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Defenders from the Left

I am disappointed that Michael Vickery [LETTERS, 11 Jan.] should have found it necessary to resort to sarcasm to respond to my point that from 1975-78 several prominent members of the American Left defended the Khmer Rouge regime against their critics and heaped praise on that regime's "agricultural reforms" and "agricultural revolution."

To refresh his memory, I would respectfully suggest that Vickery re-read George Hildebrand and Gareth Porter's 1976 book, *Cambodia: Starvation and Revolution* and Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman's 1979 book, *After the Cataclysm*. Hildebrand and Porter defended the policies of the Khmer Rouge regime and praised its agricultural revolution. Chomsky cited US congressional testimonies by David Chandler and Porter to dismiss as "myth" allegations that "the leadership of Democratic Kampuchea adopted a policy of physically eliminating whole classes of people."

Interestingly, Chomsky in 1977 cited the writings of Vickery to refute refugees' testimonies on abusive conditions in Cambodia. Vickery was quoted as equating the forced relocations from Cambodian cities as comparable to "basic policies considered by bourgeois economists and political scientists to be rational and practical for a country with problems similar to Cambodia."

TOMMY KOH
Washington Singapore Ambassador