

Koy Thuon

Re: Nuon Chea
Khieu Samphan
Sou Met
Van Rit
Duch

1970-1975

In the late 1960s, Thuon felt personally quite close to Pol and Nuon, who had "nurtured" him in times of difficulty. He had spent more than a year with Pol in Rattanakiri and had accompanied Nuon on the arduous journey there and back.¹

At the time of the coup, Koy Thuon was at Pol's Central Committee headquarters in the Northeast, but after the coup he linked back up with Nuon in lowland Kracheh, which was overrun with Vietnamese troops. Leading Vietnamese cadre tried to persuade them to rely on Vietnamese military strength for the time being, and not to be too selective about class background in setting up new local political structures.²

Meanwhile, the coup d'état had turned the political situation in Kampung Cham upside down. Mass demonstrations by "patriotic people" broke out during which anyone who was recognized as a promoter of Sihanouk's overthrow was murdered by the demonstrators themselves. Throughout the North Zone, even where the Vietnamese did not intervene militarily, government troops abandoned their rural outposts for positions in provincial towns and along national routes.³

There was also a flow of intellectuals out of Phnom Penh to

¹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Traitorous Plans of Comrades Ya-Thuch-Deuan-Sreng in Wishing to Murder Brothers Number One and Two," 14 February 1977, p.4.

² Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "My Revolution-Betraying Activities: Contacts with Viet Nam, 1970-1975," 2 February 1977, pp.1-3.

³ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Activities Betraying the Revolution: Period II (1970-1975)", 10 February 1977, p.17; and "Some Important Events that Demonstrate the Traitorous Activities of Comrade Sreng," 14 February 1977, p.4.

the North Zone. Among those who came were Prum Sang-ar and Eung Keum Seng. The latter was Hou Youn's brother-in-law and joined him at the Central Committee headquarters there.⁴ Hou Youn himself had been brought to the North from the Southwest. Hou Youn was in constant contradiction with and openly attacked the CPK line on many points. Its class line was ultra-left because it left no place for anyone other than poor and lower-middle peasants. Its cooperativization line was wrong because it required these peasants to move more quickly than their level of consciousness would allow. Collectivization of land and draught animals was, he said, provoking dissatisfaction among the masses. The elimination of marketplaces was also extremist and was preventing patriotic elements among the bourgeoisie from assisting the revolution. Similarly, the CPK policy of evacuating people from market and other towns was creating great hardship for those forced to move, and was contrary to the practice of all other revolutions. Finally, he complained of his own lack of freedom and about the material shortages from which he and others were suffering.⁵ According to Thuon's "confessions," Hu Nim continued as in the 1960s to following Hou Youn's political lead and also opposed the CPK line. However, unlike the straightforward Hou Youn, Hu Nim dissembled in front of the Organization, pretending to support the Party line. The Organization was thus fooled into confirming him as Minister of Propaganda after April 1975.⁶

Tiv Ol accompanied the Organization from the Northeast to the North Zone. At the Party headquarters, Ol became part of a "special group" that included Hou Youn, Hu Nim and Tauch Pheuan, and for which Khieu Samphan was the "overall responsible." The four of them constituted a "a separate group of a department of the Organization's Office tasked with propaganda." Ol's assignment was to write articles and record artistic performances for radio broadcasts.⁷ As a group, they were only rarely allowed outside

⁴ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "I Would Like to Make an Additional Report About Organizational Links of the Pracheachalana Organization in Phnom Penh," 20 February 1977, p.1.

⁵ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Hou Youn," 27 February 1977, pp.3-5.

⁶ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Hu Nim Problem," 27 February 1977, pp.2-4.

⁷ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between Me and Tiv Ol," 2 April 1977, p.22; Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Hu Nim's Activities," 3 April 1977, p.8.

their separate quarters, such as when they were authorized to attend the 1971 Party School.⁸

Tauch Pheuan told Thuon that Hou Youn, like Hu Nim, was "one of us."⁹

Thuon's "confessions" reveal that in early 1972, the Organization decided to allow Tiv Ol to participate directly in local base-building in the North Zone by putting him in charge of Chamkar Loe district, where he worked with the former monk *achar* Vaen. His tenure coincided with the Khmer Republic's Chen La II offensive in this area, and, according to Thuon's "confesions," Ol's deviations from the CPK's class line by appointing "upper class" elements as cadre made it easier for Khmer Republic troops to penetrate his district. After two months, following complaints by "basic class" cadre and combatants against Ol's deviations, Thuon removed him from Chamkar Loe. The Organization then took him back to do radio work.¹⁰

Around the same time, Tiv Ol's wife, Leng Seum Hak, was assigned to work under another former professor, Tan Tri *alias* Chheuan, doing grassroots organizing. According to Thuon's "confessions," she "did not give a damn about the enemies who were undercover in the villages and subdistricts, or the spies or pacification agents. She said they were all our people, and regardless of whether they did right or wrong, they could always be reeducated and refashioned." Moreover, she accused those who executed them instead of being the real traitors to the revolution. Similarly, she refused to reduce local rations below two meals of hard rice per day, regardless of the Party's demand that rice be requisitioned for the army. Then, in 1974, she was transferred to Special Zone Sector 15.¹¹

Immediately after the coup, the Organization summoned all

⁸ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Hu Nim's Activities," 3 April 1977, p.8.

⁹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Hou Youn," 27 February 1977, p.5.

¹⁰ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between Me and Tiv Ol," 2 April 1977, pp.23-25.

¹¹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Comrade Leng Seum Hak *alias* Sei," 3 April 1977, p.9.

Central Committee members for study.¹²

Shortly after the coup, Koy Thuon met Seat Chhae *alias* Tum for the first time since 1966. Both had experienced the four years since as times of "difficulty," Thuon in the North Zone as a whole, Seat Chhae in Sector 22, of which he had become Secretary. Tum accepted Thuon's offer of cadre from the North Zone to help organize a revolutionary administration in this part of the East Zone. They took important posts in a highly-contested Sector where a high proportion of the local were of "middle-class" background, either "petty bourgeois intellectuals" or "middle peasants." Moreover, he appointed a Paris-educated regroupee, Yun Seuan *alias* Yuoh, as Sector Deputy Secretary. Thuon's "confessions" relate this to Tum's openy rejection of the leadership of Zone Secretary Pheum. His stubbornness in this regard are portrayed as provoking constant disunity in the form of a "two-line struggle" within the Zone Committee. It also supposedly explained why Sector 22 was deeply penetrated by enemy agents.¹³

Thuon's "confessions" also relate all this to Sector 22's military shortcomings: its failure to prevent Khmer Republic marines from breaking the siege of Kampung Cham in late 1973 and its failure - despite the assistance of reinforcements from the North - to cross the Mekong into Phnom Penh on schedule during the final offensive in 1975.¹⁴

In late 1971, the Higher Organization itself had sent a well-known regroupee, Leav Kaev Muni, to the North Zone, which was supposed to "utilize him as the concrete situation warranted." While in Viet Nam, Muni had enjoyed a status "equivalent to membership in the Central Committee," but upon his return to Cambodia, he was angry to find himself ignored by the

¹² Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between Me and Brother Nheum (*alias* Sâmbat), the Current Secretary of the Northwest Zone," 6 March 1977, p.9.

¹³ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Contact Links in the East Zone," 18 February 1977, pp.2-3; Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts with Comrade Seat Chhae (Comrade Tum), the Current Representative of the General Staff, and Me (Koy Thuon)," 4 March 1977, pp.4-5.

¹⁴ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts with Comrade Seat Chhae (Comrade Tum), the Current Representative of the General Staff, and Me (Koy Thuon)," 4 March 1977, pp.5-6.

Organization. Thuon turned him over to Sot for deployment in Siem Reap along with two other regroupees, Sav and Thang Kheun. Sot assigned them to build up bases along the border between Phnum Srok and Kralanh districts, where they recruited ex-Issarak.¹⁵

In the immediate post-coup North Zone, Deputy Secretary Pok was in charge of Siem Reap and Utdar Meanchey (then known as Sector 35), while Thuon's intellectual protégés Sreng and Deuan were in charge of two of its three other Sectors.¹⁶ Thuon's former student Sot was appointed Sot's deputy in Siem Reap, and when Pok was put in charge of the Zone military, Sot became the cadre primarily responsible for building up revolutionary bases in the sector.¹⁷

After the coup, Brothers Number One and Two relocated to the North Zone,¹⁸ and during much of the 1970-1975 war, the North Zone benefitted from the "direct administration and guidance of the Organization above," which "always paid attention to following up every activity" there and "gave instruction after instruction." Under such close scrutiny from Pol and Nuon, Thuon and other "important core cadre" there applied themselves to "implementing the Party's political line and policies." This included "strenuously ... purging no-good elements" from the local political administration, "sweeping traitorous espionage links cleanly away," blunting Khmer Republic military operations, launching assaults on National Routes and provincial towns, increasing agricultural production, and generally solving problems arising in relations with the Vietnamese. As a result, despite being newly established, it was able to keep up in these regards

¹⁵ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Setting Up of Pracheachalana Organizational Links in the Northwest," 19 February 1977, pp.7-8.

¹⁶ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Activities Betraying the Revolution: Period II (1970-1975)", 10 February 1977, p.21. According to Pok, the "upper echelons" assigned him to Siem Reap in July 1970. "Biography of Kae Pok (Secret): From 1957 until the Present," nd.

¹⁷ Koy Thon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Comrade Sat," 23 February 1977, p.4.

¹⁸ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Traitorous Plans of Comrades Ya-Thuch-Deuan-Sreng in Wishing to Murder Brothers Number One and Two," 14 February 1977, p.4.

with other Zones.¹⁹

For a time, Thuon's wife Yun and Pol's wife Khiev Ponnari (*alias* Yeum) did grassroots organizational work in Sandan district of Kampung Thom.²⁰

In February 1973, Pol and Nuon met secretly with the "Ta Meuy," the Deputy Secretary of the southern branch of the VWP.²¹

In May 1973, on the Organization's instructions, Thuon convened a study session for Zone cadre at which both Pol and Nuon taught.²²

Pol and Nuon spent much of the second half of 1973 on the move, visiting various zones, and at the end of the year, following a Central Committee meeting, they went to direct an assault on Phnom Penh. They returned to the North Zone in June 1974 to convene another Central Committee meeting, which was followed by a Military School session in July attending by some 70 key military cadre.²³

However, Thuon's wartime sins included allowing "no-good elements" and "espionage links" to go undercover in the grassroots political administration in Kampung Thom and western Kampung Cham, and then not acting proactively to fully purge them once they were in. This supposedly explained setbacks and defeats during the war, including early losses during the "Chen La II" battle with Khmer Republic forces in late 1971, the failure of Communist

¹⁹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Activities Betraying the Revolution: Period II (1970-1975)", 10 February 1977, p.28.

²⁰ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "Truly Revolutionary Forces Whom I Implicated," 8 April 1977, p.4.

²¹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Traitorous Plans of Comrades Ya-Thuch-Deuan-Sreng in Wishing to Murder Brothers Number One and Two," 14 February 1977, pp.6-8.

²² Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Traitorous Plans of Comrades Ya-Thuch-Deuan-Sreng in Wishing to Murder Brothers Number One and Two," 14 February 1977, pp.8-9.

²³ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Traitorous Plans of Comrades Ya-Thuch-Deuan-Sreng in Wishing to Murder Brothers Number One and Two," 14 February 1977, pp.11-12.

assualts on Kampung Cham and Kampung Thom towns in late 1973 and [early?] 1974, and the large-scale flight of people from CPK to Khmer Republic zones in Kampung Thom, also in 1974 [?].²⁴ In fact, Communist losses in Chen La II were the result of the initial Khmer Republic numerical superiority,²⁵ and the attack on Kampung Cham was thrown back as a result of the quick intervention of crack Khmer Republic paratroopers and marines, reinforcements that also turned the numerical balance against the Communists.²⁶

According to Thuon's "confessions," Sot allowed veteran non-Communist Issarak to enter the local revolutionary administration in Siem Reap and then failed to properly carry out the Higher Organization's instructions to remove all "spies and pacification agents" from the Angkor Voat area in 1972. This supposedly explained why Khmer Republic forces were able to launch an attack on Angkor Voat in late 1972, and why the Organization had to fall back on the assistance of Vietnamese forces in the area to prevent the loss of the temples.²⁷

Similar errors were supposedly also committed by Say, the

²⁴ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Activities Betraying the Revolution: Period II (1970-1975)", 10 February 1977, pp.23-26. For more on the Chen La II fighting, see Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Triatorous Organizational Links and Activities of Comrade Tol (Secretary of Sector 31, North Zone)," 12 February 1977, pp.3-4.

²⁵ Wilfred P. Deac, *The Road to the Killing Fields: The Cambodian War of 1970-1975* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1997), pp.113-115.

²⁶ Wilfred P. Deac, *The Road to the Killing Fields: The Cambodian War of 1970-1975* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1997), pp.176-178. For more details on the CPK defeat, which blame it on Thuon's cadre, see Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Traitorous Organizational Links and Activities of Comrade Tol (Secretary of Sector 31, North Zone)," 12 February 1977, pp.7-9. Kae Pok commanded the attack on the town from the south and west. According to Thuon, although the town was not liberated, Pok's and other North Zone troops killed 10,000 "enemies" and evaucated 50,000 people from it. Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "Some Important Events that Demonstrate the Traitorous Activities of Comrade Sreng," 14 February 1977, p.8.

²⁷ Koy Thon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Comrade Sat," 23 February 1977, pp.5-6.

government soldier who had sold weapons to the maquis before 1970, after he was made a cadre in Siem Reap. He incorporated former Son Ngoc Thanh-ists, old society local officials, upper class elements and Sino-Khmer into the grassroots political administration he organized there, which resulted in complaints against him by cadre of "basic class" origin. He was transferred to Sector 31, where he then opposed cooperativization, declaring that the CPK was moving too fast. During the final offensive on Phnom Penh, he criticized the loss of lives it was bringing about.²⁸

In mid-1973, the Organization was concerned about the situation in North Zone Sector 30, especially its failure to push forward with cooperativization and send combatants to fight on the front lines. Summoned to a meeting with the Organization, Koy Thuon reported that the sector was also seriously penetrated by Khmer Republic spies and pacification agents. The Organization instructed him to "pay real attention to keeping track" of what was going on inside the CPK, "because it's only when something exists on the inside that contemptible outsiders can get in." Thuon convened this to Deuan and Sreng.²⁹ The Organization also instructed Thuon to purge the military forces led in Kampung Thom by Pech Cheang, but he allegedly allowed two whom the Organization specifically wanted to arrest to flee. Similarly, when the Organization ordered a purge of spies among troops Cheang later led in the Siem Reap area, he supposedly let some of them escape.³⁰

A particular problem in Sector 30 was Hâh, the Political Chairman of a battalion originally organized by Sreng and deployed on Route 7, who was currently chairman of the sector military. In May 1973, Seat Chhae reported to the Organization that his undercover links in Phnom Penh had seen Hâh there cavorting with the enemy. Summoned by the Organization and shown Seat Chhae's telegram, Thuon was ordered to investigate and take measures. Thuon ordered Sreng to arrest Hâh, but because Sreng pleaded that his friend Hâh be spared, Thuon decided not to ill him. Instead, in early 1974, Thuon transferred Hâh to Siem Reap. To rewin the

²⁸ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between Me and Comrade Say (Industry)," 21 February 1977, pp.2-6.

²⁹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "Some Important Events that Demonstrate the Traitorous Activities of Comrade Sreng," 14 February 1977, p.7.

³⁰ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "Comrade Pech Cheang," 24 February 1977, pp.6-7.

Party's trust, Hâh killed many enemy in Chongkal district, but when Khmer Republic forces attacked Angkor Vaot in July 1974, Hâh's defence flank there collapsed.³¹

During the 1970-75 war, Ya continued to criticize the CPK's "petty bourgeois" leadership and supposedly broached the possibility of replacing it with a Party led by Kaev Meah.³² Ya purportedly accused Brothers Number One and Two of being "too narrow-minded" and "extremists", and thus of obstructing Party unity and creating problems with the Vietnamese. He wanted Kaev Meah and returned regroupes given real responsibilities in line with their seniority and capabilities, and believed that the Vietnamese should not be treated as "unfriends". He complained that his own Central Committee membership was merely nominal. He was effectively powerless and subjected to grueling criticism.³³ In 1973, Ya purportedly also believed that the policy of launching cooperativization in the midst of an as yet unwon war was "ultra-left" because it alienated the "national bourgeoisie, patriotic landlords, rich peasants and petty bourgeois intellectuals," and he pointed out that it was contrary to both Vietnamese and Chinese practice. He supposedly characterized implementation of the line of independence/mastery as "self-isolating".³⁴

From 1974, when Ya was put in charge of transporting arms, he was also given charge of former regroupes.³⁵ In April 1974, he

³¹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between the Links of the Contemptible Hâh and the Phnom Penh Traitors," 23 February 1977, pp.1-9.

³² Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Activities Betraying the Revolution: Period II (1970-1975)", 10 February 1977, p.34.

³³ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Traitorous Plans of Comrades Ya-Thuch-Deuan-Sreng in Wishing to Murder Brothers Number One and Two," 14 February 1977, pp.1-2; Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Comrade Mut, Secretary of Sector 22, East Zone," 22 February 1977, p.2.

³⁴ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Traitorous Plans of Comrades Ya-Thuch-Deuan-Sreng in Wishing to Murder Brothers Number One and Two," 14 February 1977, p.3.

³⁵ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Activities Betraying the Revolution: Period II (1970-1975)," 10 February 1977, p.34.

hosted a meeting in the Northeast at which they complained they were being ill-treated by the CPK and discussed the possibility of forming a committee to represent their interests.³⁶

According to Koy Thuon's "confessions," Ya characterized CPK friendship with the VWP as a "necessity," and declared that instead of inciting the people to drive them out, the Party should recognize that without the Vietnamese, it would not have had an extensive liberated zone immediately after the 1970 coup. He criticized the CPK's foreign policy as "self-isolating," and said that if the CPK wanted to be truly independent, it must have good relations not only with China, but also with Viet Nam.³⁷

Chong frequently criticized Mok, saying Mok himself did not know how to get a job done, but constantly bad mouthing everybody else. Then, in 1973, Chong's "traitorous plans" were "totally smashed and defeated."³⁸

Other sins including provocative propaganda against and even killings of Vietnamese troops by subordinates of Thuon's protégés, thus "stirring up contradictions" with the Vietnamese at a time when the CPK line was still to maintain outwardly friendly relations with them.³⁹

³⁶ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Activities Betraying the Revolution: Period II (1970-1975)," 10 February 1977, p.44; Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Events of April 1974," 2 March 1977, pp.1-2; Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Events of April 1974," 2 March 1977, pp.9-10,23,25.

³⁷ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Events of April 1974," 2 March 1977, pp.10-11.

³⁸ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Activities Betraying the Revolution: Period II (1970-1975)," 10 February 1977, p.35.

³⁹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Activities Betraying the Revolution: Period II (1970-1975)," 10 February 1977, p.25. For example, in order to defeat the Khmer Republic Chen La II operation in Kampung Thom in late 1971, the Organization gave instructions to "cooperate well with the Vietnamese army" so as to mount a successful counter-attack. See Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Traitorous Organizational Links and Activities of Comrade Tol (Secretary of Sector 31, North Zone)," 12 February 1977, pp.4-5.

After the launching of the civil war in early 1968, "the ruling class killed" and imprisoned more cadre. These imprisoned included Tol, who had been organizing in Kampung Thom, and who after 1975 was Secretary of Sector 31. He had been released and rejoined the maquis just before the 1970 coup. After initially being designated a district secretary, he was promoted to Sector Secretary in 1972 because of his feats in defeating Khmer Republic military operations.⁴⁰

At a Central Committee meeting in June 1974, "the Party" (as Koy Thuon put it) "decided to break Phnom Penh" and put forward a detailed plan for this strategic offensive, although the date for launching it was not set. Thuon's assignment once D-Day was set was to lead the North Zone's three divisions in the assault on the capital. During the remainder of the year, Thuon was instructed to carry out a number of preparatory campaigns and to counter a major Khmer Republic operation, and his successes in most battles pleased the Organization. In November 1974, he was instructed to position and provision his troops for the attack on the capital.⁴¹

In what the CPK saw as an attempt to foil its hopes of attacking Phnom Penh, the Khmer Republic launched a new attack on Angkor Voat in July 1974. Early advances were blamed on Sot's failure to prevent his forces from engaging in deal-making with the enemy in the temple areas, and he was transferred to the Zone Commerce Committee, under Deuan. Other sins attributed to Sot were having earlier provoked bloody clashes with Vietnamese forces, having organized tens of thousands of people to construct a dam, only to have it collapse, and compelled thousands of people to dig a long canal through impossibly rocky soil.⁴²

As Khmer Republic troops advanced on Angkor Voat in July 1974, the Organization summoned Thuon personally to demand a counter-attack. Thuon ordered Pok back to Siem Reap as Sector Secretary along with two regiments of troops, and in three days,

⁴⁰ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Triatorous Organizational Links and Activities of Comrade Tol (Secretary of Sector 31, North Zone)," 12 February 1977, pp.1-3,5.

⁴¹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Traitorous Plans in the Implementation of the Plan for Storming Attacks to Break Through to and Liberation Phnom Penh City," 10 February 1977, pp.49-50.

⁴² Koy Thon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Comrade Sat," 23 February 1977, pp.5-7.

the Khmer Republic offensive was defeated.⁴³

According to Koy Thuon's "confessions," Ya believed it was wrong for the CPK to attempt to take Phnom Penh at a time when most provincial capitals remained in Khmer Republic hands, and believed it would result in an unnecessary loss of revolutionary forces.⁴⁴

When after initial successes, the advance of North Zone and some other troops on the capital after 1 January 1975 stalled, the Organization convened a meeting of all Battlefield Committees to review the situation. The Organization stressed that unless the North Zone pinned down more Khmer Republic troops north of the capital, they would be able to hold onto the Mekong south of Phnom Penh, and the offensive would fail. Thuon then convened a meeting of North Zone military cadre at which they were told to redouble their efforts, and in early April 1975 their troops broke through Phnom Penh's second line of defense from the north, and these were the first to reach the centre of Phnom Penh on 17 April.⁴⁵

According to Thuon's "confessions," Southwest Zone Deputy Secretary Chong (*alias* Prasith) was guilty of opposing the CPK class and political lines by appointing "upper class," "hooligan" and "ex-civil servant" elements to posts in the state power and by relying too heavily on "regroupees" returned from northern Viet Nam, including his own younger brother. Chong supposedly attacked the CPK line on expelling such elements from responsible positions as "unjust." Thuon portrays Chong as having been wrong in appointing the former AGEK leader Sang Rin (*alias* On) as Secretary of Southwest Zone Sector 32 and former editors of Pracheachun

⁴³ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between the Links of the Contemptible Hâh and the Phnom Penh Traitors," 23 February 1977, pp.9-10.

⁴⁴ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Events of April 1974," 2 March 1977, p.9.

⁴⁵ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Traitorous Plans in the Implementation of the Plan for Storming Attacks to Break Through to and Liberation Phnom Penh City," 10 February 1977, pp.51-56. North Zone Division 3, led by its Secretary Suong, won the race to reach Voat Phnum, the symbolic centre of town. See also Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "Some Important Events that Demonstrate the Traitorous Activities of Comrade Sreng," 14 February 1977, pp.10-11.

Group-affiliated newspapers as district cadre.⁴⁶

According to Pheuan's "confessions," Northwest Zone Secretary Nheum had hoped to incorporate Siem Reap into it, but the Organization rejected his request to this effect. Nevertheless, supposedly at Pheuan's suggestion, Nheum established illicit contacts with Siem Reap cadre Sot.⁴⁷

During the war, as before, Nheum and Koe "were incapable of solidarity. Brother Nheum attacked Brother Koe, and Brother Koe disliked Brother Nheum. Things got to the point where he did not trust Brother Nheum, whom he said was trying to find some means to kill him. Brother Nheum and Brother Koe had separate forces."⁴⁸

Executions and Dissidence: 1975-1977

According to Thuon's "confessions," both during the war and after 17 April, in relative terms, Northwest Zone Secretary Nheum kept alive ex-soldiers and ex-civil servants, including many senior as well as junior officers. Nheum purportedly said to Nheum that the Party should "take pity on them and not just keep on killing them." They should instead be re-educated and refashioned. Thuon contrasts this with his own practice, which was, he confesses, "to kill too many."⁴⁹

According to Thuon's "confessions," after April 1975, Nheum vowed that he would "administer well" all the tens of thousands of new people that the Organization was sending to the Northwest, and go all out to fulfill the Party's plans for transforming the Zone by putting up new paddy dikes, digging new feeder canals and constructing dams.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "The Organizational Links in the Contemptible Chong's Domain," 19 February 1977, pp.11-12.

⁴⁷ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between Me and Brother Nheum (*alias* Sâmbat), the Current Secretary of the Northwest Zone," 6 March 1977, pp.4-5.

⁴⁸ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between Me and Brother Nheum (*alias* Sâmbat), the Current Secretary of the Northwest Zone," 6 March 1977, p.12.

⁴⁹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between Me and Brother Nheum (*alias* Sâmbat), the Current Secretary of the Northwest Zone," 6 March 1977, p.13.

⁵⁰ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between Me

According to Koy Thuon, Nheum was only a candidate member of the Standing Committee.⁵¹

Thuon's rejected "confessions" assert that in 1972, Nheum identified Pheum as the leaders of the dissident movement inside the CPK. Nheum purportedly characterized Pheum as a personal friend who was much-loved and very much trusted in his Zone, and in whom "the Party" also had complete faith.⁵²

North Zone cadre who had established themselves in Phnom Penh then were given instructions by "the Party" that "all traitors must be swept cleanly away," and these instructions were carried at the same time as those to evacuate all the people from the capital. Four North Zone cadre organized the execution of all Khmer Republic cabinet members and "more than 800 other head" of traitors seized in the town. This, Thuon remarks in his "confessions," demonstrated their political loyalty.⁵³ His own view was that the Organization was right to adopt a policy of "sweeping cleanly away all forces that were 'rotten'."⁵⁴

and Brother Nheum (*alias* Sâmbat), the Current Secretary of the Northwest Zone," 6 March 1977, p.14.

⁵¹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between Me and Brother Nheum (*alias* Sâmbat), the Current Secretary of the Northwest Zone," 6 March 1977, p.14.

⁵² Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between Me and Brother Nheum (*alias* Sâmbat), the Current Secretary of the Northwest Zone," 6 March 1977, p.15.

⁵³ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Traitorous Plans in the Implementation of the Plan for Storming Attacks to Break Through to and Liberation Phnom Penh City," 10 February 1977, p.56; and Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Education of Euan and Reestablishment of Contact with CIA Links," 10 February 1977, p.77. Thuon identifies the leadership of the execution operation as comprising Euan, Nhaem, Mol and Mân. Euan became Secretary of Central Committee Division 310. Nhaem and Mol were later assigned to duties in Kampung Saom, while Mân became Chairman of the Centre's Water Transport Committee.

⁵⁴ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts with Comrade Seat Chhae (Comrade Tum), the Current Representative of the General Staff, and Me (Koy Thuon)," 4 March 1977, p.7.

However, East Zone Sector 22 Secretary Tum, who had entered Phnom Penh with two divisions of zone and sector troops, purportedly told Thuon he believed that the victors should "not go overboard in sweeping" the "traitors in Phnom Penh." Only the worst traitors should be executed; the others should be kept alive and eventually put to use. Therefore, Tum's troops did not engage in "indiscriminate sweeping."⁵⁵

Meanwhile, Thuon heard, the Organization had detained Hou Youn.⁵⁶

Thuon had met Phok Chhay again for the first time shortly before 17 April 1975, when Chhay was "travelling with the Organization." After 17 April, Chhay worked for a while organizing the reception of Chinese experts at Pochentong airport. Thuon was soon inviting him to dinner at his house. In October 1975, the Organization removed him from his Pochentong job, following complaints that he refused to take orders from his Party superior there, Division 502 Secretary Met. He was transferred to the Central Committee Office, where he initially monitored radio broadcasts and did some economic work.⁵⁷

However, getting North Zone cadre and combatants to obey orders not to remove anything from the city and to maintain discipline was not as easy. Thus, while people were expelled and traitors killed, many consumer goods disappeared from Phnom Penh back into the North Zone, and Zone military forces feasted, drank and took liberties with women.⁵⁸ Thuon himself ignored orders from

⁵⁵ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts with Comrade Seat Chhae (Comrade Tum), the Current Representative of the General Staff, and Me (Koy Thuon)," 4 March 1977, p.7.

⁵⁶ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Hou Youn," 27 February 1977, p.6. The phrase used is "*khoat tuk muoy kanlaeng*". Thuon's "confessions" suggest he believed that Hou Youn might still be alive.

⁵⁷ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Problem of Phok Chhay and the Students' Association," 26 February 1977, pp.7-8; Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between Phok Chhay and Me After the Great Victory of 17 April 1975," pp.1-5.

⁵⁸ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Traitorous Plans in the Implementation of the Plan for Storming Attacks to Break Through to and Liberation Phnom Penh City," 10 February 1977, pp.57-58.

the Organization that he remain at the side of Son Sen to help the latter with his work.⁵⁹

Once Phnom Penh was cleared, about a month after 17 April, the Organization assigned Thuon to take charge of "Commerce", which meant overseeing the movement of goods between one part of the country and one unit of organization and another. At the same time, Deuan and a number of other North Zone cadre were brought to Phnom Penh to take up various assignments, which in Deuan's case was to head the Central Committee Office.⁶⁰

The Organization assigned Prum Sang-ar and Hou Youn's brother-in-law Eung Keum Seng to the Propaganda Ministry.⁶¹ It was also the Organization that originally suggested to Koy Thuon that he provide performers from the North Zone artistic troupe to the Propaganda Ministry and that he help supply its material needs.⁶²

According to Koy Thuon's "confessions," Hu Nim was aware that the propaganda his Ministry was producing about the CPK's agricultural production feats was false, and that listeners found it ridiculous.⁶³

Hu Nim's work was closely supervised by the Organization.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Traitorous Plans in the Implementation of the Plan for Storming Attacks to Break Through to and Liberation Phnom Penh City," 10 February 1977, p.58.

⁶⁰ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Traitorous Plans in the Implementation of the Plan for Storming Attacks to Break Through to and Liberation Phnom Penh City," 10 February 1977, p.59.

⁶¹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "I Would Like to Make an Additional Report About Organizational Links of the Pracheachalana Organization in Phnom Penh," 20 February 1977, pp.1-2.

⁶² Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between Comrade Hu Nim and Me After the Great Victory of 17 April 1975," 27 February 1977, p.3.

⁶³ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between Comrade Hu Nim and Me After the Great Victory of 17 April 1975," 27 February 1977, p.4; Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Situation at the National Radio: Organization," 5 April 1977, p.5.

⁶⁴ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between

The writers's team at Propaganda was comprised entirely of old society professors.⁶⁵

After liberation, Hu Nim became increasingly exasperated with Tiv Ol, who acted without consulting him and who was constantly chasing after women. When Hu Nim mentioned this to Koy Thuon, Thuon suggested he report these problems to the Organization with a view to having Ol removed, but the Organization did not act on the request. Hu Nim then organized a petition against Ol, and finally he was indeed removed.⁶⁶

In October 1975, according to Thuon's "confessions," he and Tiv Ol had a falling out after Ol made sexual advances on three of Thuon's ex-lovers, who reported this to Hu Nim. Hu Nim taped their complaints and those of other women and sent the tapes to the Organization. When the Organization did nothing, Nim organized the "masses" in Propaganda to write a petition of complaint against Ol, after which the Organization transferred him. However, Thuon then regretted having encouraged Hu Nim to do this and wrote a secret letter of apology to Ol, **who was undergoing re-education at the Organization's Fishing Office at Chrang Chamreh.**⁶⁷

The return of progressive intellectuals from abroad created an at least potential pool of followers for Hu Nim, should he decide to join an opposition to Pol and Nuon.⁶⁸

Comrade Hu Nim and Me After the Great Victory of 17 April 1975," 27 February 1977, p.5; Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Situation at the National Radio: Organization," 5 April 1977, p.5.

⁶⁵ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Situation at the National Radio: Organization," 5 April 1977, p.2. Thuon lists them as: Hu Nim, Tiv Ol, Eung Keum Seng, Prum Sang-ar and Seng Bun Thân.

⁶⁶ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between Comrade Hu Nim and Me After the Great Victory of 17 April 1975," 27 February 1977, p.6.

⁶⁷ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between Me and Tiv Ol," 2 April 1977, pp.29-30.

⁶⁸ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between Comrade Hu Nim and Me After the Great Victory of 17 April 1975," 27 February 1977, p.7.

According to Thuon's "confessions," Hu Nim condemned CPK execution policies as "fascist," declaring that the Party should not "spill the blood of and murder" Cambodia's own people. The defeated enemy should instead be kept alive to help with production. It was not the defeated enemy but killing them that was "useless." Thus, Hu Nim was accused of wanting to "cooperate with the enemy," of having the stance of a "pacification agent," a "conciliator," which made him "an enormous danger" to the Party. Similarly, Hu Nin was opposed to evacuation of Phnom Penh, which he said caused "absurd suffering". Those who were stripped of homes and property that was in some cases the result of decades of work, and sent into rural areas without shelter, food or water were being tormented like "turtles in a fire" and dying in large numbers. Thuon's "confessions" say that Hu Nim furthermore contended that the result of abolition of markets was not equality, but wide disparities in the availability of food, due to a lack of any workable mechanism for exchange. This policy was therefore "ultra-left." So, too, was the attempt immediately to eliminate capitalists by transforming them into worker-peasants.⁶⁹

The Organization designated the North Zone's Number Three, Pech Cheang, Thuon's student at Lycée Sihanouk in Kampung Cham, chairman of the National Bank, and then reassigned him to the Foreign Ministry.⁷⁰

The Organization also instructed Thuon to oversee the establishment of a new leading committee for a revamped North Zone comprising Prek Prasap district of Kracheh, Kampung Cham west of the Mekong and Kampung Thom and Siem Reap provinces. Almost all the members of Party Committee of this new North Zone were intellectual protégées of Thuon, except for its Secretary, Kae Pok. Sreng was Deputy Secretary and a former student named Pech Cheang (*alias* Thau) was its senior Member. They administered a population of one million.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Hu Nim's Activities," 3 April 1977, pp.11-13.

⁷⁰ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "I Would Like to Make an Additional Report About Organizational Links of the Pracheachalana Organization in Phnom Penh," 20 February 1977, pp.2-3; Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "Comrade Pech Cheang," 24 February 1977, p.9.

⁷¹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Activities Setting Up Traitorous Base and Organizing Traitors Forces to Conduct

Kae Pok had been reappointed Secretary of the Siem Reap-Utdarmeanchey Sector (Sector 35) in July 1974 and held this post through 17 April 1975. In this capacity, as Koy Thuon would recall in S21, Pok had "swept cleanly away a major number" of Khmer Republic officers and officers, starting with the Siem Reap provincial governor and regional military commander, but working his way through the entire commissioned and non-commissioned officer corps to the second lieutenants and corporals and also executing "big and medium civil servants", as well as detaining many of lower rank. In addition, "the masses" had killed those associated with the Khmer Republic who had attempted to flee to Thailand. After Pok was promoted to North Zone Secretary, Thuon "confesses" he instructed Pok's replacement as Siem Reap-Utdarmeanchey Secretary, Sot, to keep alive and put to work those detained.⁷²

Meanwhile, the disgraced Hâh remained in Siem Reap as a sector military cadre⁷³ in a new division created to guard the Utdar Meanchey-Thailand border. This unit's regimental cadre were selected by Koy Thuon from North Zone units, but its battalion cadre came from Siem Reap. The Organization decided on how it would be deployed along the frontier, where **its duties included not only countering Thai encroachments but also preventing people from fleeing into Thailand.** Between July 1975 and February 1976, it grew from 1,800 men to 3,200.⁷⁴

Thuon's "confesses" suggest that he and Siem Reap-Utdar Meanchey Sector Secretary Sot agreed to a request from the

Activities Betraying the Revolution Post-Liberation," 14 February 1977, pp.1-4. The other committee Members included Ngeun and Tol. Deputy Secretary Sreng was concurrently Secretary of Sector 30, Ngeun was Secretary of Sector 31, Nguen Secretary of Sector 32 and Sot Secretary of Siem Reap-Utdar Meanchey Sector

⁷² Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Plan to Set Up the Grassroots in 106 and Set Up My CIA Links to the Thailand Side," 23 February 1977, pp.3-4; see also

⁷³ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between the Links of the Contemptible Hâh and the Phnom Penh Traitors," 23 February 1977, p.10.

⁷⁴ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Problem of the Command Committee, Cadre and Forces of Comrade Hean's Division in Siem Reap-Utdar Meanchey," 24 February 1977, pp.1-7.

Communist Party of Thailand for sanctuary in the province without consulting with the Organization.⁷⁵

As Koy Thuon's "confessions" comment, the Organization's assignment of both Ya and Tum to the General Staff reunited two cadre who had previously worked closely with it in Phnom Penh and at Office 100). The Organization appeared to have particular trust in Tum, and had designated him a candidate Central Committee member in 1970. He was politically sophisticated and had a strong leadership personallity. Moreover, he was well-liked by East and Special Zone cadre at the General Staff and their associates in Central Committee units in and around Phnom Penh, including Nat, Saom, Tat, Teanh and Chakrei.⁷⁶

However, by the beginning of 1976, it became apparent that the Organization was turning against Tum when he was not promoted to full-rights membership in the Central Committee. He reacted angrily to being passed over, purportedly complaining to Thuon, "I'm exerting myself to death, and the Organization still acts as if I'm invisible."⁷⁷

In June 1975, the first post-liberation meeting of the Central Committee was convened in Phnom Penh for what proved to be a brief session held in the Vihear Preah Kaev pagoda. Shortly thereafter, the Organization handed over all responsibility for transportation of goods to Thuon's Commerce ministry, and assigned Ya to head logistics at the armed forces General Staff, which was chaired by Son Sen. At the same time, Non Suon was put in charge of a prospective national bank, and Tauch Pheuan of Public Works.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "Contacts with the Thai Front," 28 February 1977, pp.1-2.

⁷⁶ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts with Comrade Seat Chhae (Comrade Tum), the Current Representative of the General Staff, and Me (Koy Thuon)," 4 March 1977, pp.8-10.

⁷⁷ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts with Comrade Seat Chhae (Comrade Tum), the Current Representative of the General Staff, and Me (Koy Thuon)," 4 March 1977, p.9.

⁷⁸ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Traitorous Plans in the Implementation of the Plan for Storming Attacks to Break Through to and Liberation Phnom Penh City," 10 February 1977, pp.65-66; Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Implementation of Further Plans to Betray the Party After the Great Victory of 17 April," 15 February 1977, p.14

Meanwhile, Thuon supposedly had a "working meeting" with Hu Nim and Tiv Ol.⁷⁹

Ya went to Viet Nam and China with Pol and Nuon for two weeks in July 1975.⁸⁰

According to Koy Thuon's "confessions," Ya suggested to him in mid-1975 that Chey and Pheuan were potentially unhappy about their exclusion from the Central Committee. Chey had been a member, but lost his position when he was imprisoned in the early 1960s, whereas Pheuan yet to join, even though he had been a Party member since the mid-1950s.⁸¹ In August 1975, Ya supposedly suggested that he, Thuon, Chey and Pheuan set themselves up as a alternative leadership team with assistance from Deuan, Sreng and others, and also supposedly broached the possibility that they might be joined by Chhouk, Chakrei and Nhoek.⁸² He also informed them that although Kaev Meah had returned to Cambodia from Hanoi, the Organization had placed him in detention.⁸³ Other

⁷⁹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Hu Nim's Activities," 3 April 1977, pp.11-13.

⁸⁰ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Implementation of Further Plans to Betray the Party After the Great Victory of 17 April," 15 February 1977, p.21.

⁸¹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Traitorous Plans in the Implementation of the Plan for Storming Attacks to Break Through to and Liberation Phnom Penh City," 10 February 1977, p.66.

⁸² Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Traitorous Plans in the Implementation of the Plan for Storming Attacks to Break Through to and Liberation Phnom Penh City," 10 February 1977, p.67; Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Implementation of Further Plans to Betray the Party After the Great Victory of 17 April," 15 February 1977, pp.22-23; Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Plan to Set Up a New Party to Be the Core for Leading the Movement to Govern, Fashion, Strengthen and Expand My Forces and to Whip Up a Movement to Oppose the Current CPK," 4 March 1977, p.1.

⁸³ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Traitorous Plans in the Implementation of the Plan for Storming Attacks to Break Through to and Liberation Phnom Penh City," 10 February 1977, p.68.

opportunities for illicit meetings came **after a study session for Central Committee members only in July and a gathering of the Central Committee at an isolated location in August.**⁸⁴ This was followed in September by a broader nation-wide study session for cadre held at the Olympic Stadium, during which the Organization allowed those attending to see each other at Party headquarters.⁸⁵ Then came celebrations of the CPK anniversary at the end of September, at which the Party leadership appeared on stage, with Brothers One, Two and Three in the front row.⁸⁶

Thereafter, Ya supposedly further elaborated plans for a new Party, which was purportedly to be called the New Socialism Party of Kampuchea. It would still be socialist, but it would build socialism "step-by-step," restore "reasonably broad private property," reopen markets, put money into circulation, and expand the class front to give "petty bourgeois intellectuals" as well as workers and peasants a place. Its foreign policy would be one of independence, peace and neutrality, on the basis of which it would have relations with all socialist, non-aligned and western countries. The leadership would comprise Ya, Khuon, Deuan and Chey, and include Northeast Zone cadre Vi, Lav and Lang, North Zone cadre Sreng and Sot, Kracheh cadre Yi, East Zone cadre Chhouk, Ministers Hu Nim and Tauch Pheuan, military cadre Euan, Sei, Hean, Chakrei and Suong, and Kampung Saom cadre Nhaem. The Party leadership itself would contain no regroupees.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Implementation of Further Plans to Betray the Party After the Great Victory of 17 April," 15 February 1977, p.15; Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Implementation of Further Plans to Betray the Party After the Great Victory of 17 April," 15 February 1977, p.23.

⁸⁵ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Actions in Operationalizing the Implementation of This Traitorous Plan," 11 February 1977, p.80.

⁸⁶ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Implementation of Further Plans to Betray the Party After the Great Victory of 17 April," 15 February 1977, p.15; Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Implementation of Further Plans to Betray the Party After the Great Victory of 17 April," 15 February 1977, pp.27-30. **Central Committee members Ya and Deuan were in the second row.** Pol gave a long speech on the Party history.

⁸⁷ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Plan to Set Up a New Party to Be the Core for Leading the Movement to Govern, Fashion, Strengthen and Expand My Forces and to Whip Up a Movement to Oppose the Current CPK," 4 March 1977, pp.2-4.

After liberation, according to Thuon's "confessions," Ya condemned the CPK line calling for a quick advance to higher-level cooperatives and even to people's communes as ultra-leftist and adventurous because it went far beyond what the masses were ready for. Ya purportedly said that the people were in tears over the loss of their land, draught animals and the other property that had been declared "common." He pointed out that the abolition of markets meant that goods essential to popular livelihood were no longer traded and thus unavailable. He denounced the policy of evacuating people from the towns, because it had led to many deaths and entailed heartless treatment of those who had survived. Moreover, he also censured the Party's policy of killing almost all the soldiers, police and civil servants it could find, arguing that instead it should put them in re-education and put to work those who were "good." Finally, he declared that the CPK policy of "independence/mastery" was being implemented in such an ultra-left manner as to make Cambodia into a satellite of China.⁸⁸

During the Party Congress in January 1976, Ya supposed convened a meeting of the alternative leadership, including Chhouk and Chakrei.⁸⁹

Although he formally no longer had any responsibilities vis-à-vis the North Zone, Thuon met in particular with Sreng and Sot when they came to Phnom Penh for meetings.⁹⁰

The problem for Pol and Nuon was that every gathering of the Central Committee, every Party Congress, every nation-wide study session was an opportunity for those who might oppose them to meet and potentially to plot against them. They could not impose their line except through such conclaves, but every gathering was a possible venue for conspiracy against them.

After liberation, the former North Zone Secretary of Division 310, Euan, developed contradictions with Son Sen. These arose

⁸⁸ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Events of April 1974," 2 March 1977, pp.5-8.

⁸⁹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "Formulating an Enormous Plan to Wreck the Kampuchean Revolution," 11 February 1977.

⁹⁰ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Activities Setting Up Traitorous Base and Organizing Traitors Forces to Conduct Activities Betraying the Revolution Post-Liberation," 14 February 1977, p.6.

because Euan felt slighted that Son Sen alternatively ignoring him and criticized him. Euan once came to Thuon in tears to complain that Son Sen gave him no credit for his military feats, and instead favoured the Secretary of Division 801, Sareuan. According to Thuon's "confessions," this was what made it possible for him to take advantage of his close personal relations with Euan to recruit him into the CIA,⁹¹ which in this context must be read as a potential ally of opponents of Pol and Nuon. Among other reasons, this was problematic because Euan's troops guarded the Ministry of Propaganda and its radio station.⁹²

In late 1975, what the Party leadership interpreted as signs of "disorder" appeared in Phnom Penh, including shooting incidents, grenade explosions, conflicts between military and other units, "wrecking" (fires and automobile accidents), thefts, murders, sexual escapades and rumours that remnant Khmer Republic soldiers were massing to attack the capital. In retrospect, these would be taken as all part of the orchestration for an attempted coup d'état.⁹³

Among the murders that took place in late 1975 was Thuon's of Long.⁹⁴ Meanwhile, one of Thuon's early 1960s student recruits from Lycée Sihanouk had reported his sexual misbehavior to the Organization.⁹⁵

Pol and Nuon felt militarily vulnerable because their bodyguard unit comprised only 20 men.⁹⁶

⁹¹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Education of Euan and Reestablishment of Contact with CIA Links," 10 February 1977, p.73.

⁹² Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Actions in Operationalizing the Implementation of This Traitorous Plan," 11 February 1977, p.84.

⁹³ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Plan to Create Chaos and Disorder in Phnom Penh City," 16 February 1977, pp.37-40.

⁹⁴ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Plan to Create Chaos and Disorder in Phnom Penh City," 16 February 1977, p.40.

⁹⁵ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Comrade Seng," 23 February 1977, p.5.

⁹⁶ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Implementation of Further Plans to Betray the Party After the Great Victory of 17

In December 1975, the Party decided to convene a Party Congress from 16 to 18 January 1976, to be attended by all Central Committee members, including newly designated candidate members, plus Centre cadre and Centre assistants, among others.⁹⁷

According to Thuon's "confessions," he and Ya envisaged a new government that would retain figures like Hu Nim and Thiounn Thieun, but would incorporate former regroupées. Militarility, it would rely on Charkei, Euan and Suong, and in the East it would rely on Chhouk. It would implement a policy of political inclusiveness, according to which national capitalists and petty bourgeois intellectuals would no longer be subject to abolition, and people would no longer be compelled to work day and night in cooperatives. Although Pol and Nuon would be assassinated, the basic principle would be to avoid bloodshed. However, any attempt at opposition would be "swept cleanly away." Meanwhile, the new government would accept aid from anyone, including the Soviet Union and even the US.⁹⁸

Following the Party Congress in January 1976, Thuon pushed the Commerce Ministry to work harder, but at the same time, according to his "confessions," he allowed hoarding of items that were supposed to be delivered to the people, including Chinese rice and other aid.⁹⁹

At the end of January 1976, Pol instructed Thuon to organize a congress of all senior Commerce Ministry cadre at which the Party Secretary would speak.¹⁰⁰

April," 15 February 1977, p.17.

⁹⁷ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Plan to Overthrow the Leading Organization, January 1976," 16 February 1977, p.41.

⁹⁸ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Plan to Overthrow the Leading Organization, January 1976," 16 February 1977, pp.51-54.

⁹⁹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Actions in Operationalizing the Implementation of This Traitorous Plan," 11 February 1977, pp.80-81.

¹⁰⁰ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Plan to Overthrow the Leading Organization, January 1976," 16 February 1977, pp.69-70.

According to Koy Thuon's "confessions," Northeast Zone cadre Vil, Lav and Lang objected to the CPK policy of "Great Solidarity of Nationalities." They advocated autonomy for the Zone, which at that time comprised only Rattanakiri and Steung Treng provinces, with a population of around 100,000.¹⁰¹ In December 1975, Ya told Thuon that the Organization was unhappy with the administration of the Zone, especially with Zone Secretary Vi and another Zone Committee cadre Lav. According to Thuon's "confessions," Ya said that Vi and other senior Zone cadre were incapable of solidarity among themselves or with the masses, and thus were administratively all over the place and could not "gather forces." In particular, "Vi, Lav and a number of other cadre had accused a number of subordinate cadre and people of all being 'traitors', and made plans to arrest some of them and had killed those they had been able to arrest. The others had fled with their relatives to Vietnamese or Lao territory." Hundreds of families had been executed. A third Zone cadre, Lang, was such a hothead nobody could work with him. Ya told Thuon that Deuan had said the Organization was unhappy with all this, and wanted somebody to go take charge of the Zone. This was confirmed by Deuan, who said "the Organization was very concerned" that Vi and others "were wrongly implementing the line, all too obviously deviating from it." What made the Organization most unhappy was the breakdown of "solidarity among the nationalities" in the Zone, which was something the Organization believed it previously built up well. At the same time, however, the Organization was also displeased that its policy to increase production in the Northeast by getting the minorities was not being rapidly implemented.¹⁰²

According to Thuon's "confessions," Ya said he would like to return to the Northeast himself, but that he believed the Organization would not agree to transfer him back to his wartime haunts, and so suggested Thuon put himself forward instead, which he said he would like to do.¹⁰³

Ya's view was that the many of the problems in the Northeast

¹⁰¹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "IV. Why I Had Such Overwhelming Faith," 4 March 1977, p.19; Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "With Respect to the Most Highly Beloved Organization," 4 March 1977, pp.6,8.

¹⁰² Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "With Respect to the Most Highly Beloved Organization," 4 March 1977, pp.1-4.

¹⁰³ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "With Respect to the Most Highly Beloved Organization," 4 March 1977, pp.3,5.

arose from the fact that its various nationalities "did not yet have good solidarity with each other. He agreed that the the Zone had been beset by accusations of treason and repressive arrests, which had further exacerbated problems of solidarity among nationalities. The solution, he said, was to pay greater attention to refashioning to achieve solidarity, relying on patient re-education while also being prepared to "forgive ... shortcomings." This would create "intimacy" and "broad-mindedness" among the various national groups.¹⁰⁴

Another problem that would have to be dealt with was the unhappiness of Central Division 920 Secretary Chhin, who had been transferred with his unit from the North Zone to the Central Committee after April 1975. He was displeased that the Organization had sent him to such a "difficult" place. At the same time, the Secretary of Central Committee Division 801, Reuan, was seen as a Son Sen loyalist, who was therefore not entirely to be trusted by anyone who might have conflicts with the General Staff Chairman.¹⁰⁵

In January 1976, Pol indeed convened a meeting on the "misimplementation of the line on the problem of solidarity of nationalities." He criticized the executions of what he described as "good" national minority cadre and people on false allegations of treason, as a result of which others had fled in a process that was still continuing. Pol said he wanted to transfer Vi and replace him with someone else. However, Thuon lost his nerve and failed to name himself as a possibility, although Deuan later put the suggestion to Pol.¹⁰⁶

In early February 1976, after a period during which the Organization began keeping closer track of Thuon's and Ya's performance as in the realms of commerce and logistics, Ya was transferred back to the Northeast to resume his earlier position as the Zone's Secretary. At mid-month, Thuon was summoned for a meeting with the Organization, a "special school" at which Pol, Nuon and "many other Brothers" were present. At that meeting, "the Organization brought up my immorality and corruption vis-à-

¹⁰⁴ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "With Respect to the Most Highly Beloved Organization," 4 March 1977, p.12.

¹⁰⁵ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "With Respect to the Most Highly Beloved Organization," 4 March 1977, p.13.

¹⁰⁶ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "With Respect to the Most Highly Beloved Organization," 4 March 1977, pp.5-6.

vis young women ..., which had by that time become notorious, as well as the treason I had committed by murdering Long to cover all that up." Thuon was also asked to reveal the political "entanglements" that had led to his misbehaviour. However, he confessed only to the murder and refused to admit to any political wrongdoing. At this point, Nuon declared that Thuon "had a disease and was always taking his medicine saying he wanted to get better, but in fact he would never get better if no one dared to lance the boil." Pol then ordered him to "cease all contacts with other ministries, especially with the Propaganda Ministry," and to "cease all interventions with everybody else." From that point on, he was under constant close surveillance. However, he was allowed to attend a Central Committee gathering in late March 1976. On this occasion, he spoke to Ya and was told about Ya's meetings with Chhouk and Chakrei.¹⁰⁷ He was also allowed to meet with his brother-in-law Yaem and his former student Pich Cheang, who were preparing to to up their posts as DK ambassadors to north Korea and China, respectively.¹⁰⁸

On 8 April 1976, Nuon sent Deuan with a car to pick up Thuon to attend an urgent working session. He found Nuon waiting for him at a "special house." Nuon told Thuon that his morals problem had become so notorious that he was in danger from angry "masses," and so he was being requested to take up residence in a secret location. He also told Thuon that he would have to undergo a life-outlook session in which he would have the opportunity to show he was not hiding anything else from the Party, and if he

¹⁰⁷ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Actions in Operationalizing the Implementation of This Traitorous Plan," 11 February 1977, pp.81-82; Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Activities Setting Up Traitorous Base and Organizing Traitors Forces to Conduct Activities Betraying the Revolution Post-Liberation," 14 February 1977, p.150; Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "The Plan for April 1976 Is Also Defeated," 17 February 1977, pp.75-76; Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "5. On the Plan to Grap the Ministry of Propaganda and Make Arrangements to Broadcast Information and the Artistic Department When There Was a Plan to Overthrow the Upper Level Organization," 27 February 1977, p.9.

¹⁰⁸ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "I Would Like to Make an Additional Report About Organizational Links of the Pracheachalana Organization in Phnom Penh," 20 February 1977, p.4; Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "Comrade Pech Cheang," 24 February 1977, p.9.

demonstrated his "absolute loyalty," then he would have nothing to worry about from Nuon himself or from Pol. Indeed, they would restore his "honour." According to Thuon's "confessions," he realized at this point that Pol and Nuon were aware of the "traitorous plans" he and Ya had been making. He remained at this house until he was transferred to S21, apparently in early February 1977.¹⁰⁹

Thuon's "confessions" refer to his place of house arrest as a "special" cell or branch of the Party. He lived in a three-story villa 300 meters from the Organization's Office. His contact to the Organization was Son Sen.¹¹⁰

According to Thuon's "confessions," while in house arrest he, like Tiv Ol, was able to win over some of his guards. As a result, within a month of his confinement, he was able to get in touch with Deuan and another ex-North Zone cadre, Saem, who chaired the Organization's K1 Office.¹¹¹ Saem supposedly became increasingly convinced of the necessity of opposing the Organization.¹¹² Also, according to Thuon's "confessions," many of the youths staffing the Organization's Office had opposition tendencies, threatening it with overthrow "right from the inside," with the backing of one-third of the troops in the Central Committee divisions stationed in and around the capital.¹¹³

In June 1976, the conditions of Thuon's detention were eased, and he was allowed outside the Organization's compound during the late afternoon, which supposedly made it possible for him to meet

¹⁰⁹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Actions in Operationalizing the Implementation of This Traitorous Plan," 11 February 1977, pp.85-86; Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "The Plan for April 1976 Is Also Defeated," 17 February 1977, p

¹¹⁰ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between Me and Tiv Ol," 2 April 1977, p.33; Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Activities in the Special [Party] Cell," 26 March 1977, p.1.

¹¹¹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Activities in the Special [Party] Cell," 26 March 1977, pp.4-5.

¹¹² Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Activities in the Special [Party] Cell," 26 March 1977, p.7.

¹¹³ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Activities in the Special [Party] Cell," 26 March 1977, p.13.

Deuan.¹¹⁴ Thuon describes a four-day conjugal visit he was allowed with his wife in June 1976, during which he supposedly managed to meet Tiv Ol, who was then in hospital.¹¹⁵

While he was under house arrest, Thuon was able to learn that Pol and Nuon were behaving in an increasingly vigilant manner, while continuing to make separate tours of the countryside and then meeting other Standing Committee "Brothers" at the end of every month.¹¹⁶ He was also aware that the whole Central Committee had been summoned to Phnom Penh to hear Pol's speech on the occasion of the CPK anniversary in September 1976.¹¹⁷

In handwritten annotations on Koy Thuon's "confessions," Son Sen instructed S21 to "follow up further" the activities of intellectual links.¹¹⁸ Son Sen also commented that Kae Pok had complained that Pich Cheang had "harassed" him "a lot" once Cheang was promoted to be North Zone Member.¹¹⁹

Koy Thuon at first refused to implicate the North Zone Rubber Plantations Chairman Sat, whom he described as "a life-and-death friend" whom he had fashioned politically since 1965 and who was "extremely influential" in western Kampung Cham.¹²⁰ Others whom he did not initially implicate included his brother-in-law, Seum Son

¹¹⁴ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Activities in the Special [Party] Cell," 26 March 1977, p.9.

¹¹⁵ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between Me and Tiv Ol," 2 April 1977, p.33.

¹¹⁶ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Activities in the Special [Party] Cell," 26 March 1977, p.6.

¹¹⁷ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Activities in the Special [Party] Cell," 26 March 1977, p.16.

¹¹⁸ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "I Would Like to Make an Additional Report About Organizational Links of the Pracheachalana Organization in Phnom Penh," 20 February 1977, p.1.

¹¹⁹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "I Would Like to Make an Additional Report About Organizational Links of the Pracheachalana Organization in Phnom Penh," 20 February 1977, p.3.

¹²⁰ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "I Would Like to Report on the Forces About Whom I Have Not Yet Presented a Report to the Organization, As Follows," 3 March 1977, p.2.

alias Yaem, a one-time schoolteacher in Prey Veng who was DK Ambassador to north Korea, and Tauch Chhun *alias* Kaem, the DK Ambassador to Laos, whom he described as "very close" to him personally.¹²¹

Pressed by his interrogators to explain why he thought he had a chance against the Organization, Koy Thuon wrote that it was because there were "contradictions over the line" because there were those in the Party who believed the CPK was "rigid in every department."¹²²

On 6 March 1977, Thuon produced a "confession" implicating both Northwest Zone Secretary Nheum and East Zone Secretary Pheum as traitors, but it was rejected by Son Sen [??] and Nuon Chea [??]. In a note marginal note dated 8 March, Son Sen explained:

The contemptible Thuch found an opportunity to write this additional story when the brothers and sisters had his hands shackled. He asked to request that the shackles be removed, that wearing them for three days was enough. He would remove them to write the whole story of Comrade Nheum and Brother Pheum. I decided that he would not be allowed to write anything more, and to keep him shackled for as long as ten to 15 days because if they were removed, he would make stories up to attack the Party's forces.¹²³

When Thuon "confessed" on 3 April 1977 that Tiv Ol's wife had actively infiltrated enemy spies and pacification agents into Special Zone Sector 15 in 1974, Duch, who was security cadre there at the time, was sceptical. In a marginal comment, he conceded that he had only met her there once, while organizing a "sweeping out" of one particular group of traitors, and therefore he could not be "concrete" about her activities. However, he wrote, he did

¹²¹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "I Would Like to Report on the Forces About Whom I Have Not Yet Presented a Report to the Organization, As Follows," 3 March 1977, pp.4-5.

¹²² Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "IV. Why I Had Such Overwhelming Faith," 4 March 1977, p.16.

¹²³ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Contacts Between Me and Brother Nheum (*alias* Sâmbat), the Current Secretary of the Northwest Zone," 6 March 1977, p.1.

not believe that she could possibly be as "talented at treasonous work." The comment explained that when he had asked Thuon for clarification, Thuon had simply asserted that he was only reporting what she had told him.¹²⁴

Son Sen also penned in his doubts when Thuon "confessed" that as Chairwoman of 17 April hospital after 1975, Leng Seum Hak had refashioned as traitors the Hanoi- and Paris-trained medical doctors Maen Thol *alias* Sat and Di Phon *alias* Thuk. His marginal note read "fabrication, no?"¹²⁵ When Thuon accused Sat of convening a meeting of traitorous "cores" at the hospital, Duch commented that he had asked Thuon to clarify, and Thuon had conceded there was nothing political about this meeting: it was merely a technical training session.¹²⁶ A year later, Sat was arrested, and Di Phon was detained when Son Sen himself was on the purge list, in late 1978. Moreover, when Thuon "confessed" that she had fashioned some 182 people as traitors in Phnom Penh, he himself then crossed the two out, reducing it to 18. Son Sen commented: "he's afraid we won't believe him, so he put 18 instead."¹²⁷

Another marginal note by Son Sen questioned whether Thuon had made up a story about having sent a letter to Hu Nim while under house arrest. He suggested that Pâng follow up with the combatant whom Thuon alleged conveyed the letter.¹²⁸

On 9 April 1977, shackles were removed from one of Koy Thuon's hands so that he could provide the names of key "counter-revolutionaries" throughout the country and also estimates of the total number of traitors in various units of organization. This document was marked "top secret." The leadership of the opposition in Phnom Penh was said to comprise Thuon himself, Ya, Tum, Deuan, Chhouk, Non Suon, Tauch Pheuan, Hu Nim, Tiv Ol, Euan,

¹²⁴ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Comrade Leng Seum Hak *alias* Sei," 3 April 1977, p.9.

¹²⁵ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Comrade Leng Seum Hak *alias* Sei," 3 April 1977, p.9.

¹²⁶ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Comrade Leng Seum Hak *alias* Sei," 3 April 1977, p.17.

¹²⁷ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Comrade Leng Seum Hak *alias* Sei," 3 April 1977, p.16.

¹²⁸ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On Hu Nim's Activities," 3 April 1977, p.1.

Chakrei and Suong.¹²⁹

Thuon's document named eight leading traitors in his Commerce Ministry, which he noted controlled controlled some 4,000 forces. It supplied overlapping lists of these leading and other traitors sub-units of the Ministry, including its Office, the "State Material Collection Department," the Market, Tailoring, Land Transport, Water Transport, Freshwater Fishing, State Warehouses and Kampung Saom Port. In addition to the 40 he named, he indicated another more than 100 persons coming under their leadership were also traitors.¹³⁰

He also produced lists of leading and other counter-revolutionaries in the Ministries of Propaganda, Industry and Public Works and "attached to the Office of the Higher Organization." The latter included Deuan and Phok Chhay. Other lists covered cadre and combatants in the ex-North Zone Divisions 310, 450 and 912 and in the General Staff, which listed Tum, Saom and Teanh. In addition to those named, Thuon said there were more than 60 "undercover forces" in the Organization's Office and more than 1,000 counter-revolutionaries among the combatants of the three Central Committee Divisions.¹³¹

A third set of lists covered the North and Northeast Zones and the Siem Reap-Utdar Meanchey Sector. It named as counter-revolutionaries the North Zone Deputy Secretary Sreng and the Zone cadre responsible for Economy, Commerce, Health, Public Works and the Military, plus the Chairman of the Zone Rubber Plantations and three of his subordinates. It named the Secretary (Tang) and 12 other leading cadre of Sector 41, the Secretary (Tol) and nine other leading cadre of Sector 42, and the Secretary (Chân) and seven other leading cadre of Sector 43. As for Siem Reap, it implicated the Secretary (Sot) and 18 other cadre. In the Northeast, it condemned Ya, but not those whom Pol had criticized in early 1976. Instead, it focused on leading cadre of Sector

¹²⁹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Counter-Revolutionary Committee in Phnom Penh City," dated 9 April 1977 by S21, p.1.

¹³⁰ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Counter-Revolutionary Committee in Phnom Penh City," dated 9 April 1977 by S21, pp.2-9.

¹³¹ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Counter-Revolutionary Committee in Phnom Penh City," dated 9 April 1977 by S21, pp.9-19.

505, which had been incorporated into the Zone and the leadership of which had been fashioned and implanted by Thuon in the late 1960s.¹³²

In "confessions" dated 28 February 1977, Koy Thuon implicated virtually the whole of the Sector 505 Committee. He recalled how the Organization had ordered him in 1963-1964 to build up base areas in Kracheh with a view to eventually linking Communist networks in the lowlands with the far Northeast, and how he had remained in charge of Kracheh until 1971, when he turned it over to the Organization. He recalled how all of the members of its wartime Committee had been "personally educated" by him, not least the Sector Secretary, his brother-in-law Yaem, who remained in post until being request by the Organization to staff the Central Committee office after liberation. Those who remained in charge after April 1975, including Sector Secretary Yi, were also his protégées and were largely of petty bourgeois intellectual background.¹³³

In a marginal note on "confessions" dated 5 April 1977, Son Sen gave instructions that some of those Thuon had implicated must be arrested and brought to S21, but that others should only be "evacuated" and kept under surveillance.¹³⁴

Finally, on 8 April 1977, Thuon wrote a retraction of some parts of his earlier "confessions," exonerating some of those whom he had named as "traitors." A marginal note by Son Sen explained that this document was written "when we unshackled the other side," and Thuon was asked "Who did you defame in your responses?"

Thuon replied that "previously, I was terribly afraid of that the Organization would ask follow questions to find these traitorous links, so I just kept on answering all over the place, implicating the Brothers and other comrades, so long as I myself would survive." He then provided lists of "truly revolutionary

¹³² Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Counter-Revolutionary Committee in Phnom Penh City," dated 9 April 1977 by S21, pp.20-27.

¹³³ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Organized Pracheachalana Links in Kracheh Sector," 28 February 1977, pp.1-9; see also Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On My Contact Links in the East Zone," 18 February 1977, p.5.

¹³⁴ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "On the Situation at the National Radio," 5 April 1977, p.1.

forces that I implicated." These included Pheum, Phuong, Chan (*alias* Seng Hong) and Lin *alias* Peam in the East; Nheum in the Northwest; Pok in the North; Vi, Lav, Lang, But, Thaong Si, Thaong Daeng, Sarun, Khamphoun, Svay and Ei in the Northeast; and Seat Chhae *alias* Tum at the General Staff. He said that, among others, he had falsely implicated Deum and Chhan of Division 164 in Kampung Saom. He retracted what he had said about many cadre and combatnats at "the Office of the Higher Organization (Pon, Ban, Ther, Lin, Reuan, Mong, Tang and Hun), explaining that most of them were less under the influence of Deuan than of Chheum Sâm-aok *alias* Pâng. He also said the Leng Seum Hak *alias* Sei was no traitor, explaining that she did not like her spouse Koy Thuon, and adding that Hanoi-trained Sat and the French-trained Di Phon also were innocent.¹³⁵

Conversely, according to these revised "confessions," Thuon had previously withheld information in his possession about the concealment of old society "traitorous forces" in the North Zone after 17 April. These included not only the three Khmer Republic general officers whom he had previously "confessed" that Sreng had kept alive, but a fourth general officer, one colonel, two majors, four captains, six first lieutenants, eight second lieutenants, numerous enlisted men, five senior civilian officials and some 200 other ex-civil servants. Many of these had supposedly been put to work in the North Zone rubber plantations. Similarly, according to Thuon's "confessions," Nhaem had kept one general officer alive in Kampung Saom and Sot had protected two in Siem Reap.¹³⁶

He also named some more "traitorous forces" that he had infiltrated or helped infiltrated into the Organization's Office, including K-1 Chairman Ket Chav *alias* Saem and S71 Vice Chairman Mav Khaem Nguon *alias* Phum, or who were at the Commerce Ministry, in Kampung Saom or in the armed forces.¹³⁷

¹³⁵ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "Truly Revolutionary Forces Whom I Implicated," 8 April 1977, pp.1-4. The marginal note is dated 9 April 1977.

¹³⁶ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "Truly Revolutionary Forces Whom I Implicated," 8 April 1977, pp.5-6.

¹³⁷ Koy Thuon *alias* Khuon *alias* Thuch, "Truly Revolutionary Forces Whom I Implicated," 8 April 1977, pp.6-13.