

ACTION PW/MIA INFO DCM POL SA2 FXA CJTF DAIO INHR (3)

VZCZCTRO106BK0063

PP RUFHK  
 DF RUMTFS #2257/01 2450629  
 ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
 P 020629Z SEP 93

02-SEP-93 TOR: 06:40  
 CTRG: DAO  
 DIST: DAO3

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE  
 TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5176  
 RUHQHQ/CDR JTF-FA HONOLULU HI  
 INFO RUFKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC//J5// PRIORITY  
 RUFHEK/USDAO BANGKOK//POW-MIA//  
 RUFHEK/CJTFFA DET ONE BANGKOK  
 RUHQSCG/USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//J3//  
 RUEKJCS/USCINCPAC LO WASHDC  
 RHHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
 RUFKJCS/DIA WASHDC//DOF//  
 RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC//USDP:RSA//  
 BT  
 UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 VIENTIANE 002257

STATE FOR CA/OCS/CCS AND EAP/VLC

F.O. 12356; N/A  
 TAGS: KPOW, MOPS, IA  
 SUBJ: FOLLOW-UP VISIT TO LAO NATIONAL FILM ARCHIVE

FROM CJTFFA DET THREE, VIENTIANE

REF: AMEMB VTNE 1783/JTFFA-DFT 3, 160504Z JUL 93

1. SUMMARY: DURING A FOLLOW-UP VISIT TO THE LAO FILM ARCHIVE, THE ARCHIVE DEPUTY DIRECTOR REQUESTED THAT SUPPORT FOR U.S. RESEARCH ACTIVITIES BE SUPPORTED THROUGH PROVIDING NECESSARY MATERIALS AND CONSIDERATION TO PROVIDE EQUIPMENT AND FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS TO UPGRADE ARCHIVE FILM PRESERVATION CAPABILITIES. PARTIAL LISTINGS (CATALOGS) OF FILM HOLDINGS WERE PROVIDED AND THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR AGREED TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL LISTINGS WITHIN A FEW DAYS. ONE FILM, SELECTED BY THE ARCHIVE AS ONE OF POTENTIAL INTEREST, WAS REVIEWED. THE PROPAGANDA FILM INCLUDED GENERAL SCENES OF PATHET LAO FORCES SHOOTING DOWN AMERICAN AIRCRAFT, TAKING OVER THE AMERICAN PADAR FACILITY AT PHOU PHA THI AND A FEW BRIEF SCENES OF AN AMERICAN PRISONER OF WAR, AIRCRAFT WRECKAGE AND CAPTURED IDENTIFICATION CARDS. DET THREE COMMANDER AGREED TO LOOK INTO PROVIDING THE FILM ARCHIVE WITH A MODERN FILM EDITING MACHINE ON A TEMPORARY LOAN BASIS AND ARRANGING A MEETING WITH THE EMBASSY U.S. INFORMATION SERVICE (USIS) DIRECTOR TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE AVENUES OF SUPPORT TO MEET THE ARCHIVE'S FACILITY IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES. THE NATIONAL FILM ARCHIVE WAS COMPLETELY PREPARED FOR THE DET THREE VISIT AND WAS TOTALLY COOPERATIVE. END SUMMARY.

2. ON THE MORNING OF 1 SEP 93, JTF-FA DET THREE CDR, LTC KENDALL AND CASUALTY RESOLUTION SPECIALIST, MR.

GADONNY VISITED THE LAO NATIONAL FILM ARCHIVE WITH LAO MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AMERICAN DESK OFFICER, MR. SONDACHAN. ARCHIVE DEPUTY DIRECTOR, MR. BOUNCHAO PHICHIT AND CHIEF CATALOGER, MR. VONGCHIT PHOMMACHACK WERE PREPARED WITH ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ASKED BY DET THREE DURING THE PREVIOUS VISIT. LTC KENDALL LED OFF THE DISCUSSION BY INFORMING MR. BOUNCHAO THAT HIS REPORT TO HIS SUPERIORS OF THE DETAILS OF HIS LAST VISIT, INCLUDING THE MR. BOUNCHAO'S INTEREST IN WORKING WITH DET THREE TO RESEARCH THE HOLDINGS OF THE FILM ARCHIVES, WAS WELL RECEIVED. MR. BOUNCHAO RESPONDED THAT SINCE THE 15 JULY VISIT, HE HAS DONE SOME OF HIS OWN RESEARCH AND COMPLETED MOST OF THE CATALOGING FOR FILM HOLDINGS HIS STAFF HAS REVIEWED TO DATE.

3. COSTS OF RESEARCH SUPPORT: MR. BOUNCHAO STATED THAT AFTER DISCUSSING WITH HIS SUPERIORS HOW THE ARCHIVES COULD SUPPORT DET THREE, HE HAS DECIDED THAT ASSISTANCE AND FILM REPRODUCTION COULD BE BEST BE DONE ON AN EXCHANGE BASIS, RATHER THAN ASSESSING FEES. HE STATED THAT AS AN EXAMPLE, IF DET THREE WANTED TO COPY FILMS OR SEGMENTS OF FILMS, RATHER THAN PAY CASH, IT MAY BE SUITABLE IF THE U.S. SIMPLY PROVIDED MATERIALS SUCH AS FILM AND CHEMICALS. HE EXPLAINED THAT PROCEDURE FOR COPYING FILM INCLUDES MAKING A NEGATIVE FROM THE POSITIVE MASTER, THEN EITHER A FILM POSITIVE OR PRINTS COULD BE MADE FROM THE NEGATIVE. MR. BOUNCHAO ADDED THAT BEYOND PROVIDING MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES FOR FILM REPRODUCTION, ANY TYPE OF ASSISTANCE THAT THE US. COULD OFFER IN EXCHANGE FOR THE COOPERATION ON THE PART OF THE ARCHIVES WOULD BE APPRECIATED. HE EXPLAINED THAT THIS COULD INCLUDE EQUIPMENT AND/OR ASSISTANCE IN UPGRADING THE ARCHIVE FACILITY.

4. FILM EDITING MACHINE: LTC KENDALL RESPONDED THAT JTF-FA WAS LOOKING INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF PROVIDING, ON A TEMPORARY LOAN BASIS, A MODERN FILM EDITING MACHINE WHICH COULD BE USEFUL IN REVIEWING FILMS FOR POW/MIA ASSOCIATED INFORMATION AS WELL AS FACILITATING THE ARCHIVES EFFORT TO REVIEW APPROXIMATELY ONE THOUSAND REELS OF FILM WHICH HAS NOT YET BEEN CATALOGED. BOUNCHAO RESPONDED THAT THIS TYPE OF ASSISTANCE, EVEN TEMPORARY WOULD BE WELCOMED, AND ASKED IF THE EDITING MACHINE WAS CAPABLE OF REVIEWING BOTH 16 AND 35 MILLIMETER FILM. LTC KENDALL STATED HE DID NOT KNOW, BUT WOULD CHECK. MR. BOUNCHAO SAID HE HAS ABOUT 200 REELS OF NEGATIVE FILM WITHOUT A POSITIVE COPY; HE WAS INTERESTED IF THE EDITING MACHINE WOULD BE OF VALUE IN REVIEWING THESE.

5. ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO THE ARCHIVE: LTC KENDALL

INFORMED MR. BOUNCHAO THAT BEYOND PROVIDING THE FILM EDITING MACHINE AND PROVIDING MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES FOR USE IN FILM REPRODUCTION FOR DET THREE, ANY OTHER ASSISTANCE WOULD HAVE TO BE SOUGHT FROM OTHER U.S. GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES. LTC KENDALL ADDED THAT HE WOULD REQUEST THAT THE EMBASSY UNITED STATES INFORMATION SERVICE (USIS) DIRECTOR, MRS. JOHNSON, VISIT THE FILM ARCHIVES TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE AVENUES OF ASSISTANCE. MR. BOUNCHAO THEN PASSED A DOCUMENT WHICH HE PREPARED, IN ENGLISH, WHICH DISCUSSED SEVERAL AREAS IN WHICH THE ARCHIVES COULD USE ASSISTANCE. THESE AREAS INCLUDED TRAINING AND FACILITY IMPROVEMENT (SEE PARA 9). LTC KENDALL AGREED TO REVIEW THE DOCUMENT AND PROVIDE A COPY TO USIS DIRECTOR, MRS. JOHNSON.

#### 6. FILM CATALOGS:

- A. MR. BOUNCHAO PROVIDED A COPY OF THREE FILM "CATALOGS" TO LTC KENDALL. THE CATALOGS, TYPED IN LAO, ARE CAREFUL COPIES OF A TYPED LISTING OF FILM CONTAINING A TOTAL OF 386 TITLES. EACH TITLE IS A SINGLE LINE ENTRY WHICH INCLUDES FILM SIZE, WHETHER COLOR OR BLACK/WHITE, NUMBER OF REELS, SOUND OR NOT, CATALOG NUMBER, LANGUAGE AND PRODUCTION YEAR.

- B. THE "LAO" LISTING INCLUDES 72 TITLES INCLUDING TITLES AS XIANGKHOANG LIBERATION FORCES, AFTER THE LIBERATION OF XIANGKHOANG, FREEDOM BATTALION, NEUTRALISTS DEFEND FROM ENEMY PARATROOPERS, LAND OF FREEDOM, DRY SEASON VICTORY AND OTHER MISCELLANEOUS POLITICAL/CULTURAL TOPICS INCLUDING COVERAGE OF NATIONAL LEVEL MEETINGS AND VISITS OF FOREIGN DIGNITARIES.

- C. A SECOND CATALOG OF "SILENT MOVIES" INCLUDES 258 TITLES SUCH AS "MILITARY DAY," "COMBINED FORCES," AND AN ASSORTMENT OF TITLES RELATING TO VARIOUS GOVERNMENT MEETINGS, FOREIGN VISITS, GOVERNMENT HOLIDAYS, VOTING, AND AN VARIOUS CULTURAL TOPICS.

D. THE CATALOG OF "FOREIGN" TITLES INCLUDES 26 TITLES, INCLUDING A VIETNAMESE FILMS "VISITORS WHO WERE NOT INVITED," "A VISIT TO THE LIBERATED AREA," A RUSSIAN FILM ENTITLED "WAR AND PEACE," AND AN ASSORTMENT OF OTHER FILM TITLES IN ENGLISH, FRENCH, LAO AND CZECHOSLOVAKIAN.

7. FILM REVIEW: AFTER THE INITIAL MEETING, MR. BOUNCHAO SHOWED THE FILM, "DRY SEASON VICTORY" (XAISANA LADU HENG) WHICH INCLUDED A WIDE RANGE OF SCENES OF PATHET LAO FORCES IN ACTION IN DEFENDING THE LIBERATED ZONE FROM THE "IMPERIALIST AMERICAN AGGRESSORS," INCLUDING GENERIC SCENES OF PATHET LAO FORCES SHOOTING DOWN AIRCRAFT, FOOTAGE SEVERAL U.S. AIRCRAFT CRASH SITES - AT LEAST TWO OF WHICH INCLUDED TAIL NUMBERS OR PARTS THEREOF, FOOTAGE OF PHOU PHA THI AFTER IT WAS OVER-RUN (A BRIEF SCENE OF A CORPSE IS INCLUDED BUT NATIONALITY COULD NOT BE DISCERNED), A PREVIOUSLY SEEN PHOTOGRAPH OF AMERICAN POW, CAPT DAVID PRDLICKA, A BRIEF DISPLAY OF CAPTURED ITEMS, INCLUDING WHAT APPEARED TO BE A MILITARY IDENTIFICATION CARD, THE

DETAILS OF WHICH PASSED TO QUICKLY TO MAKE OUT DURING THE VIEWING. (NOTE: SOME OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS PREVIOUSLY SEEN BY U.S. INVESTIGATORS IN THE LAO MILITARY MUSEUM AND THE REVOLUTIONARY MUSEUM APPEAR TO BE PRINTS FROM FOOTAGE INCLUDED IN THIS FILM.) AFTER WATCHING THIS FILM, THE SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES INCLUDED WATCHING A SECOND FILM ENTITLED "LAND OF FREEDOM." DUE TO A PROJECTOR FAILURE, THE ARCHIVE WAS UNABLE TO SHOW THIS ONE. LTC KENDALL REQUESTED THAT HE BE PERMITTED TO RETURN ON 3 SEPTEMBER AT 1400 TO VIEW THIS FILM. MR. GADOURY TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO PHOTOGRAPH THE FACILITY INCLUDING ROOMS AND EQUIPMENT DESCRIBED IN REF.

8. SUGGESTION TO FILM JOINT FIELD ACTIVITIES: AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING, LTC KENDALL ASKED MR. BOUNCHAO IF THE ARCHIVE HAD THE CAPABILITY TO DOCUMENT A LAO-U.S. JOINT FIELD ACTIVITY. MR. BOUNCHAO ASSURED LTC KENDALL THAT HE DID AND WOULD BE INTERESTED, SUBJECT TO LAO GOVERNMENT APPROVAL. LTC KENDALL STATED THAT HE COULD NOT MAKE A COMMITMENT, BUT AGREED TO SUBMIT THE SUGGESTION THROUGH HIS SUPERIORS.

9. TRANSCRIPT OF PROJECT PROPOSAL: THE DOCUMENT PASSED BY MR. BOUNCHAO WITH HIS ASSISTANCE PROJECT PROPOSAL IS PARAPHRASED BELOW:

- # PROJECT FOR LAO FILM PRESERVATION #

- I. PROJECT AIMS: SAVE FILM FROM DAMAGE AND PRESERVE THEM FOR FUTURE USE. FILMS CONTAIN SIGNIFICANT HISTORICAL, POLITICAL, SOCIAL-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL DATA.

- II. FILM PRESERVATION STATUS: WHEN THE FILM ARCHIVES WAS FOUNDED IN 1975, THERE WERE ONLY THREE STAFFERS. THEIR TASK WAS TO ACQUIRE FILMS FROM USIS, THE INFORMATION OFFICE, MOVIE THEATERS IN VIENTIANE AND FILMS PRODUCED IN THE LIBERATION ZONE. IN 1977 THE ARCHIVES WAS EXPANDED AND PLACED UNDER THE CINEMA DEPARTMENT. ALTHOUGH THE MISSION WAS TO CATALOG AND PRESERVE FILMS, THIS WAS NOT POSSIBLE DUE TO BUDGET LIMITATIONS. THE FILMS WERE SIMPLY STACKED IN UNAIRCONDITIONED ROOMS. IN 1985, THE CINEMA DEPARTMENT RECEIVED 50 MILLION KIP TO BUILD THE FILM STORAGE BUILDING. BECAUSE OF A SUBSEQUENT LACK OF FUNDS, THE CONSTRUCTION AND INSTALLATION OF NECESSARY EQUIPMENT WAS HALTED DUE TO INSUFFICIENT FUNDS. UNDER THE GOVERNMENTAL RESTRUCTURING IN 1988, THE FILM ARCHIVES SECTION WAS DISCONTINUED AND THE FILMS ON HAND WERE GIVEN TO THE STATE CINEMATOGRAPHIC COMPANY. SOME HISTORICAL FILMS, CONSIDERED PART OF THE LAO NATIONAL HERITAGE, WERE DISTRIBUTED TO DIFFERENT PROVINCES AND OTHERS WERE SIMPLY LEFT TO COLLECT DUST, UNCAPED FOR. CONSIDERING THE SITUATION, I RECOMMENDED TO THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND CULTURE THAT THE FILM ARCHIVE BE RECREATED TO PRESERVE THE LAO FILMS. THIS HAPPENED ON 1/7/1991. SINCE ITS FOUNDED TWO YEARS AGO, WE HAVE TRIED TO RECATALOG THE FILMS AND PROVIDE ADEQUATE STORAGE. BUT THE RESULTS HAVE BEEN LESS THAN ADEQUATE AS WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO UPGRADE OUR FILM STORAGE FACILITY. THE FILMS CONTINUE TO DEGRADATE. WE LACK ARCHIVISTS, AIRCONDITIONED ROOMS AND TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT FOR FILM PRESERVATION (SHELVES, CENTRAL AIRCONDITIONERS, VENTILATORS, ASPIRATORS, ETC.). THEREFORE WE REQUIRE FUNDS FOR TRAINING APPLIED TO IMPROVE FILM STORAGE CONDITIONS.

- III. PROJECT OUTLINE:

- 1. TRAINING FOR THREE MONTHS IN THAILAND FOR TWO PERSONS.
- 2. RECONSTRUCTION OF FILM STOREHOUSE AND PROVISION OF SHELVES, CENTRAL AIRCONDITIONING, ETC.

- IV. AMOUNTS FOR THE PROJECT:

- TRAINING:	USD 13,000
- RECONSTRUCTION:	USD 27,340
- TOTAL AMOUNT:	USD 40,340

(NOTE: ATTACHED TO THE ABOVE DOCUMENT IS A SEPARATE DOCUMENT, TYPED IN LAO, WHICH PROVIDES RECONSTRUCTION COST BREAKDOWN BY ITEM. END NOTE.)

10. COMMENTS:

- A. CDR DET THREE'S OFFER TO LOOK INTO PROVIDING THE LAO FILM ARCHIVE WITH A MODERN FILM EDITING MACHINE WAS MET WITH OBVIOUS ENTHUSIASM. THIS CAPABILITY WOULD BE WELL SUITED TO SATISFYING U.S. REQUIREMENTS AS WELL AS ASSISTING THE ARCHIVE IN COMPLETING THEIR CATALOGING

PROJECT.

- B. MR. POUNCHAO WAS PREPARED IN DETAIL FOR THIS FOLLOW-ON VISIT. HE WAS READY WITH EVERY ITEM DISCUSSED DURING THE 15 JULY VISIT AND WAS COMPLETELY COOPERATIVE. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT TO UPGRADE HIS STAFF AND FACILITY ARE MORE IMPORTANT TO HIM THAN DIRECT PAYMENTS FOR SERVICES PROVIDED IN SHOWING AND REPRODUCING FILM. THE AUGUST 1992 "MANAGER" MAGAZINE ARTICLE ON THE NATIONAL FILM ARCHIVE NOTED THAT 1989 FUNDING SUPPORT FROM SWEDEN WAS DIVERTED TO OTHER PROJECTS. MR. POUNCHAO CLEARLY WOULD PREFER QUID PRO QUID ASSISTANCE THAT DIRECTLY IMPROVES HIS FACILITY AND CANNOT BE DIVERTED.

- C. IFT THREE WILL COORDINATE WITH USIS DIRECTOR ON OTHER METHODS THAT ASSISTANCE MAY BE PROVIDED TO THE FILM ARCHIVE. THE CATALOGS AND FILM PRESERVATION PROJECT PROPOSAL DOCUMENTS WILL BE FAXED TO HQ JTF-FA FOR REVIEW. PRINTS OF PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN AT THE FILM ARCHIVE WILL BE FORWARDED TO HQ JTF-FA. WILKINSON  
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