may have thought we have shown such a determined effort that we have been too idealistic. If such a feeling exists, I do not share it. I believe we should all be idealistic, but we must always be appreciative of tailoring

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<sup>56</sup> Van Haeften to Marvin Murphy, Acting Chief, Program Officer, 25 June 1963, file Development Agriculture Education Support Materials, Box 383, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. Murray to Thompson, 16 November 1962, file Jack Thompson, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. Dean Murray and Jack Thompson frequently questioned van Haeften’s interest in developing the land-grant model for Cambodia in part because his agriculture training had been in Europe

<sup>57</sup> Richardson, *Partners in Development*, 109.

our efforts and aspirations to reality. So, in conclusion I want to commend you for your dedication and suggest to you that we cooperate and participate in a change of pace in conformity to the present situation. In doing this, I hope that we may never lose sight of our long range ambition of helping build a real institution over time.<sup>58</sup>

Thompson often ended his letters to Murray in a similar manner, noting the potential of the Georgia project to improve the lives of the Cambodian people and reiterating his belief in the University of Georgia's role in fighting the Cold War:

It seems very worthwhile for our country to assist Cambodia in developing its resources so that the promises of communism will have no attraction to the Cambodian people. It seems to me that Cambodia's resources will not be developed adequately without a school such as the one contemplated in our contract. Cambodia's resources cannot be developed without a large corps of Cambodians adequately trained in the practical aspects of agriculture, forestry, and fisheries.<sup>59</sup>

Two outstanding issues would determine the project's fate: the results of the AID audit of the project that was taking place in Cambodia and the issue of whether the Cambodians would make available land for the new site of the National School. Thompson continued to suspect that the audit was AID's way of terminating the contract. He believed, though, that his meetings with the Washington review team and those with the National School staff would highlight that the University of Georgia team had done what it could given that AID was not able to get the Cambodians to decide on the land:

I do not imply that these AID people should be criticized for not delivering the land, when it is the Cambodians who have not lived up to the two contracts. However, getting the land was and is AID's responsibility, and I do blame them for not being honest in recognizing the impossible situation under which the first UGA team operated. The USAID audit is nearing completion. During the process I have had to go through many

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<sup>58</sup> Murray to Thompson, 2 February 1962, file USAID Phnom Penh, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. There are other numerous examples of this including Murray to Thompson 7 March 1963, file USAID Phnom Penh, Box 49, and Murray to Thompson, 16 November 1962, file Jack Thompson, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia

<sup>59</sup> Thompson to Murray, 19 March 1963, file USAID Phnom Penh, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

details concerning the work of the first team. I am convinced that they accomplished even more than could reasonably have been expected under the circumstances.<sup>60</sup>

On the issue of the land, Thompson kept in close communication with Curtis Campaigne in an effort to keep the University of Georgia's goals for the project on Campaigne's radar. Thompson also wanted to balance the information Campaigne was receiving from van Haeften.<sup>61</sup> Thompson had resigned himself to the possibility that budget reductions by Prince Sihanouk might mean that the Cambodians would need to scale back plans for development of a new school. Thompson also had come around to accepting one of the alternatives as satisfactory-expanding the Prek Leap extension school. Campaigne, perhaps influenced by van Haeften, remained skeptical that the Cambodians would ever identify land for the project. AID was now having the same land issue with its project to develop a school of technology. Campaigne told Thompson of a plan for Campaigne and Ambassador Sprouse to meet with Prince Sihanouk to discuss the issue of the two schools. Campaigne thought that the Cambodians might want to abandon the project for the technological school since the Russians were about to complete construction of the Russian Institute of Technology. If that happened, Campaigne thought that the Cambodians might give stronger support for the National School of Agriculture. AID was required to submit to Washington a feasibility report for both projects by February 1963. The

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<sup>60</sup> Thompson to Murray, 12 December 1962, file Jack Thompson, Box 49, C.C. Murray, 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>61</sup> Thompson to Murray, 8 February 1963, file USAID-Phnom Penh, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. Thompson, ever-suspicious of van Haeften, wrote to Murray: "As long as Mr. van Haeften is determined to get rid of the UGA Contract, Mr. Campaigne is going along with him. Mr. Campaigne has no background in agriculture and probably would not trust his own judgment in that area. Just what method of persuasion Mr. van Haeften uses I do not know. From what I see of the efforts of the Agriculture Division, their overall performance is pretty sorry. They have a few good men, but do not make good use of them. The wilderness cattle station at Stung Keo is about as far-fetched a fiasco as you could dream up."

agriculture project would not meet the requirements as feasible unless a definite commitment of having land ready for development was obtained.<sup>62</sup>

Given what they were hearing from AID in Cambodia and Washington in the first few months of 1963, University of Georgia officials thought it was increasingly likely that the contract would be terminated. Though they were never directly informed of such, Murray and Thompson were aware that the Mission planned to recommend to Washington that the contract be ended. Thompson even went to the effort of documenting in detail the key points leading up to the current situation in which the University found itself with the idea that Murray could share this information with AID Washington.<sup>63</sup> Murray was determined to do whatever it took to keep that from happening, even if it meant adjusting the nature and scope of work to be carried out. Murray and Thompson remained committed to the idea that the University of Georgia could contribute to building comprehensive agricultural education in Cambodia. But as for the situation on the ground, Thompson noted it was “best described as a mess.”<sup>64</sup>

The University of Georgia team not only worked in the dark about whether the project would continue, they also worked without a contract. Thompson and Murray knew that AID in Phnom Penh was pressuring Washington to terminate the contract. Murray was concerned about this “dilly-dallying around” on the part of AID Washington in making a decision on the project. The project had been operating for a year on a letter of authority rather than a budget because the

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<sup>62</sup> Thompson to Murray, 17 January 1963, file USAID Phnom Penh, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia; Thompson to Murray, 12 December 1962; and Thompson to Murray, 10 October 1962, file Jack Thompson, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>63</sup> Thompson to Murray, 19 March 1963, file USAID, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>64</sup> Thompson to Murray, 8 February 1963, and Murray to Thompson, 2 February 1963, file USAID Phnom Penh, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. On a trip to Washington, Murray met with AID staff who informed him that there was a general feeling in Washington that the work accomplished under the contract was short of expectation.

contract amendment setting up the present Georgia team in Cambodia had never been signed by AID. Murray was growing impatient, noting: “We have a lot of people over there just piddling and messing around. We ought to stop this foolishness and really get down to business, or pull the whole caboodle, lock, stock and barrel out of there.”<sup>65</sup>

Then, in spring and summer 1963, several things occurred that worked in the University’s favor. First, the Cambodians decided what they wanted in an agricultural college. The new college, the Royal University of Agriculture, would combine the existing National School of Agriculture with the Royal Institute of Agricultural Research, the national agricultural extension facility, and the national agricultural library into one integrated institution for teaching, research, and extension. Second, the Cambodian government identified a new site, the coconut grove or farm prison site, as the new location for the school. In Jack Thompson’s view, this new site was the best one to date with enough land for demonstration plots, lakes and forests for forestry and fisheries work, and high, dry land suitable for building.<sup>66</sup>

The other major events influencing the project were meetings in Washington and Cambodia between the project’s principals—C.C. Murray, C.L. Orrben, and Curtis Campaigne. In the past, when the University of Georgia had run into specific difficulties in Cambodia, visits by Aderhold or Murray seemed to, at least temporarily, solve the problems. Miraculously, from Murray’s meetings in April with Campaigne in Washington emerged a verbal agreement with the AID Mission Director to extend the University of Georgia contract another year. Out from under

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<sup>65</sup> Murray to Thompson, 7 March 1963, file USAID Phnom Penh, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. Murray to Orrben marked Personal and Confidential, 17 April 1963, file C.L. Orrben, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>66</sup> Thompson to Murray, 19 March 1963. Campaigne to Chau Seng, 4 April 1963, file USAID Phnom Penh, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia and “Reform of Agricultural Education, La Depeche, 9 May 1963,” file ProAg 442-A-11-AC 1963 University of Agriculture, Box 57, Cambodia Agriculture, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286 NACP.



the influence of the AID Mission staff in Cambodia who wanted to terminate the Georgia contract, Campaigne clearly changed his mind.<sup>67</sup> Murray wrote to Thompson about his meetings in Washington as “time well spent.”<sup>68</sup>

The results of the much-anticipated audit of the Georgia contract were released at about the same time Campaigne was in Washington. Curiously, even though the results of the AID audit of the Georgia contract had been “Unsatisfactory” and the report recommended letting the contract expire, Campaigne still agreed to extend Georgia’s contract. Whether Murray and Campaigne discussed the audit during their meetings in April 1963 is unclear. The audit’s findings, at least those that reflected negatively on the University of Georgia, did not have an impact on the project as there is no mention of it in correspondence or memoranda from Murray or Campaigne. Jack Thompson in Cambodia, however, was absolutely indignant about the contents of the audit, noting that it was “a miserable compilation of errors of fact, biased opinions and incompetent judgments.” He was doubly annoyed that one of the AID auditors had told him that the results would be “satisfactory, under the circumstances.” Thompson found the audit, which was conducted by an auditor who knew little about agriculture, “erroneous in many points of fact and almost totally wrong in its implications”<sup>69</sup>

The audit pointed to a number of deficiencies on the part of the University of Georgia including the absence of leadership, the inability to develop a good working relationship with their local counterparts, and the language barrier. The audit report also blamed the Cambodian

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<sup>67</sup> Orrben to Murray, 10 April 1963. Murray to Thompson, 17 April 1963, file USAID Phnom Penh, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>68</sup> Murray to Thompson, 14 May 1963, file USAID Phnom Penh, Box 49, CC Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>69</sup> Handwritten letter from Thompson to Johnson, 19 April 1963; and Thompson to Johnson, 22 April 1963, file USAID Phnom Penh, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

government, which failed to fully meet its responsibilities under the contract. There were several administrative deficiencies outlined, including incomplete leave records and the fact that the Georgia contract allowed for first class air travel when regular AID personnel were not required to use economy class.<sup>70</sup>

One paragraph of the audit's findings confirmed for Thompson what he had thought all along, that the AID Agriculture Division in Cambodia sought to oust the University of Georgia and take over the work of the contract:

In lieu of a contract team, the Chief of the USAID Agriculture Division has indicated that the USAID Agriculture technicians could, in addition to their regular duties, assist in advising the faculty of the NCA [National College of Agriculture] in the technicians' own specialties. The advantage of this is immediately apparent. The part-time faculty of the NCA are the same employees of the Ministry of Agriculture who are presently counterparts of the USAID Agriculture technicians. Thus, the major problem faced but not overcome by the UGA team, that of establishing mutual respect and a good working relationship, has already been solved.<sup>71</sup>

The University of Georgia and AID seemed to put the audit results quickly behind them. In his meetings with Campaigne in Washington, Murray had agreed to a two-week trip to Cambodia in late May to prepare the scope of work and terms of the contract extension. Even as Murray was about to depart the U.S., some in the Mission in Cambodia were still trying to convince Campaigne to terminate the University of Georgia contract. The Mission's Deputy Director, Peter Cody, argued that the new plan for comprehensive agricultural teaching, research, and extension called for an integrated approach that could best be led by technicians in the AID

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<sup>70</sup> "Report of Audit of the University of Georgia Contract Nos. ICAC-1392 and 1494 to Develop Agricultural Education in Cambodia for the Period from Inception, February 20, 1960 through November 30, 1962, 20 February 1963, file USAID Phnom Penh, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 21; and van Haeften to Robert S. Spencer, Chief Auditor, 28 April 1963, file Audit Reports, Box 386, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP. The Agriculture Division also received an "Unsatisfactory" rating on irrigation projects it was carrying out using its own technicians. The audit found that the irrigation systems developed were not being used and that there was no training for Cambodians on how to use the systems. Van Haeften disagreed with the audit's findings and prepared a lengthy response.

Agricultural Division, not a university contract. AID staff would better understand local conditions and would already have good working relationships with the Cambodian Ministry of Agriculture. Like van Haeften, Cody thought that if more staff were needed, AID could call on short-term technicians who could assist and who would be less expensive for AID. He also argued that if Campaigne decided that a university contract was the way to go, AID should reconsider whether the University of Georgia was suited to carry out the activities:

In my opinion, the question of the resident advisor is a thorny one. Despite the promises of an “educational statesman” the two team leaders to date have been of the level of an educational advisor within the agricultural division. The situation has made the performance of their tasks difficult, but even under the best of circumstances, they are not in the “educational statesman” category, by a fairly obvious margin. Even the right sort of person may have considerable difficulty defining his job. One other feature of the contract, which is of lesser importance, is the inclusion of an English-language teacher. My only comment is that this function could be far more inexpensively handled by the IVS group. I also imagine that a direct-hire secretary would be less expensive unless the university would forego all overhead charges on this position.<sup>72</sup>

Four days later, after receiving a cable from Campaigne that the Georgia contract would be renewed, van Haeften laid out for Campaigne his arguments as to why this should not occur. First, van Haeften thought, like Cody, that the staff of the Agriculture Division were best suited to carry out the work of building the facilities and curriculum of the new Royal College of Agriculture. Van Haeften thought that the Georgia team had only worked with the staff of the National College and had made no efforts to develop working relationships with Ministry of Agriculture officials. Generally, van Haeften’s experience with faculty from land-grant universities was that they were incapable for productive work in foreign countries:

It is almost impossible to take an outstanding land grant college employee out of the country for as much as two years, unless he has reached the age of retirement, and never for more than two years, for fear of losing out in his academic and professional circles. The result is that with a university contract, you are faced with low level performance,

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<sup>72</sup> Cody to Campaigne, “The Role of the University Contract in the Agricultural Program,” 20 May 1963, file Georgia Contract, Box 106, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

either because of the poor health of the older personnel, mediocrity, or from the lack of experience in foreign assistance work. In the latter case, the culture barrier is generally sufficient to guarantee failure.<sup>73</sup>

Van Haeften argued that a key part of the work would be providing consultation to the Mission, and the University of Georgia's contract staff was not up to the job:

In the first place, it is doubtful if the contractor would be qualified for this role, since he would have a vested interest. In the second place, the loyalty of the contractor's representative would not lie with the Mission nor Agency, but with the contractor. Thirdly, since you would have inexperienced personnel, they would be of little value under the most favorable circumstances. And above all, in the case if this contract it has been amply documented that neither party has any respect whatsoever for the professional ability and integrity of the other. These attitudes cannot be changed merely by changing personnel.

He also pointed to instances where the University of Georgia "interfered" with the work of the Mission or made some of the Mission's ideas their own:

Dr. Liztenberger saw the need for a seminar of Cambodian students of Agriculture and drafted an Airgram to AID/W requesting it. He saw the need to send the agricultural leaders of Cambodia, including the Secretary, to the U.S. to visit with the students. Although he had very good reasons not to hold the seminar at Athens, the contractor prevailed, although fewer than one-fifth of the students involved were studying under provisions of the contract. This is another instance where the contractor interfered with the Mission's program and wishes. It is significant that the idea of the seminar came from the Mission, not the contractor.<sup>74</sup>

Although Cody, van Haeften, and other officers in the Mission in Phnom Penh might have had valid reasons for wanting to terminate the Georgia contract, in this case the politics of Washington prevailed. Campaigne left Cambodia for Washington convinced the contract should not be renewed, he returned to Cambodia with a draft contract and scope of work extending the contract for another year.

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<sup>73</sup> Van Haeften to Campaigne, "University of Georgia Contract," 24 May 1963, file Agriculture Education Support Material Fy 63, Box 383, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

Dean Murray's May and June trip to Cambodia ended debate for the moment about whether the project would continue with a University of Georgia presence in Cambodia. Thompson was thrilled to see Murray and had noted, "If anyone can salvage anything out of it, I believe you can."<sup>75</sup> While in Phnom Penh, Murray had lunch with Ambassador Sprouse, dinner with the Cambodian Secretary of Agriculture, dinner with the Campaignes and Cody's, and was fêted by Thompson, Butler, and Robert George at the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) Officers Club. His schedule even included attending the Cambodian trade fair with Ambassador Sprouse and Prince Sihanouk. Besides the social outings, Murray's schedule included meetings with Sprouse, the Director of the National School, and various AID personnel (Van Haften does not appear on Murray's schedule). Murray also spent time with the parents and friends of students who were studying at the University of Georgia.<sup>76</sup>

The meetings and social outings seemed to be well-planned and productive as several important decisions were made. Most importantly, the University's contract was extended to June 30, 1965. Along with continuing the participant training program, Georgia would keep its existing three staff positions in Cambodia—the Advisor, Secretary, and English language instructor—who would be supplemented by short-term advisors as required. The role of the Advisor would be to provide advice and consultation to AID on the physical development of the new site, including campus layout, plans and specifications of buildings, and equipment of

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<sup>75</sup> Thompson to Murray, 8 February 1963, file USAID Phnom Penh, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>76</sup> "Schedule for Dr. C.C. Murray, May 26-June 1, 1963"; Various invitations; Murray to Savang, 14 June 1963. Murray to Thompson, 14 June 1963, file Thank You Letters, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. Murray became ill in Cambodia, noting to Thompson, "My trip home was enjoyable and uneventful. I took on some real solid food in Hong Kong and have had no further intestinal discomfort."

laboratories and facilities. Short-term advisors would be used to develop research programs, an experiment station, an extension service, and instructional materials.<sup>77</sup>

As part of the contract, which was prepared using the exact verbiage developed jointly by Campaigne and Murray in Cambodia, the Georgia Advisor reported directly to the AID Mission Director or his designee. The contract further stipulated that the Georgia Advisor would work with the Chief of the Agriculture Division, who could be the AID Director's designee, on all matters relating to the contracts. So, rather than directing a project as in the past, the University of Georgia's role would now be advisory in nature, support AID and its Division of Agriculture. This was significant since there had been some disagreement in the past as to whether Thompson worked for or with van Haeften.<sup>78</sup>

Murray's time in Cambodia was also spent in several, lengthy one-on-one conversations with each of the three Georgia team members about their own roles in the project. In these serious discussions, it was decided that Jack Thompson would return to the United States in August. It is unclear as to whether Thompson requested to end his work on the project, if Murray suggested it, or if AID requested it as part of the terms of the new contract. The new contract, however, included a provision that "the services of the current Advisor will terminate August 31, 1963."<sup>79</sup> There is some indication that there might have been an informal "deal" between Murray and AID Washington relating to Thompson and van Haeften's service in Cambodia and the contract renewal:

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<sup>77</sup> "Contract between the United States of America and the University of Georgia, 11 June 1963, Appendix B-Operational Plan," file Contract and Amendments 1960-64, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.; and Murray to Butler, 3 July 1963, file Vickey Butler, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.; and Murray to Thompson, 14 June 1963, file Thank You Letters, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

Mr. Niblock of AID/W called a few days ago and indicated that he had a recommendation for Mr. van Haeften to stay another year. He recalled the very frank discussion which we had on this when I was in Washington and after I returned from Phnom Penh. He felt that there was a “general understanding” that we would start over with a new slate—Jack would come home and Carl’s tour there would end. I was very frank in telling Mr. Niblock I would not put myself in the position of making judgments about direct hire personnel and that, while there was a general feeling referred to above, there was no specific commitment in writing about this. I told Niblock to exercise his own judgment and that we would do likewise with respect to our continued participation in a contract.<sup>80</sup>

Correspondence between Murray and Thompson after Murray returned to Athens provides some indication of Murray’s evaluation of Thompson’s job performance in Cambodia. From Thompson, “I want to thank you for the raise in salary. I have had my contract notarized and have returned it to President Aderhold. We are really looking forward to returning home”<sup>81</sup> Murray’s response implies that he understands that Thompson is leaving Cambodia under acrimonious circumstances:

You and everyone here should be proud of your good work and the contribution which you have made in the advancement of our program and aspirations in trying to help the Cambodian people establish a quality educational program in agriculture. I am sure that as the years go by you will look back upon this experience with pride for having had a part in it.<sup>82</sup>

And a few weeks later, Murray writes again to Thompson about Thompson’s time in Cambodia, assuring Thompson that he had done the best possible job given the environment:

As I continue to reflect on our experiences, I become increasingly appreciative of the difficulties and trying circumstances under which you worked. This emphasizes to me

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<sup>80</sup> Murray to Butler, 20 August 1963, file Vickey Butler, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>81</sup> Thompson to Murray, 2 July 1963, file Jack Thompson, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>82</sup> Murray to Thompson, 14 June 1963, file Thank You Letters, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

the display on your part of an excellent comprehension of the job to be done and a sense of dedication and commitment which has been most commendable.<sup>83</sup>

Robert George and Vickey Butler decided to stay in Cambodia. Butler did some “real soul-searching” to conclude that she should stay in Cambodia as long as her services were “really needed.” She agreed to stay at least six more months until the University could identify short-term consultants to send to Cambodia.

With Dean Murray’s visit, Jack Thompson preparing to leave Cambodia, and a new contract between the University and AID signed, the shroud of uncertainty and suspicion that had once covered the relationship between the Georgia Team and AID Cambodia staff appears to have lifted, if temporarily. Before he departed, Thompson for the first time began to work closely with the AID Agricultural Division on curriculum development.

It is most pleasant to be able to work cooperatively with the USAID people for the first time. Now that my departure date is established, I am no longer under fire.<sup>84</sup>

Additionally, in the spirit of cooperation Van Haeften agreed to invite Butler to Agriculture Division staff meetings and Campaigne let Butler know his door was always open for her. Campaigne was pleased with the results of Murray’s visit.<sup>85</sup>

The ups and downs of the University of Georgia-AID relationship mirrored the relationship between the United States and Cambodia, which at that point was progressively breaking down. Although Sihanouk continued to accept increased U.S. aid, the United States was troubled by the fact that Sihanouk had ended the western monopoly on military aid to

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<sup>83</sup> Murray to Thompson, 3 July 1963, file Jack Thompson, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>84</sup> Thompson to Murray, 2 July 1963, file Jack Thompson, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>85</sup> From Campaigne to Murray, 23 July 1963, file Washington Conference, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. Campaigne indicated that she could not attend Mission staff meetings as they involved political questions with other people in the Mission.



Cambodia by accepting several Soviet MIG-17 aircrafts and anti-aircraft guns. Sihanouk had also increased the frequency of his public accusations that Thailand and Vietnam were supporting enemies of Sihanouk with assistance from U.S. intelligence agencies. He was particularly concerned about Son Ngoc Thanh and Sam Sary. Son Ngoc Thanh had been Prime Minister during the Japanese occupation of Cambodia during World War II and became head of the opposition Khmer Serei forces operating out of Vietnam. Sam Sary, Sihanouk's former advisor and Ambassador to London, had become vehemently anti-Sihanouk and had fled to Thailand, where he was known to have ties to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Even after President Kennedy sent Sihanouk personal birthday greetings in October (which had never been done by a previous president) and then a longer personal message in November offering support for Sihanouk's nonalignment stance, Sihanouk publicly criticized U.S. aid and indicated that he hoped it would end.<sup>86</sup>

After Jack Thompson's departure in August, Butler and George were on their own in the uncertain and increasingly complex political climate. Dean Murray's reliable AID Washington colleague, C.L. Orrben, visited the Mission in September 1963. Butler observed during his visit that Orrben must have had some sharp criticisms for van Haeften and his Deputy, Clyburn:

Orrben has made Clyburn very unhappy, for he told him he didn't think he knew what he was doing (at least this is the rumor the other Ag Division people are passing around. I know he told him he was going too fast. I don't think van Haeften is too happy either, for he looked quite subdued this morning when I checked the box. What will come of this remains to be seen, but I do know that Mr. Orrben is your friend, and he is a friend of the Georgia Contract. He is going to do all that he can to keep this thing going and to get it going as it should be. I'LL SEND MANY UNOFFICIAL notes from time to time.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Clymer, *The United States and Cambodia*, 99-100.

<sup>87</sup> Butler to Murray, 10 September 1963, file Vickey Butler, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

As was the pattern with the Georgia contract, the progress during Dean Murray's visits in mending the working relationship between the AID Agriculture Division did not stick long. Butler had a number of small "set-to's" with Clyburn and van Haeften about creating the stencils to photocopy Jack Thompson's curriculum report. Clyburn and van Haeften did not want the report reproduced or distributed. Even as van Haeften's tour in Cambodia was ending, Butler thought that the Agriculture Division was still actively working to make sure the Georgia contract was not carried out:

There is a great desire on the Ag Division personnel for all of the Ga. Contract to be dispensed with. Right now they are trying to convince the Director that they are the ones who developed the curricula. I am working on this through Don Smith, the Deputy Director (Acting, I should say, for Peter Cody will return about December 13). Things are not too comfortable for us, but we are hanging on. I am not going to Hong Kong for Thanksgiving. There never seems to be a time for me to leave the office—it just isn't safe to leave the contract unattended.<sup>88</sup>

As might be expected, this news from Cambodia did not sit well with Murray. At this moment, Murray used the harshest language yet and it appeared he was ready to pull the University of Georgia's team out of Cambodia:

I have thought many times since that maybe we ought to cancel out our affiliation with the Mission. Mr. Orrben pleased with me not to do this and I think this is the primary reason for his call the other day. We are in the unfortunate position of trying to work with the Mission while the philosophy and attitude on the part of its staff is so utterly shallow and short-sighted that it (the staff) is more difficult to deal with than the people whom we are trying to help. This, plus the effort to build a bureaucracy for the edification and glory of a few people in the Mission, has placed us in the position of being relatively ineffective because of the lack of appreciation on their part that they need help and their bureaucratic maneuverings to claim credit for all of our ideas and plans. I am confident that most institutions, who really want to function and do a job, or they wouldn't have been involved in the first place, would have washed their hands of this mess long ago. I have stuck with this because of my faith in and belief that we had an opportunity to

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<sup>88</sup> Confidential from Butler to Murray and Johnson, no date, and Murray to Butler, 31 October 1963, file Vickey Butler, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia. While in Washington, Murray learned that van Haeften would be replaced by Reid Lewis, with whom Murray met and who had experience working with other university contract groups.

render a service, and that this service was needed as a part of the objectives of our Government in helping Cambodia and its economic development.

Probably with the hope that a copy of the letter would find its way into the AID Mission's hands,

Murray issues a sort of challenge:

While our continued involvement in the face of a knowledge of the attitude of the Mission may subject us to criticism by those who want to rationalize on their incompetency and stupidity, I am willing to take my chances with such people before Committees of Congress, or with any other group, and lay it on the line in bold relief. I am not ashamed of what we have done. Neither am I afraid. I believe that it would be unwise for any of the knot-headed career bureaucrats to attempt to cover their mistakes and maneuverings by attempting to blame the University of Georgia for their lack of success in helping build the Royal University of Agriculture. This is a decision which is up to them.

Finally, given increasing tensions between the United States and Cambodia and the current state of the project, Murray offered Butler and George an "out" should the situation become unbearable:

You and Bob have done an excellent job. We understand your situation and the frustration and tension which you are enduring. It is my sincere hope that the situation will improve and that it will be possible by some means for our Country to continue to help Cambodia in its educational and economic development. The only advice which I can give you now is to watch developments carefully and to seek the best counsel available there and to make the best decisions possible in light of the circumstances. I would suggest that you maintain the necessary alertness and have your household effects in such condition that it would be possible to leave on relatively short notice. If it is impossible to function effectively and you and/or Bob want to leave, discuss your situation with Mr. Campaigne and the Ambassador and then exercise your best judgment. We will support you in whatever decision you make.<sup>89</sup>

Butler and George never had to make that decision as Prince Sihanouk made it for them.

On November 19, Butler and George were informed that Sihanouk had rejected all American aid—military, economic, and cultural—and that all Americans would be leaving Cambodia over the next few months. Sihanouk's anger over U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia and American

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<sup>89</sup> Murray to Butler, 19 November 1963, file Vickey Butler, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

involvement with those who opposed him contributed to the refusal of U.S. aid. After the assassination on Ngo Dinh Diem and his brother in the U.S.-sponsored coup in Vietnam, Sihanouk decided that he could not trust the Americans and that he should distance himself from the United States. Sihanouk claimed to have direct evidence that the United States was supporting the Khmer Serei with arms and resources and he was weary of continuing American denials of involvement with the opposition. For some time, Sihanouk had also considered the impact of U.S. aid on Cambodia's economy. The country's agricultural yields were low, tax revenue had been difficult to generate, and industrialization had not taken off. In 1960-62, American aid made up fourteen percent of Cambodia's budget. Sihanouk believed that the Cambodian elite had grown too dependent on luxury goods imported under the U.S. commodity import program, revenues from which were used as Cambodian contributions to the U.S. aid program. Additionally, there were a number of other "issues of friction" that had resulted from the AID program. Sihanouk felt that AID support came with too many conditions, including the U.S. policy that American funds could not be comingled with Bloc aid. The Cambodians were unhappy about the American policy of disallowing firms outside of Cambodia and certain firms within Cambodia from being involved in U.S.-financed transactions because of their Communist affiliations. Also, there was a general feeling within the Cambodian government that AID sought to involve itself too deeply with internal Cambodian government operations in implementing AID projects.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Clymer, *United States and Cambodia*, 103; and Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 130-131. Declassified Memo from Peter Cody to Ambassador Sprouse, "Points of Friction of USAID Program with the RKG," 16 January 1964, file General Reports, Box 11, Cambodia Files 1958-1963, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, General Records of the Department of State, RG 59, NACP. Cody cites certain examples of the co-mingling of United States and Bloc funds. The sporadic shortage of non-communist building "Free World" materials meant that occasionally bags of North Vietnamese and other Bloc cement were incorporated into AID-financed structures. The Cambodians resented U.S. efforts to remove unfriendly or incompetent Cambodian personnel from AID-financed building projects, including the Khmer-American School. Cody also thought that Sihanouk's claims that the commodity import program led to corruption rang hollow. Cody felt that the real issue was that the program's rigid

Sihanouk was also very public in his assertion that U.S. aid had not contributed to Cambodia's development or economic independence, but rather had given dollars only to capitalists. He pointed to the failures of U.S. aid in Thailand, where he argued that U.S. assistance had gone into the "pockets of a small group of privileged men who are leading the country by force and coup, not by the confidence and suffrage of the people." Sihanouk complained that Laos received more than twice the U.S. aid sent to Cambodia even though Laos had less than half of Cambodia's population. The difference, he noted, was that Laos was aligned to the United States and allowed U.S. air bases and were content to let the U.S. control of certain sectors of its economy. U.S. aid had also failed Laos, argued Sihanouk, as the prices of consumer goods were increasing, agricultural production was lackluster, and no new infrastructure had been developed.<sup>91</sup>

Vickey Butler's penultimate official letter to Dean Murray was dated November 19, 1963. In it, Butler described the escalating tensions in Cambodia related to the growing anti-American sentiment of the Cambodian government and the rumor that all AID activities would be stopped by Prince Sihanouk:

The Prince has been speaking for approximately four hours; thousands of Cambodians have gathered in the square in front of the Palace since he summoned them there and declared a holiday. The general tone of his many lengthy addresses has been substantially anti-American and anti-West. (This time he includes the French). The banks have been closed for about a two-day period, and when they reopened, personal accounts were allowed to withdraw only 10,000 riels at the time and company accounts only 50,000 riels at the time. They are in liquidation at the moment. Apparently all confidence in local economy has been lost and the majority of foreign firms operating here are formulating plans for complete withdrawal. If carried out, (and his announced plans for nationalization) this will naturally have a paralyzing effect on the economy. All

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accounting regulations and administrative practices, designed to eliminate misuse of funds and fraud, had actually been an irritant to the Cambodians who were accustomed to receiving illegal payments and self-enrichment.

<sup>91</sup> "Interview with Prince Sihanouk," 9 January 1965, published Cambodian Ministry of Information, Phnom Penh, the Cambodian National Archives.

of his numerous ideas are contained in the extreme left leaning La Depeche, which I have forwarded to the Coordinator's office. If you do not recall, it is interesting to know that our new Minister of Agriculture, S.E. Chau Seng is editor of this daily. In my conference with Mr. Cason yesterday, he assumed me that as far as could be determined at the moment, no positive steps for withdrawal will be made.<sup>92</sup>

Indicative of how quickly the situation changed, on the same letter, Butler included a handwritten note:

It is now 4 p.m. and we have been interrupted by Mr. Clyburn and Yolande Sullivan saying "we are moving—all AID has been suspended." You can see how fast things move once they begin. What a pity! I could weep for the innocent ones who will suffer. Renegotiations may help. I hope so!

And the next day, the situation changed again:

The sudden move yesterday could have been a little premature, for the document did not come from the Prince, as he indicated in his address. However, for security reasons we will be housed temporarily at Ag Division-USAID. There is a meeting at the palace this morning—maybe some AID will be retained. We don't know what will be decided. You folks get the news faster than we do.<sup>93</sup>

Butler's last communication from Cambodia is dated November 29, 1963. With Prince Sihanouk rejection of AID, all but essential Embassy personnel were to leave Cambodia. The Agriculture Division wasted no time in relieving the remaining University of Georgia staff from their duties:

Bob George and I were the first to be advised that we could leave. These instructions came from Dr. Clyburn, who said Mr. Campaigne had written us a letter to this effect. As yet we haven't received a letter. U understand Clyburn wrote the letter for Campaigne's signature; apparently Mr. Campaigne decided not to rush us out.

As she reflected on the situation, Butler considered that both Sihanouk and U.S. advisors in Cambodia were to blame for the break in relations between the United States and Cambodia:

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<sup>92</sup> Butler to Murray, 19 November 1963, file Vickey Butler, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>93</sup> Letter and postscripts from Butler to Murray, 19 and 20 November 1963, file Vickey Butler, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

There are scores of Red Chinese in Phnom Penh. The Prince reported only five advisors here, but this city is full and I'm sure many more will be arriving since he has just signed a straight flight from Phnom Penh to Peking. This in the face of his request for Britain to reconvene at Geneva for neutrality reassurance. He is most unpredictable. This rejection, though regrettable, was not surprising, for upon taking an honest appraisal of attitudes and philosophies of our administrative Mission people, one can understand the Cambodians' desire to be rid of us. I predicted this would happen sooner or later. There are too many self-centered, pompous, egotistical empire-builders here, and not one has any idea of seeing things with Cambodian eyes. I've never seen such a lack of maturity or humility among so many so-called intelligent people.<sup>94</sup>

Vickey Butler departed Phnom Penh on December 3, 1963. Robert George stayed a few weeks longer to try to sell his car. No University of Georgia personnel would ever again be assigned to posts in Cambodia.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Letter from Butler to Murray, 29 November 1963, file Vickey Butler, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>95</sup> Johnson to Orrben, 13 December 1963, file C.L. Orrben, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

## EPILOGUE

After the termination of the AID program in Cambodia, all but a few AID staff had left Cambodia by January 1964. United States-Cambodia relations deteriorated further as border raids and attacks by South Vietnam and the United States continued to result in Cambodian fatalities and devastation of Cambodian villages. During spring 1964, the United States and Sihanouk agreed to a quadripartite conference with South Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, and the United States to address Cambodia's border questions. The United States' draft proposal regarding border issues had so angered Sihanouk that the Cambodian government organized a large demonstration outside the American Embassy. The rioters threw rocks and other objects at the Embassy and entered it, vandalizing the Embassy's first floor. In July 1964, the United States designated Randolph A. Kidder as Ambassador to Cambodia, but Sihanouk refused to accept his credentials, and Kidder returned to the United States just a few months later. By the end of May 1965, United States-Cambodia relations were officially severed and no Americans remained in Cambodia. The AID office in Cambodia was not reopened until 1972 after the coup by Lon Nol, Sihanouk's former army chief and Minister of Defense. The United States' presence in Cambodia was short-lived, however, as the Khmer Rouge took power in 1975.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> David P. Chandler, *The Tragedy of Cambodian History: Politics, War, and Revolution Since 1945* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991), 109-114, 124; and Peter Cody, Unpublished Autobiography, 5-7. Cody was in the Embassy during the riot along with the British Ambassador who was there for a meeting: "They did batter down the front door but did not try to gain the second floor. I really don't think they were out to do any physical harm. After they gained entry to the first floor some typewriter parts came flying through our second story windows. Both the snack bar and the health unit were located on the first floor. When the rioters left and we were able to return downstairs we found mustard and ketchup from the snack bar and blood plasma from the health unit smeared all over. It looked like a real high casualty battle scene. We wanted to advise the British Embassy that their ambassador was with us and ok. Our local telephone wires were down. We sent a cable message over our private communication system via the Philippines or Guam to the State Department in DC. They called the British Embassy who called London and they sent a message to the British Embassy in Phnom Penh. This all took about twenty



The University of Georgia project to develop the School of Agriculture was one of ten major construction projects underway and in various stages of implementation when AID programs were terminated in December 1963. Other pending projects included the completion of the Khmer-American Friendship Highway, the Arts and Trades School, a rural health demonstration center, the Khmer-American Friendship School, the Siem Reap Teacher Training Center, the Public Works Engineering School, and a number of provincial secondary schools. At the time the AID program was terminated, AID had contracted with an architectural and engineering firm to begin preparing the plans and specifications for the campus of the School of Agriculture. AID estimated that the total contract for the project, including construction of buildings, research and demonstration facilities, laboratories, and dormitories would be \$9.7 million.<sup>2</sup>

When AID activities were suspended in Cambodia, there were 202 Cambodian students studying in the United States, seventeen of whom were at the University of Georgia (two had graduated), of whom twelve were studying under the National College Contract. By June 1964, negotiations about the future of the contract between AID and the University of Georgia had ended. It was clear that AID programs in Cambodia would not be re-initiated for some time and so there were no prospects for sending another University team to Cambodia to resume work on developing the School of Agriculture. Interestingly, the Cambodian government and AID agreed to allow Cambodian students already studying in the United States to remain until they completed their programs of study. The University of Georgia and AID agreed that the

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minutes. We had trouble keeping the British Ambassador away from the windows. He wanted to see what was going on and we were afraid he would be hurt.”

<sup>2</sup> Peter Cody to Ambassador Sprouse, “Status of Interrupted USAID Projects,” 5 February 1964, file General Reports, Box 11, Cambodia Files 1958-1963, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, General Records of the Department of State, RG 59, National Archives at College Park, Maryland (NACP).

agriculture contract would be terminated as of September 30, 1964, and the Cambodian students studying under the agriculture contract would be transferred to the AID participant contract.

The Cambodian students, well aware of the suspension of AID programs in their home country, were given a choice of whether to remain in the United States or return to Cambodia. Of the 202 Cambodian students studying in the United States, four elected to return to Cambodia. All of those at the University of Georgia decided to stay to complete their studies.<sup>3</sup>

The intent of the AID participant training program, particularly with respect to those students studying under the agriculture contract, was for the Cambodian students to return home to take up faculty positions at the new School of Agriculture. This did not occur. The new Cambodian agricultural college was never constructed and the students took several different career paths, some of which ended tragically. Of the Cambodian students who were studying at the University of Georgia in 1964, thirteen returned to Cambodia to work for various government departments including the Ministry of Agriculture or the Cambodian forestry service. One student returned to Cambodia to teach law after receiving a graduate degree in Belgium; two students worked in veterinary fields; and one returned to Cambodia and joined the Shell corporation. Of those students who went to work for government ministries, five later worked for Shell corporation in Cambodia. So, most of the students who returned to Cambodia found employment in government ministries. Some of the University of Georgia graduates were

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<sup>3</sup> Curtis Campaigne to Ambassador Sprouse, "USAID Participant Program," 8 January 1964, file Participants, Box 386, Cambodia, Records of the Agency for International Development, RG 286, NACP; C.C. Murray to J.D. Bolton, 15 June 1964, file Budgetary Matters, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia; and "Cambodia Eighth Semi-Annual Progress Report, January 1-June 30, 1964," file Semi-Annual Reports 1960-64, Box 15, CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project Series, 1950-68, University of Illinois Archives. Peter Cody, Unpublished Autobiography, 2009. Cody's recollection of why the UGA contract team left Cambodia is that he and other AID staff negotiated with Dean Murray to end all project work except for the student program. He notes that Murray reluctantly agreed to this. Neither AID nor University of Georgia documents support Cody's recollection. Contract documents, letters, and memoranda reflect that the University's contract was renewed in fall 1963 with reduced personnel in Cambodia, but this ended in December 1963 when all AID programs were suspended.

quickly promoted to managerial positions within the various government departments even though degrees from French institutions were still the most prestigious in Cambodia and those graduates typically had better positions in government.<sup>4</sup>

Most of the University of Georgia students had returned to Cambodia by 1966, a time when Cambodia was becoming increasingly unstable. After the coup by Lon Nol in March 1970, the Communist Party of Kampuchea (CPK), later known as the Khmer Rouge, joined forces with the Viet Minh to protest Lon Nol's U.S.-backed government. The Khmer Rouge and the Vietnamese recruited and trained soldiers throughout the early 1970's, and by 1973 some eighty-five percent of Cambodia was held by the Khmer Rouge.<sup>5</sup>

Believing that the political unrest would intensify, some of the University of Georgia graduates left Cambodia. Seven returned to the United States and two relocated to Canada. Georgia graduate Sin Meng Srun held a position as the regional director of forestry for Siem Reap province from 1966-1972. He returned to the University of Georgia to pursue a Master's and Ph.D. in Forestry in 1972 and recalls why he left Cambodia with his wife and two sons:

Every time we would go out into the forest I'd have 60 soldiers go ahead to sweep the forest. I'd go out with my hygrometer equipment and AK-47s and M-16s. Finally, I said 'I've had enough of this.' So I decided to go back to the U.S.<sup>6</sup>

Twelve of the University of Georgia graduates, stayed in Cambodia to be near their families and their homes. Between 1975 and 1979, all but two were killed at some point by the Khmer Rouge. Only one official record of a University of Georgia graduate being held by the Khmer Rouge was found—that of Duong Sok San who was arrested on February 17, 1976 and

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<sup>4</sup> Ou Thuok, interview by author, 6 April, 2009, Falls Church, Virginia.

<sup>5</sup> Khamboly Dy, *A History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979)* (Phnom Penh, Cambodia: Documentation Center of Cambodia, 2007), 10-14.

<sup>6</sup> Sin Meng Srun, interview by author, 24 July 2008, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

imprisoned in Ta Khmau district, south of Phnom Penh. Although official records of the ten University of Georgia graduates who disappeared under the Khmer Rouge regime could not be located, their disappearances were corroborated by two surviving students and the current director of the Prek Leap School of Agriculture in Cambodia. Sadly, one of the students, It Sareth, had organized the Khmer Alumni association for U.S. graduates in Cambodia. In 1975 as the Khmer Rouge took power It Sareth as president of the association tried to negotiate with the American Embassy in Phnom Penh for assistance in evacuating those who were members and who had studied in the United States under the AID program. The Embassy refused his request.<sup>7</sup>

The ten University of Georgia graduates who perished were among the estimated 1.5 to 1.7 million people who died during 1975-1979 in Democratic Kampuchea under the Khmer Rouge.<sup>8</sup> In its re-engineering of Cambodian society, the Khmer Rouge eradicated every aspect of capitalism: private ownership, the use of currency, property rights, and income. Additionally, the educational system was abolished, practicing religion of any kind was not tolerated, and urban living ended as residents of cities were evacuated to the countryside. The focus of society moved from the family to the collective. The CPK placed top priority on the development of the agricultural sector, particularly the cultivation of rice. As part of its dismantling of pre-revolutionary Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge reorganized the country around

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<sup>7</sup> Thuok and Srun interviews; Phat Muny, Director and Lam Khannarith, Head of Continuing Education at Prek Leap National School of Agriculture, interview by author, 23 July 2008; and Biographic Database Record from Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) for Duong Sok San, Record K06800, p.1. DC-Cam has catalogued about 155,000 pages of primary documents from the Khmer Rouge and has some 400,000 pages of documents that have not been catalogued. According to meetings with its staff in July 2008, it is not unusual for prison or execution records to be unavailable as thousands of documents were destroyed and in some cases there are no records for executions for individuals who were not held in Khmer Rouge prisons or jails.

<sup>8</sup> Ben Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power: A History of Communism in Kampuchea, 1935-1975* (London: Verso, 1985), v. Kiernan estimates 1.5 million died during the Khmer Rouge. The Yale University Cambodian Genocide Program, Yale University, accessed on-line, 30 July 2008, <http://www.yale.edu/cgp/>. The Yale Cambodian Genocide Program estimates the number to be 1.7 million or 21 percent of the total population

geographic districts and regions that included cooperatives, and most people were given “jobs” that related to agriculture.<sup>9</sup>

Rather than eliminating the class structure in Cambodia, the CPK created two classes of people. The “base people” or “full-rights people” were rural farmers and laborers who had no family, who worked for the government, and who could become leaders of cooperatives. The “new people” or “April 17 people” (referring to the day in 1975 when the Khmer Rouge evacuated Phnom Penh’s two million residents into the countryside) were those who were seen as enemies of the Khmer Rouge. These internal enemies included former capitalists, those who were not ethnically Khmer, former government officials and their families, minorities, and intellectuals. The Khmer Rouge also saw as enemies those Cambodians who could speak a foreign language or who had ties to foreign countries. Thousands of university-educated individuals were killed by the Khmer Rouge. Indeed, every person known to the Khmer Rouge to be well-educated was executed. Those who were educated often pretended to be illiterate and certainly concealed their foreign language skills. Those who needed eye glasses did not wear them as they were a sign of being educated.<sup>10</sup>

By late 1976, the search for “enemies” became the focus of the Khmer Rouge. One of their slogans was “It is better to arrest ten people by mistake than to let one guilty person go free.” Those arrested and imprisoned in region or zone-level prisons often died from malnutrition, untreated illnesses, or torture. People accused of being enemies were often taken to interrogation centers where they would stay for a few months before being taken to a killing field for mass execution. Sometimes families of the accused were also executed. Some “new

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<sup>9 9</sup> Khamboly, Dy, *A History of Democratic Kampuchea*, 20-23, 30.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 30, 41-45, 47.

people” were not imprisoned but slaughtered in fields or forests. Some were buried alive. The most infamous prison was Tuol Sleng or S-21 (Security Office 21). Of the 14,000 prisoners held at the secret prison, twelve survived.<sup>11</sup>

Two University of Georgia students survived the Khmer Rouge. Kong Sam Ol is a high-ranking government official in Cambodia today. Tuck Ou Thuok (Tuck) escaped the Khmer Rouge and Cambodia with his family after several months of traumatic experiences. Tuck, who was working for the Ministry of Agriculture, along with his family were among the two million residents of Phnom Penh evacuated to the countryside by the Khmer Rouge on April 17, 1975:

I had moved with my family to my father’s house. One the morning of April 17, 1975, the Khmer Rouge came. They were small kids, 10 years old and the height of their rifles was higher than their own height. They came and pointed the guns at us and said to get out of the house. At that time my younger brother had twin babies. We were forced out and told not to bring anything, not even milk or food or clothes. My younger brother had on a Cambodian wrap and no shoes. We were pushed out into the countryside and we walked probably from 7 am in the morning until 6 pm, about 10 kilometers. The streets were full of people walking. I happened to live in the southern part of Phnom Penh and we were pushed out south.<sup>12</sup>

Although many families were separated during the evacuation of Phnom Penh, during the walk out of Phnom Penh, Tuck’s family including his wife, three-year old daughter, his brother and his family, his parents, sister, and in-laws managed to stay together. Like others, Tuck and his family were relocated to a rural area:

We arrived in one place along the Mekong River. We lived under the trees with no protections. My brother there with his twin babies. It was unbelievable the treatment we received from the Khmer Rouge. During that time the prison had no walls. Everywhere

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 45-47; Khamboly Dy notes that 14,000 prisoners were held at S-21. Author notes from visit to Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, 25 July 2008, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Most of the prisoners in S-21 were Khmer Rouge soldiers and CPK members, though many were children. One of the posted prison rules was “When getting lashes or electric shocks, you must not cry out at all.” Torture methods included electric shock, burning cigarettes into flesh, rape, cutting off female prisoners’ breasts, hanging upside down, and beatings.

<sup>12</sup> Ou Thuok, interview by author.

you go they control you. The Khmer Rouge knew nothing about education, they had zero education, they could not even read Cambodian. They just wanted to control us.<sup>13</sup>

As was the Khmer Rouge's pattern, they identified Tuck as someone who was educated and who had ties outside Cambodia, and so they targeted him and his family as enemies of the people:

After a week or two, one night the Khmer Rouge came and asked us to leave. They put us on a jeep with my wife, my family, my daughter. I thought they were taking us somewhere else. Since we had education overseas I thought they might want us to help them build up the country. But instead they took us for executions. I remember at midnight, a full moon. They made us sit on a dike. The other side was a pond, a big pond. And they blindfolded us, including my three-year old daughter. My in-laws, my father-in-law, my mother-in-law, me. Probably 21 of us were lined up on the dike and we believed they were going to shoot us and dump us in the pond. After negotiating with them for so long, we knew we were going to die. Before we died, we just wanted to say something, just say whatever we wanted to say. But we were arguing for so long. They called us all kinds of things like CIA, American imperialist. They knew of my background. Before dawn, some Khmer Rouge guy came from somewhere and bailed us out, giving a guarantee that he knows my family and we were good people. The guy said that he guarantees that this guy and his family were a good family and if something goes wrong he put his life as a guarantee. So we were lucky and they let us go. The next day they moved us to another place and I said to my wife "We're not going to survive." We were seeing corpses everywhere. They killed people everywhere. This was a killing field. This is the word I use now but at the time we said they were going to wipe us out. We have no chance.<sup>14</sup>

During this time, Tuck encountered friends from Phnom Penh, including another University of Georgia graduate, It Sareth, who was a law professor in Cambodia and who was eventually killed. Knowing that his family would die if they stayed in Cambodia, Tuck planned an escape that over the course of a year would take him to Saigon, what had been the Demilitarized Zone, a Vietnamese jail, France, and eventually back to Georgia in 1978. Ironically, Tuck found a position with the Voice of America in Washington, DC, the radio source that he

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

listened to as a teen in Cambodia and that had led to his interest in studying in the United States at age 19:

I wanted to come to the United States because I was motivated by American music. I used to listen to jazz by Willis Conover on the Voice of America. I was addicted to this kind of jazz. Then when I grew up to be old enough to study English I started learning English from Voice of America by listening to their programs.<sup>15</sup>

Today Tuck and his family reside in Falls Church, Virginia. He works for Voice of America. Other surviving University of Georgia graduates became successful in their own careers. Sin Meng Srun eventually received a Ph.D. from the University of Georgia and became a professor of forestry at Humboldt State University in California. After retiring, he returned to Cambodia in the early 1990s to a position as Vice President for Academic affairs at Pannasastra University of Cambodia, where he works today. Another student, Trang Meng Kry, received a Ph.D. from the University of Georgia and is retired in California.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. Sadly, many of Tuck's other family members did not survive including his father, mother, sister, mother-in-law, and sister-in-law. Sin Meng Srun, interview by author.





Figure E.1. Ou (Tuck) Thuok, 6 April 2009 at his home in Falls Church, Virginia. Photograph by author.



Figure E.2. July 2008, Phnom Penh. From left, clockwise, Jennifer Frum; Bo Chum Sin, wife of Sin Meng Srun; and Sin Meng Srun. Others are friends and family members of Sin Meng Srun. Photograph by Andy Herod.

Carl van Haeften, AID's Agriculture Division chief in Phnom Penh, became Assistant Mission Director in Vietnam after leaving Cambodia. Upon his retirement from the foreign service in 1975, van Haeften actively supported refugees from Cambodia and Vietnam in relocating to Washington DC and with acquiring jobs and starting businesses. He also became active in the movement to encourage Cambodian refugees to return to Cambodia to help rebuild the country after the Khmer Rouge.<sup>17</sup>

Had all AID programs not been suspended by Sihanouk, would the University of Georgia's contract have continued? As of December 31, 1963, there were seventy-two U.S. universities carrying out AID technical assistance projects worth more than \$158 million. At the

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<sup>17</sup> 1997 Obituary Materials from Bobbie van Haeften.

highest levels at the University of Georgia there was strong institutional commitment to the project. President Aderhold and Dean Murray in letters, reports, and in their actions indicated the project's importance on several levels. First, it was the University's patriotic duty to stifle Communism. Aderhold and Murray held the conviction that the land-grant model and ideal could raise the Cambodians out of poverty and orient them towards Western ideas. Second, both men clearly saw the participation in an international university technical assistance contract as enhancing the University of Georgia's prestige. The significant funding attached to the project would also aid their expansion efforts.<sup>18</sup>

The problems and disagreements that developed as part of the University of Georgia's AID contract in Cambodia—questions on each side about the competence of the other, questions of motive, the development of an environment of distrust, and vague and sometimes conflicting goals—differed little from AID experiences with other university contracts. In 1963, AID Administrator David Bell asked John Gardner, president of the Carnegie Corporation, to form a task force to examine the relations between universities and AID. The resulting study, known as the Gardner Report, identified a number of common challenges in the university-AID relationship. Universities complained of AID not understanding the long-term nature of higher education, of being too focused on short-term accomplishments, and of being too rigid in contracting procedures. AID argued that universities did not understand the need to justify the agency's actions to Congress, that universities often sent third-rate personnel overseas, that faculty were more loyal to their disciplines than to project goals, and that universities took on tasks and contracts they were not equipped to carry out. Additionally, AID personnel believed

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<sup>18</sup> John W. Gardner, *AID and the Universities: A Report to the Administrator of the Agency for International Development* (New York: Education and World Affairs, 1964), 1; John M. Richardson, *Partners in Development: An Analysis of AID-University Relations, 1950-1966* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1969), 124-125, 195.

that university overseas personnel often were naïve about United States policy direction and that professors wanted complete autonomy from AID in carrying out activities but wanted to be full partners in decisions about projects. The Gardner Report's recommendations were largely general operating guidelines focused on ways to develop better communications between universities and AID and improving understanding about each others' organizational structures and constraints.<sup>19</sup>

One of the primary problems that universities involved in AID technical assistance projects had with AID was the issue of project length. As was the case of the University of Georgia's contract, usually it was AID that wanted to terminate a contract over the objections of the university. There were different reasons for this. Sometimes projects were discontinued by AID because of a lack of progress. Other projects were terminated based on where they fit in the overall country assistance package. Sometimes, AID mission personnel were overruled in their recommendations to end contracts because of political considerations—which was likely what happened in the University of Georgia's case. AID admitted that even in a perfect situation, it would take several years for university contracts to deliver results. The political and economic constraints usually did not allow for that much time.<sup>20</sup>

Interestingly, in early 1964 C.L. Orrben, Murray's trusted colleague at AID in Washington, passed along to Murray an observation by an AID Cambodia agricultural division staff member, an observation that in some ways vindicated the University of Georgia's project efforts. In his end of tour report, the AID staff person, Lloyd Clyburn, expressed his view that the University of Georgia had done what it could given the complex relationship between the United States and Cambodia:

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<sup>19</sup> Gardner, *AID and the Universities*, 4-5, 8.

<sup>20</sup> Richardson, *Partners in Development*, 151-155.

The University was most successful in areas of specific and least helpful in areas of nonspecifics. The English language program, a specific, was in the long-run very successful, as well as the compilation of book lists and apparatus lists. On the other hand, lack of familiarity with the blueprint documents greatly reduced the portion of the administrative burden that could be borne by the contract team. Lack of experience in the workings of a Mission limited the contribution to the diplomatic job. Because there were few specifics to be handled during the life of the contract, the feeling arose among some that the team didn't accomplish much. In my opinion, such an evaluation is invalid. The truth is that there was little accomplishable. I don't believe the non-specifics mentioned above are a part of the contract technician's job. They are better reserved for a career officer.<sup>21</sup>

Although during the remaining tenures of Aderhold and Murray, the University of Georgia did not enter into another AID technical assistance contract, in 1965 the University did pursue an AID contract to train 170 "change agents" who would work in the foreign services from Latin America, the Near East, the Far East, South Asia, and Africa. The University of Georgia's proposal was not funded as AID postponed the program after a speech by President Lyndon B. Johnson in which he expressed his desire to use more fully U.S. higher education institutions to meet challenges in the developing world. AID delayed implementing the projects so that they could be "examined more thoroughly before considering implementation of any of the submitted proposals."<sup>22</sup>

Aderhold retired as University president in June 1967. After eighteen years as Dean of the College of Agriculture, in July 1968 C.C. Murray became head of international programs for the University System of Georgia. In his new role, Murray would build on his international

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<sup>21</sup> Orrben to Murray, 7 January 1964 and attached document "End of Tour Report, December 1963, Lloyd Clyburn, Agricultural Education Advisor, Agriculture Division, 17 December 1963, file C.L. Orrben, Box 49, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

<sup>22</sup> J.W. Fanning to H.W. Smith, J. Hammock, F. Bates, G. O'Kelley, F. Saunders, J. Thompson, and G.I. Johnson, 21 June 1965; and A.H. Moseman, Assistant Administrator Agency for International Development to O.C. Aderhold, 17 November 1965, file U. Committee for Development of AID Training Proposal, J.W. Fanning, Box 20, C.C. Murray 92-080, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia.

experience and his commitment to international education by involving other Georgia institutions in this work. In his words, his goal was:

To launch a program in international education based on the belief and conviction that the University System should play an important role along with our government and other universities in the broad field of international education with emphasis on the developing nations.<sup>23</sup>

Murray was a logical fit for such a position. Despite the trials of the Cambodia project, he had retained his commitment to the idea that universities had a role to play in extending their expertise and knowledge to address the challenges of the developing world.

President Aderhold and Dean Murray clearly would have preferred a different ending for the University of Georgia's efforts in Cambodia. Both had envisioned a long-term commitment by the University of Georgia and AID that would conclude with the successful development of a robust program of agricultural education in Cambodia. Both believed that in introducing the land-grant model, Cambodia could develop a productive agricultural sector and generate economic development that would lead to a stable and democratic Cambodia oriented towards the West. These grand ambitions became a casualty of U.S. foreign policy in Southeast Asia and the realities of the larger Cold War. Paradoxically, it was these same Cold War realities that had manifested such nation building efforts on the part of the United States and the foreign policy position that knowledge would necessarily lead Southeast Asia away from China and the Soviet Union and towards the United States. In their belief that the University of Georgia could play a role in Cambodia's development, Murray and Aderhold were perhaps overly-idealistic, but no more so than American foreign policymakers who believed in the United States' ability to influence Cambodia.

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<sup>23</sup> Thomas G. Dyer, *The University of Georgia: A Bicentennial History, 1785-1985*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1985), 342; "Murray Leaves Ag Post, Named Regents Professor," *Red and Black*, 27 September 1968, p. 25.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Primary Sources

The following serves as a guide to the primary sources used in this study. Chapter notes provide more complete documentation.

#### Manuscript Collections

Along with the National Archives, this study used a number of different manuscript collections located in the United States and Cambodia. The sections below describe these materials.

#### *United States*

In the United States, the author used several manuscript sources. The first collection of documents located was the CIC-AID Rural Development Research Project File at the University of Illinois Archives. This collection includes documentation related to sixty-eight rural development contracts in thirty-nine countries, undertaken by thirty-five land-grant institutions, including the University of Georgia. The finding aid is organized by country and subject, and the box/folder list yielded a box containing documents related to the University of Georgia project. The author contacted the archivist by telephone and was able to obtain 500 pages of documents from the archives. Among the documents were progress, annual, and final project reports; expenditure summaries; project contracts; student participant lists; participant



biographical data; trip reports; and various tables and lists. These important background documents helped the author to establish a timeline of events involved in the project.

The University of Georgia's Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library yielded several hundred pages of documents central to this research project. Specifically, the C.C. Murray Manuscript Collection and that of O.C. Aderhold were of particular importance. These collections contained memoranda, airgrams, cablegrams, transcripts of telephone conversations, trip reports, and other materials pertaining to the project. The documents, especially those that were exchanges between Athens and Phnom Penh, provided documentation of the tensions, problems, successes, and failures involved in carrying out the project in Cambodia. These documents also include significant insight into the personalities involved in the project, particularly those of Aderhold and Murray, and to their motivations, interests, and hopes for the project. This study also used the Omer C. Aderhold collection of the Hargrett's Georgia Photo File.

The National Archives in College Park, Maryland contained several record groups with primary source material related to this project. The author first identified potential record groups by consulting bibliographic sources from studies of U.S.-Cambodian relations. Those most useful to this project were Kenton Clymer, *The United States and Cambodia, 1870-1969* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004) and David P. Chandler, *The Tragedy of Cambodian History: Politics, War, and Revolution Since 1945* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991).

Three record groups from the National Archives were used in this study. The first was Record Group (RG) 59: General Records of the Department of State, 1765-1999. The subgroup and series used from RG 59 were Cambodia Files 1958-1963, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs.



From RG 469, Records of U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948-1961, the study used subgroup and series Cambodia 1955-61, Office of Far Eastern Operations. This study relied most extensively on RG 286: Records of the Agency for International Development, Cambodia and Cambodia Agriculture series. Several boxes from RG 286 were sealed with tape and string and had not been opened since they were shipped from Cambodia to the United States in 1965.

Approximately 3,000 pages of primary source materials were retrieved from these record groups. The materials in these collections were rich and varied. The most useful documents from the National Archives collections were internal AID memoranda, airgrams, cablegrams, declassified U.S. Mission country team minutes, project reports, Cambodian student participant information, and financial documents. Since the author had access to internal University of Georgia documents related to the project, the AID documents were important in providing another perspective on the project from the point of view of the AID personnel and the U.S. government.

The National Archives Still Pictures Unit, RG 286, Photographs of AID Activities in Cambodia 1956-63, contained several black and white photographs useful to this project. These included photographs of AID and University of Georgia personnel from AID rosters, Cambodian student participants, and Mission activities.

Unfortunately, twenty-nine boxes with potential records related to this project were classified. The author filed a Freedom of Information Act request on December 17, 2008 for access to the documents. As of November 2009, this request had not been filled.

*Cambodia*

The author used some material from the holdings of the Cambodian National Archives, although resources for the time period included in this project were not abundant. Most Cambodian government documents from 1954-1970 had not yet been transferred to the National Archives when the Khmer Rouge took power in 1975. The vast majority of government documents from this time period were destroyed. The Cambodian publications and periodicals collection contained official documents, speeches, propaganda pieces and political statements of Prince Norodom Sihanouk. Most of these were in French as were finding aids. Some documents were in Khmer. The digitized still photograph collection included useful and interesting publicity photographs of events involving Prince Sihanouk.

Also, in Cambodia staff from the Documentation Center Cambodia (DC-Cam) in Phnom Penh were helpful in searching their databases for Cambodian students who had studied at the University of Georgia. DC-Cam was established in 1995 as a field office of the Yale University Cambodian Genocide Program. In 1997, DC-Cam became an independent, non-profit research institute with 155,000 pages of primary Khmer Rouge documents and 6,000 photographs. About 400,000 additional pages of documents have not yet been catalogued. The collection includes biographies, prison records, confessions, diaries, official Khmer Rouge documents, physical evidence, news clippings, interviews, and lists of victims. Because nearly all documents are in Khmer language, DC-Cam staff researched the list of students, returning prison records for one student.

## Interviews

Although several individuals were involved in the project examined in this study, most are now deceased. The author was able to conduct interviews with individuals in Georgia, Washington, DC, and Cambodia who were involved in or who were knowledgeable of the project. In some cases, these individuals were difficult to locate. In other cases, they were located by sheer luck.

### *United States*

Current University of Georgia faculty and staff were helpful in identifying participants who had passed away and those who might have families still in the area. Internet for fee “people searches” yielded addresses and telephone numbers for some of the University of Georgia and AID personnel, but these records were seldom accurate as to whether the individual was deceased. One letter sent to University of Georgia participant Robert George was returned “deceased.” After a year, the spouse of AID employee Carl van Haeften contacted the author in response to the letter sent to her husband. Although her husband had passed away ten years earlier, she provided the author with biographical information about her husband and with the name and telephone number for Peter Cody, an AID officer who had served in Cambodia and who agreed to be interviewed. Cody’s interview was important in that he was the only AID staff person involved in the project who could be located. His interview and unpublished autobiography were helpful in understanding AID’s perspective on the Georgia project and the political situation in Cambodia.

All but one of the University of Georgia personnel are deceased. The faculty member who is alive is quite elderly and declined to be interviewed. Donald Branyon, Jr., son of the

Georgia Chief of Party, agreed to be interviewed and kindly shared letters, photographs, scrapbooks and reports from his father's time in Cambodia.

### *Cambodia*

The author traveled to Cambodia in July 2008 having made email contact with the Head of Continuing Education of the Prek Leap National School of Agriculture, Lam Khannarith. Interviews with the school's Director, Phat Muny, and Lam Khannarith yielded no information about the University of Georgia project. The school had been occupied by the Khmer Rouge and all of the school's records were destroyed. All of the information that the current staff had on their institution's history was word of mouth as many of those who were involved with the school died under the Khmer Rouge. Both men were very helpful, however, in identifying which of the Cambodian students who had studied at the University of Georgia had disappeared during the Khmer Rouge regime. Phat Muny was particularly helpful in providing telephone contact information for Sin Meng Srun, one of the two former students who reside in Phnom Penh. The author was able to interview Sin Meng Srun in his office and spend time with his family at his home. Kong Sam Ol is currently a high-ranking official with the Cambodian government. The need to go through more formal channels to contact him and the fact the Cambodian elections were approaching meant that the author was not able to interview him.

The author also interviewed Ou Thuok, one of the former Cambodian student participants who currently resides in Falls Church, Virginia. The interviews with the two Cambodians who had studied at the University of Georgia provided valuable insight into life on campus for a foreign student in the early 1960s. Additionally, both men had compelling stories once they left

Georgia and returned to Cambodia to begin their professional careers. Their lives took divergent paths, but both eventually ended up back in the United States.

### Newspapers

Two newspapers were used in this study. The *New York Times* On-line Historical Database, 1851-2006, was useful in determining how events in Cambodia were being reported in the United States. The Obituaries section was used to identify whether AID participants, particularly the more prominent figures, were deceased. The author used the *New York Times* to piece together biographies of key participants, including Charles Mann of AID. The on-line archives of the *Red and Black*, the University of Georgia's student newspaper, were particularly user-friendly and valuable. Using the *Red and Black's* searchable database, the author located biographic material on University of Georgia participants, including O.C. Aderhold, C.C. Murray, and Dolores Artau. Chapter IV relied heavily on the *Red and Black* for information about student life, foreign students' experiences at the University of Georgia, and the atmosphere on campus during desegregation.

### Other Published Primary Sources and University Documents

Several other primary sources were used in this study. University of Georgia annual reports for the period 1957 to 1965 were consulted to analyze financial data related to the project and how the project fit into the larger context of the University's international programs and portfolio of externally funded projects. Also, the study used a photograph of C.C. Murray from the *History of the College of Agriculture of the University of Georgia* (1975). Both the annual

reports and the *History of the College of Agriculture* were found in the Georgia Room of the Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

To locate biographical information on some of the AID participants including van Haeften, Peter Cody, Charles Mann, and others, the author used the Marquis Who's on-line directory accessed through the University of Georgia Libraries Galileo database. Finally, Peter Cody provided a copy of his unpublished autobiography that was very useful to understanding the internal dynamics of AID, the political climate in Cambodia, and diplomatic relations with Prince Sihanouk.

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