

CASE STUDY #1 – CAMBODIA

'To spare you is no profit; to destroy you is no loss.'

On November 9th 1953 Cambodia became an independent nation previously under French colonial rule (1863). Prince Sihanouk representing the monarchy was in power until March 18th 1970 when he was deposed by a military group led by lieutenant-general Lon Nol. Lon Nol would later become president of the Khmer Republic on October 9th of that same year, which was the name given to Cambodia at this time. Sihanouk was kicked out of power due to his lack of concern for the neighboring North Vietnamese. They attempted to control eastern Cambodia under communist rule. The depressing state of Cambodia's economic situation was also an indirect reflection on Prince Sihanouk's ability to control the country. For these reasons he was shamefully kicked out of power, but this of course didn't sit well with him. In 1960 he joined a communist guerrilla group known as the Khmer Rouge with the purpose of overthrowing Lon Nol and taking Cambodia back. From 1975-1979 this group was in power of the Khmer Republic. Under the leadership of Pol Pot and other such members as Nuon Chea, Ieng Sary, Son Sen, and Khieu Samphan; genocide became a large issue in Cambodia during this time.

The Vietnam War

As the political dispute in Cambodia was going on, there was a neighboring war in Vietnam that required the attention of President Lon Nol. For the most part Sihanouk was able to remain impartial during the conflict as he had let both sides (North and South Vietnam) use some space and resources from Cambodia. However, now that Lon Nol was in power, the US thought it acceptable to move into Cambodian territory as Lon Nol had strong ties with America. This made Cambodia a battle ground and as a result of war up to 750,000 Cambodians were killed.

Guns and bombs were some weapons utilized in the assault. The war caused many people to join the Khmer Rouge and soon had numbers exceeding 700,000. The communist group was now in a perfect position to rule Cambodia. They had support and an outside threat they could use to bring everyone closer together, and closer to the will of their word.

The Genocide

Pol Pot, leader of the Khmer Rouge, was a big fan of Mao's China. He wished to follow in his footsteps and soon the large and rigorous task of "ethnic cleansing" was underway. All intellectuals including nurses, engineers, teachers etc. were to be dispatched of immediately, in other words killed. Also, all un-communist folk or those who opposed the rule of Pol Pot were to be executed at once. All Cambodians were sent to work in farms with no pay and very little to eat. The sick, ill and disabled were driven out as well, and if they didn't leave fast enough, they would be shot like their neighboring counterparts. Children were taken from their parents and it was a crime to show affection, emotion of any kind.

Well over 2 million people perished in the Cambodian genocide. Causes consist of starvation, disease, execution and exhaustion. Ironically, in 1979 the Chinese, a fellow communist country, invaded Cambodia overthrowing the Khmer Rouge for the mistreatment of the Chinese; as they fell prey to the Khmer Rouge's tyrannical ways as well. As a result, the group fled past Thailand and for a brief period in time Cambodia was an absolute mess. However in 1990 a new coalition government was instituted and the former monarch, Prince Sihanouk, was elected to lead the new government. In 1995 graves had been uncovered and the traumatic lives led by the Cambodians were amplified as the horrific idea of genocide was truly brought to life.

CASE STUDY #2 – BOSNIA

“Please do something. Whatever you can. In the name of God, do something.”- Sarajevo 1995

In 1878 Bosnia was part of the Ottoman/Turkish Empire and then of the Austro-Hungarian Empire until the First World War. Upon completion of World War I, Bosnia joined with other countries such as Serbia and Croatia to form Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia, at the time, had a communist ruler named Josip Broz Tito. Unfortunately in 1980 Tito passed away, this left each country with no leader, no one to turn to, and an incredible want to become independent. There was now a three-way civil war brewing that forced the Croats, Serbs and Muslims into a heated battle.

The Genocide

All in all, Bosnia finally got its independence in 1992. However the Serbs didn't like the idea of "independence". The Bosnian Serbs still saw Slobodan Milosevic (leader of Yugoslavia) as their great leader; the anger and frustration just progressed from there. Most of the Bosnian Croats had fled due to conflict and hostility in the areas, but soon three fourths of Bosnia was controlled by the Bosnian Serbs lead by Ratko Mladic. Only a small sum remained to fight for their Bosnian homeland. Soon many cities such as Sarajevo (capital city of Bosnia) were attacked and many people were mercilessly slaughtered and killed. It was here that a young phone operator whispered the words "Please do something. Whatever you can. In the name of God, do something." The Dutch received the telegram and tried everything in their power to end the corruption. They told Mladic that if the area wasn't vacated immediately, air strike planes would come to drop bombs on the town at precisely 6:00am. The militia group however did not heed their warning, but still no bombs fell. Instead the situation only got worse, Mladic liked to

use the term “ethnic cleansing” as opposed to Genocide. It was quite a trick using doublespeak to deter any other countries from jumping into such as a “dirty” situation. Countries such as the USA and other members of the UN Security Council were only obliged to take action if “genocide” was involved. Nevertheless Mladic stuck to his gumption and well over 10,000 people were killed as a result of Mladic and his tyrants. He would separate the women from the men and make death slow and painful.

The After Math

Ratko Mladic and his partner Radovan Karadzic were arrested by NATO officers in 1998. Mourners accompanied by Dutch soldiers travelled to Srebrenica to mourn the loss of their loved ones and to revisit the place that holds so many memories.

CASE STUDY #3 – DARFUR

The genocide in Darfur represents one of the most extravagant losses of life in the 21st century. Beginning in February 2003 the main victims of the assault were the African tribes of Darfur. These consist of the Fur, the Massaleit, and the Zaghawa for the most part. One of the issues causing the tribes to conflict is the lack of arable land in the region. Politically the dispute occurred do to conflicting viewpoints between the Sudan Liberation Movement and the Justice and Equality Movement; one accusing the other of favoring Sudanese Arabs over the African tribes. Amongst all of the disarray there is a group known as the Janjaweed created for the sole purpose of killing off these unfortunate African tribes, they typically rode on the back of a horse or camel. The Janjaweed is a militia group created by the Sudanese government; although they deny any association with them the government has provided much financial assistance and

weaponry to the Janjaweed tribe with money received from oil profits. In 1989 in Khartoum (capital of Sudan) the government wanted to transform Sudan, even the Darfur region, into a pure Arabian society; meaning that even though the skin tone was relatively the same between the tribes of Africa and the Arabians, they still hoped for a time of ethnic cleansing within the country. When Sudan first gained independence as an Arabian nation in 1956, all of the African tribes fought against the oppressors for the north of Sudan. It is quite clear that there have been unresolved issues festering within these two parties for many years. It has been estimated that over 200,000 have been killed do to this heinous crime.

Darfur Today

President Omar Al-Bashir of Sudan has been indicted to the international criminal court on March 4th. Also, all foreign aid has been cut off from Sudan as to discourage their funding of militia groups such as the Janjaweed, and of artillery and weaponry. Additionally, in February of this year the Sudan Liberation Movement and the Justice and Equality Movement have signed a ceasefire that will hopefully bring an end to the awful Genocide that is astonishingly a current issue in today's society.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The involvement of various international organizations with regards to Genocide has been, for the most part, very helpful in not only being an excellent source of information, but for stepping up and taking action. Let's consider the genocide that was previously active in Bosnia for a moment. In 1995 when the Serbs violated their ceasefire agreement, NATO opened fire in order to make a point about following the rules. As a result negotiations of peace were held in

Dayton, Ohio later that year. Not only did NATO aid in subduing these criminals, but they have also organized a NATO peacekeeping team of approximately 60 000 to maintain the peace they have temporarily created. On the other hand however, the United Nations were rather disappointing in their efforts to maintain the peace in Bosnia. Normally it would have been the duty of the UN to step in and stop such feudal behavior, but because the term “ethnic cleansing” was used in place of the word “genocide” the UN felt no need to take effect. The group released a statement apologizing for the lack of effort on its part, even when the Dutch needed and asked for some sort of air support, the UN remained still and silent. The statement reads “Through error, misjudgments, and an inability to recognize the scope of the evil confronting us, we failed to do our part to save the people of Srebrenica from the Serb campaign of mass murder” (Senior Commander General Janvier). Despite this embarrassing confession, the Security Council of the United Nations redeemed itself. In March it brought the situation of Darfur to the International Criminal Court, and in April 2007, Janjaweed leader Ali Kushayb was charged with counts of war and counts against humanity. Not only that, but on July 14th 2008, the president of Sudan Omar al-Bashir was charged with three counts of genocide, five counts of crimes against humanity and two counts of murder. It would appear that despite everything, organizations such as NATO and the UN are doing a fine job at cleaning up other people’s mess.

When reviewing other organizations dealing with genocide and the relief of, there seemed to be many, all unique and all helpful. The Children’s Hunger Relief Fund has delivered over 300, 000 meals to Sudan and has a link to a site where one can donate money straight to their cause. Student’s Against Genocide have sold over 60,000 “stop genocide in Darfur” t-shirts. This raised an estimated 200, 000 for their charity. The Genocide Education Project clearly takes a different approach to helping Darfur, by educating the average person on the issues of the world

that he/she has the right to know about. The Cambodian Genocide Group created by the professors at Yale University are trying to raise funds in the name of genocide as well.

Overall, every little bit of money helps. And the more educated we can be on a subject, the stronger and more generous we will become.

IMPOSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Genocide is a global issue that has been going on for many years now, most people are aware of the meaning of the world, and most people have been affected or have bared witness to its horrid reality. It is true that reversing a problem of this magnitude is close to impossible, but there are little things that everyone can do to in order to make an impact and change a life. Get educated or educate someone else. Knowledge is power, and when one has the power to make an informed decision it is usually the right one. This is besides the obvious fact that without knowledge on the subject one cannot take an interest. Raise money is another way we can help the people who need it the most. All in all, if everyone can stand together and do our part to try and make a difference, we will, but it really does help to have somebody with power and authority on the righteous side. Take the President for example, him in collaboration with the UN and other such groups have made astounding differences when it comes to preventing Genocide. Have a large sum of people write letters in regards to genocide, what could it hurt. I truthfully believe that as a society we have attempted everything in order to completely eliminate genocide from the planet, but unfortunately unless we can accomplish world peace, genocide is no shorter a goal to reach.

