

While most of the patients looked bright and alert, one patient, Cheng Soeur, 20 years old, was obviously suffering. His breathing was labored, his lips swollen and cyanotic. He still had fever and his hospital record showed that he had malaria (Plasmodium falciparum ++). The Khmer took a blood sample from Cheng Soeur on February 14, 1982, at 1100 hrs, and a urine sample on February 15, 1982, at 0700 hrs. Both samples were handed over to the investigator and have been sent to appropriate laboratories for analysis. Cheng Soeur said that this was his first experience with chemicals; six others have had previous exposures (1981), at which time the shells were much closer and some victims "fell into a coma and couldn't walk for an hour". Otherwise, the symptoms were said to be the same.

2.2 Hmong

On February 20 and 21, 1982, the principal investigator visited Ban Vinai Refugee Camp, close to the Thailand-Laos border; Mr. M. Grinius and the investigator interviewed two victims who had been interviewed on earlier occasions by either the physicians in the camp or by Dr. Amos Townsend¹⁾.

Xia May Wong reported that he had witnessed a gas attack on December 20, 1981, at Phou Ynaw. Xia May Wong was in a rice field about one mile from the village when he heard the noise of a jet plane, which flew over the village twice. Fifteen minutes later, people saw "poison" on trees and rocks; the color of the "poison" was described as yellow to orange. Xia May Wong didn't dare go into the village until the next day. When he returned, he found five dead people. Pigs were said to have died too, and plant leaves had holes in them. Survivors told him that they felt nauseated, that their eyes felt like "falling out of their sockets", and that seizures and diarrhea occurred within five minutes. The final count of dead was 20. Xia May Wong used a bamboo scoop to collect some of the powder in a container, "but people who did so got sick nevertheless". If the powder came into contact with the skin it hurt.

Xia May Wong said that plants were affected by the poison as well. Cabbage, rice and other plants turned yellow in about 10-14 days.

The same person had been seen as a patient by Dr. Derek Bird, one of the

¹⁾ Medical Coordinator, International Rescue Committee.