



Forces Ordered to 'Clear' Phnom Penh

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During the U.N.-led trial of former Cambodian regime leaders, a witness testified military forces were ordered to "clear" Phnom Penh of "enemies."

Pean Khean, 62, a former minister of commerce for the Khmer Rouge, testified Wednesday at the trial of Nuon Chea, Khieu Samphan and Ieng Sary, three Khmer Rouge leaders who are facing charges of atrocity crimes, including genocide, for acts committed by the Pol Pot regime, Voice of America reported.

"Those who were considered enemies would be destroyed when they were arrested," he said. "They were all to be cleared, and after them, the CIA from Phnom Penh had to be cleared too."

Pean Khean said he had joined the Communist Party of Kampuchea in 1966, when he was 16, "to liberate" Cambodia.

On Monday, attorneys for Nuon Chea attempted to implicate Finance Minister Keat Chhon and Foreign Affairs Minister Hor Namhong for their alleged roles during the reign of the Khmer Rouge, The Phnom Penh Post reported.

However, trial chamber president Nil Nonn blocked defense attorney Michiel Pestman from questioning witness Saloth Ban, Pol Pot's nephew who worked under Ieng Sary, about Keat Chhon and Hor Namhong.

"The witness is instructed not to answer this question, it is irrelevant," Nil Nonn ordered multiple times.