

Chen: report on 'Amph'?

Conversations with Roger RUMF, 28 April 1983, Washington

At his house (1016 G Street NE), 1500-1800 hrs. Jacqui Chagnon, his wife, not there.

- 1) He is still writing up his trip report (Dec 82: Thai camps; Jan-Feb 83: Laos). Will send MSM a copy when it is done so that Matt can pick out the bits that should go into the Amer Acad YR Conf final report. He will also send me a copy.
- 2) Gave me a copy of his recent letter from the Swedish Ambassador (Oberg). Happy that I should inquire in Sweden as to official Swedish support for his projected scientific investigation visit to Laos. I told him that MSM would be happy to be involved only if there were such Swedish sponsorship. I said I would ask about what had happened to last year's MSM/Sweden/Laos planning.
- 3) Talked about composition of his team. He asked if I wanted to join. I said yes.
- 4) In the Boston area he had spoken with a Lao refugee. The refugee had been a Lao Govt soldier, fighting Hmong in Phou Bia area 1976-79 incl. Muong Cha area east of Phou Bia. Says he knew of no CW use, though helicopters had been used to drop some kind of incendiary.
- 5) During 1978-81 the US Embassy in Bangkok did ^{not do} much active inquiring into the YR stories. But now they were, in the person of Carter Read.
- 6) From his inquiries among Laotians: there are stories of people getting sick following dew-like substances appearing on ground. Two types: yellow/white spots and black/red spots. Sickness described corresponds to YR symptoms--hemorrhaging and local skin effects (especially seen in children). But no association with aircraft. These stories are from areas not reported as YR areas by USG. Nor are they confined to highland Hmong villages; also reported by lowland Laos.
- 7) Doesn't trust Dawson of Bangkok Post
- 8) Denny Lane at US EMB Bangkok now seems sceptical of the YR stories. I might get this confirmed by Amb Jim Leonard, who was there with three other diplomats plus Murray Hibert in Feb 1983.
- 9) Questions he suggested I might put to Crocker:
 - a. Do the references to aircraft in the refugee-interview summaries come from the refugees themselves or from other (hard) intelligence? (cp. (6) above).
 - b. How do the US interviewers work? Are the questions about CW/YR at the start or at the end of interviews?
 - c. Had there been YR stories from camps other than Ban Vinai? Townsend had been to some of them, but had heard no such stories.
 - d. US herbicide operations in Laos?
- 10) Now on sale: Buckingham, Operation Ranchhand: The Air Force and Herbicides in Southeast Asia 1961-71 (Dept of the Air Force: Office of Air Force History), Washington: USGPO, 1982.