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The Cambodian horror was so bad that the Vietnamese occupation in 1978 was a perverse form of relief .

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The world might want to believe that the Khmer Rouge ca n't still be such bad guys , just as in the late 1970s it was reluctant to credit the reports of genocide then taking place .

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Some of our sources in Thailand say the notorious old Khmer Rouge leader , Pol Pot , has been holed up this summer in Khmer Rouge camps near the Thai-Cambodian border .

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So it 's difficult to swallow the notion that Mr. Baker is willing to accept conditions that would help the Khmer Rouge set up shop again in Phnom Penh .

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True , Prince Sihanouk backs the idea of such a coalition , at least for this week .

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It 's time the State Department recognized that China does not play by gentlemen 's rules .

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It would be entirely rational for communist insurgents in countries such as the Philippines or Peru to conclude the following : Fight viciously enough and the U.S. , under the banner of pragmatism , might eventually help negotiate your way to victory .

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U.S. diplomacy has done it before , and it will likely do it again .

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The administration and Congress have lately tangoed around the idea of sending military aid to Cambodia 's non-communists .

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But now the possibility of " diplomatic movement " (Vietnam 's withdrawal , the Baker initiative) has put that plan on hold , with the proviso that if the going got rough , the U.S. would then rearm the opposition .

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Why the timidity ?

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At the very least , the odds are heavily weighted against the prospects of preventing the Khmer Rouge and Cambodia 's communists from ultimately moving against their opponents .

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When that day comes , it would be particularly awful to know that the United States sat on military aid and deprived these people of the means to settle their fate with at least a little honor .