

*in Vietnam of aerial
Photography Evaluation*

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19 November 1973

Dr. Saunders MacLane
Vice-President
National Academy of Sciences
2101 Constitution Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20418

Dear Saunders,

The following is a summary of my understanding of the matters I related to you at the end of our panel meeting in New York yesterday.

During the summer the Academy was advised by Army personnel that classified imagery of South Vietnam, the nature of which I do not know, indicated that herbicide spraying had caused much more severe and extensive damage than was indicated by the then current CEHV estimate. The Academy accordingly arranged for the CEHV member directing the forest study to view this imagery in Washington in August. However, he was permitted to see only a degraded form of the imagery, presumably because of the classification status of the original material. He concluded that there was no necessary contradiction between what he was shown and the current CEHV estimate. Shortly thereafter, an Academy official, to whom the necessary clearances could be granted, was invited to view the material in its un-degraded form. This he declined on the ground that he was not technically qualified to evaluate such materials.

I have refrained from communicating this information to you until the revised CEHV forest chapter became available and until the RRC panel had prepared its review. At that point I sought and received permission from an Army official to appraise you of this matter.

Sincerely yours,

M. Meselson

Matthew Meselson