

ROUTINE

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PT 00104 353/14362

19 Dec 81

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ACTION: USAG ETC DCA DMHB USAMMA AFMMFO USAMBRDL USAMRIID  
153 MED DET USAMRDC USAMIIA

INFO: USAG ETC DCA DMHB USAMMA AFMMFO USAMBRDL USAMRIID  
153 MED DET USAMRLC USAMIIA

OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_ MSG CONT NR: 104 OPER INITIAL: pu

RTTUZYUW RUMTFIA1624 3531348-UUAA--RUEORDF.

ZNR UUAA ZYN ZPD  
R 191230Z DEC 81  
FM FBIS BANGKOK TH  
TO RUHJFBA/FBIS OKINAWA JA  
RUMJHK/FBIS HONG KONG  
RUEORDF/DIR USAMIIA FT DETRICK MD//SGMI-SA//  
RUEADWD/DA WASH DC//DASG-MIR//  
RAYWYA/DNA CANBERRA AS  
RAYWYB/JID CANBERRA AS  
RUCIFBA/CINCPAC SCOTT AFB IL//INZ//  
RUCLAKA/CDR 4TH PSYOP GROUP FT BRAGG NC  
RUDOMKA/FBIS LONDON UK  
RUEBHAA/STORAGE CENTER FBIS WASH DC  
RUHQHQA/CINCPAC HONOLULU HI  
RUHQHQA/COMIPAC HONOLULU HI  
RUMJFS/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE LAOS  
RUTLAAA/FBIS WASH DC  
ZEN RUMJQB/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK TH  
FBBK  
BT  
UNCLAS 1E/BBC



(ATTN FT DETRICK, DASG-MIR: YOU ARE BEING SENT ONLY A SELECTED PORTION OF FORMER LAO NATIONAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR DR KHAMSENGKEO SENGSAHTHIT'S 15 DECEMBER PRESS CONFERENCE IN BEIJING DEEMED TO BE OF SPECIFIC INTEREST TO YOU)

REF BK191220 BEIJING LAO LAOS 161230 /// DESERT THEIR RANKS.

TAKE 3 OF 3 -- BEIJING REPORTS INTERVIEW WITH LAO DEFECTOR

BK191230

((TEXT)) MY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, WHICH IS ATTACHED TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH MINISTRY, IS ALSO CONTROLLED BY VIETNAMESE ADVISERS AND SPECIALISTS. THOSE VIETNAMESE WHO WERE ASSIGNED TO PERFORM TASKS IN THIS DEPARTMENT DURING MY TENURE WERE TECHNICALLY SPECIALISTS, BUT IN POINT OF FACT THEY WERE PERSONS WHO HAD BEEN ASSIGNED TO FOLLOW UP THE WORK IN MY DEPARTMENT. IN ADDITION, A VICE MINISTER OF THE VIETNAMESE PUBLIC HEALTH MINISTRY IS NORMALLY SENT TO MAKE AN INSPECTION IN THIS DEPARTMENT EVERY YEAR OR EVERY 6 MONTHS.

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((QUESTION)) ASKED BY A REPORTER ABOUT WHAT ITEMS VIETNAM HAS GIVEN TO LAOS, KHAMSENGKEO REPLIED:

((ANSWER)) I HAVE NEVER SEEN AN ACTUAL ITEM -- BE IT OLD EQUIPMENT OR MEDICINE -- GIVEN AS AID TO THE LAO PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE BY VIETNAM. ON THE CONTRARY, VIETNAM HAS OFTEN STOLEN AID MATERIALS WHICH WERE GIVEN TO LAOS BY FOREIGN COUNTRIES. IT HAS SOMETIMES TAKEN THE NEW FOREIGN AID MATERIALS AND REPLACED THEM WITH OLD, USED ONES. THOSE AID MATERIALS INCLUDE AN AUTOMOBILE. I HAVE OFTEN HEARD ABOUT THIS MATTER.

REGARDING THE SHORTCOMINGS SUFFERED BY THE VIETNAMESE TROOPS IN KAMPUCHEA, I SEE THAT THEY ARE SIMILAR TO THE ONES THEY HAVE SUFFERED IN LAOS. IN MARCH OF THIS YEAR, I MYSELF HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO ATTEND A MEETING IN PHNOM PENH WHERE A KAMPUCHEAN FRIEND TOLD ME THAT VIETNAM HAS OFTEN STOLEN AID MATERIALS GIVEN TO THE HENG SAMRIN REGIME BY FOREIGN COUNTRIES. SIMILAR INCIDENTS HAVE ALSO OCCURRED IN MY COUNTRY. IT IS TRUE THAT WHEN THE VIETNAMESE TROOPS WERE FIRST BEING SENT INTO LAOS THEY BOUGHT WHATEVER THEY WANTED. BUT, AT PRESENT, THEY DO NOT HAVE MONEY. SO, WHEREVER THEY GO, THE VIETNAMESE TROOPS JUST TAKE WHATEVER THEY NEED FROM THE LAO PEOPLE WITHOUT PAYING ANY MONEY TO THEM. THERE WERE SEVERAL OCCASIONS WHEN THEY EVEN PLUNDERED PROPERTY BELONGING TO THE LAO PEOPLE BEFORE KILLING THEM.

((QUESTION)) WHEN ASKED BY A FOREIGN REPORTER ABOUT THE VIETNAMESE USE OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS IN LAOS, KHAMSENGKEO SAID:

((ANSWER)) WITH REGARD TO THE PROBLEM OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS, AS YOU REPORTERS ARE WELL AWARE, IT HAS BEEN MADE KNOWN ALL OVER THE WORLD. THIS PROBLEM IS PRESENTLY BEING DISCUSSED IN THE UNITED NATIONS. A UN COMMITTEE HAS BEEN SET UP TO INVESTIGATE THE FACTS OF THIS MATTER.

SOME ARMY OFFICERS HAVE INFORMED ME ABOUT THIS MATTER AND SAID THAT IT IS TRUE THAT VIETNAM HAS USED CHEMICAL WEAPONS IN LAOS. THE VIETNAMESE SIDE HAS NEVER LET THE LAO SIDE BE INFORMED OF THIS MATTER. IT IS THE VIETNAMESE THEMSELVES WHO HAVE USED CHEMICAL WEAPONS.

VIETNAM HAS USED CHEMICAL WEAPONS IN TWO WAYS: ONE WAY IS TO FIRE THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS FROM ARTILLERY PIECES OR MORTARS. WHEN THE SHELLS HIT THE GROUND, THEY EXPLODE AND THE TOXIC CHEMICALS ARE THEN RELEASED. THOSE WHO ARE POISONED WITH THE TOXIC CHEMICALS BECOME FAINT. VIETNAM HAS PARTICULARLY USED THIS TYPE OF WEAPON AGAINST THE MONG ETHNIC MINORITY IN THE MOUNTAINOUS AREAS IN CENTRAL LAOS OR IN NORTHERN XIENG KHOUANG PROVINCE.

ANOTHER WAY THAT IT HAS USED THIS TYPE OF WEAPONS IS TO FIRE IT IN ROCKETS CARRIED BY AIRCRAFT. VIETNAM HAS USED THIS METHOD IN PHOU BIA -- A MOUNTAINS AREA CONNECTING XIENG KHOUANG, SAM NEUA AND LUANG PRABANG -- WHERE THE PEOPLE OF MONG NATIONALITY ALSO LIVE.

((QUESTION)) WHEN ASKED BY A FOREIGN REPORTER WHETHER THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN LAOS WAS BETTER BEFORE OR AFTER THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE REPUBLIC, KHAMSENGKEO REPLIED:

((ANSWER)) REGARDING THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN MY COUNTRY, GENERALLY SPEAKING THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN MY COUNTRY UNDER THE OLD SYSTEM IS AS BAD AS THAT UNDER THE NEW SYSTEM OR IN THE PERIOD AFTER THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE REPUBLIC. IN THE OLD SYSTEM, THE LAO ECONOMY WAS CALLED A SEMICOLONIAL AND SEMIFEUDAL ECONOMY. ACTUALLY, THE LAO ECONOMY IN THAT PERIOD WAS A SEMICOLONIAL ECONOMY. THIS IS

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BECAUSE THE FOREIGN AGGRESSORS AT THAT TIME HAD IMPLEMENTED A NEOCOLONIALIST SYSTEM, THEREFORE, THE ECONOMY OF LAOS HAD BECOME A NEOCOLONIALIST ECONOMY. THE LE DAWN VIETNAMESE CLIQUE HAS ALSO IMPLEMENTED A NEOCOLONIALIST SYSTEM IN ITS ECONOMIC OCCUPATION OF LAOS. THIS IS WHY I SEE THE LAO ECONOMY UNDER BOTH THE OLD AND NEW SYSTEMS AS A COLONIAL ECONOMY. IT HAS NOT YET BECOME A GENUINELY INDEPENDENT ECONOMY.

((QUESTION)) ASKED BY A FOREIGN REPORTER ABOUT SOVIET INVOLVEMENT IN LAOS, KHAMSENGKEO REPLIED:

((ANSWER)) SO FAR AS I KNOW, THERE ARE NOW SOME 3,000 SOVIET NATIONALS IN LAOS. OF THESE SOVIET CADRES, SOME OF THEM HAVE, OF COURSE, WORKED IN ACADEMIC FIELDS WHILE OTHERS HAVE PERFORMED SECRET DUTIES WHILE ATTACHED TO THE KGB.

(ENDALL) 161230 DC/NEWMAN/PS 19/1415Z DEC

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