

ATTACHMENT 10

REPRODUCED FROM THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

59/104

Stenographic Transcript of
HEARINGS
Before the

SELECT COMMITTEE ON POW/MIA AFFAIRS

Original
(Copy 182)

UNITED STATES SENATE

DEPOSITION OF CHIEF, EAST ASIA DIVISION (1976-81)

Thursday, October 1, 1992

Washington, D.C.

ALDERSON REPORTING COMPANY
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Attachment 1

Stenographic Transcript of
HEARINGS
Before the

SELECT COMMITTEE ON POW/MIA AFFAIRS

UNITED STATES SENATE

DEPOSITION OF COS, VIENTIANE (1970-73)

Tuesday, June 9, 1992

Exhibits 1-5 attached

Copy _____ of _____

Washington, D.C.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-5650
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1 A. G. McMurtrie Godley.

2 Q. Godley, as stated in the Foreign Service List
3 of June, 1972.

4 A. Right. Okay.

5 Q. Who I might add is one of the great American
6 proconsuls in my book, a superb leader and an excellent
7 person. It was a sheer pleasure to work with him. And
8 let me add, too, this is pertinent to our general roll-
9 out, that this inordinate CIA presence, we worked for the
10 Ambassador. He was the boss. Whereas I was in charge of
11 the ground operations, in effect, the Ambassador was
12 involved in everything we did, and if the Ambassador said
13 "no," it was no. If the Ambassador said "yes," it was
14 yes. There was no situation where CIA was running a
15 clandestine war. This was the United States mission in
16 operation there, under the direction and command of the
17 Ambassador.

18 Q. Did you have direct contact with Washington?

19 A. I had direct cable contact.

20 Q. Bypassing the Ambassador ever, or always with
21 his consent?

22 A. No. I mean, I had my own communications
23 channel. That's the way it was set up. CIA communicates
24 directly.

25 The Ambassador had access to everything I did,

1 said, wrote, or whatever. If he came into my office and
2 said "What have you got here, ." I mean, I showed it
3 to him. I didn't check every message I wrote before I
4 sent it. I didn't have to. My guidelines with him were
5 very, very clear. He was privy to everything I was doing,
6 and everything I said or did I did under his authority.

7 I did not see his communications. He generally
8 showed me his communications.

9 You know how it works in an embassy. There's
10 an awful lot of traffic being passed back and forth among
11 the units of the embassy, the political section, the
12 economic section, the CIA section, and so on. They're in
13 a constant interchange of information.

14 Now, there are privacy channels, privacy
15 messages that are sent back that are not shown to
16 everybody. If I sent a privacy back, you want to call it
17 that, on a sensitive matter, it was something I either
18 showed to the Ambassador or discussed with the Ambassador.
19 There were no end-run, end-around operations there at all.
20 I say that with great confidence.

21 I feel very confident, too, that whatever the
22 Ambassador did that was important to my operations I knew
23 about.

24 I think we had as thorough and as intimate an
25 exchange of information and ideas as I could ever expect

1 to see or hope to see.

2 On the routine distribution of traffic, the
3 intelligence reporting, that is, you're familiar with the
4 designation, the "FOB" designation of the intelligence
5 from Vientiane --

6 Q. Yes.

7 A. -- went routinely to everybody in the mission,
8 that is, to all the chiefs of section. The operational
9 traffic did not get the same kind of distribution. So our
10 routine operational traffic, I didn't bother the
11 Ambassador with that. I mean, he didn't see that. He
12 could see it if he wanted to. If he came in and he asked
13 me, I would show him anything. I had no hesitation to do
14 so.

15 I didn't show it to everybody in the Political
16 Section. Dick Howland, for example, we worked very
17 closely together. But he didn't need to see some of the
18 personnel traffic, for example. They were not privy to
19 it. The Ambassador could see if it he wanted to, but he
20 didn't, as a rule.

21 Q. How closely did the Director of Central
22 Intelligence monitor the Laos operation?

23 A. Well, my impression is he rode it very, very
24 carefully. It was a hot subject in Washington at the
25 time. There were various interdepartmental, interagency

1 groups that governed our operation -- the WSAG, the
2 Washington Special Action Group, for example. I don't
3 recall whether the Director himself was a member of that,
4 but certainly the Deputy Director was. He was involved
5 with the White House on an almost daily basis on Vietnam,
6 on Laos, and so on. So to my understanding, he was on our
7 operation like a leech, you might say. I mean, he was
8 there. He was privy to it all. I frequently heard from
9 him in the cable traffic.

10 You know, we had various ways of writing
11 messages where we can send a routine operational message
12 back and it goes from desk to desk. But if I want
13 somebody in particular to see it, I can send it from me to
14 him, from me to the Deputy Director, and put his name on
15 it. So I assume he saw most of the press, but there's a
16 screening process and he can't read every cable that comes
17 back.

18 Whenever I was in contact with him, he knew
19 everything I was up to. He was privy and conversant on
20 the whole shebang.

21 Q. Was there ever any tension between Helms and
22 his guidance and Ambassador Godley's guidance?

23 A. Never. No.

24 Q. Was there ever any tension between Helms and
25 his sense of what was good for Laos versus what was coming

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1 Q. I'd like you to refresh your memory with a
2 document. I'd like you to take a few minutes to look at
3 this.

4

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11 I have tabbed it, and I have tabbed on the side
12 in the back areas that mention U.S. prisoners seen in
13 Laos. I'd like you to describe, again, if you are
14 familiar with it, if you had a hand in drafting it or
15 approving it.

16 I'd also like you, as you read the source line,
17 to say what gave rise to this 20 page report in 1971,
18 please.

19 Take a few minutes, as you need.

20 [Discussion off the record.]

21 MR. MCCREARY: Let's go back on the record.

22 THE WITNESS: Well, I had to have seen this
23 report. This could not have gone out without my intimate
24 involvement with it. No question about that. I don't
25 remember it, but then, my memory is -- I mean, I don't

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1 remember specifically reading this.

2 Now, what gave rise to it? It sounds to me
3 like we must have been asked by Headquarters to do it. In
4 other words, give us your best compilation of all you've
5 got, whatever you think, whatever you can add on the
6 subject of prisoners of war.

7 I would say it's in response to a Headquarters
8 request. But there, again, I could be wrong. ~~I don't~~
9 know.

10 Q. You do not recall, then, a specific tasking? I
11 mean, that's a monumental task for any embassy, it strikes
12 me.

13 A. Well, this is not an embassy. This is a
14 station.

15 Q. Correction, station. Yes.

16 A. Oh, yes. Well, I suspect this was done in
17 at my request undoubtedly, and done by them on the
18 basis of reporting from : That's where
19 they would have had, they would have had a continuing
20 overview of all that was happening, all that was being
21 reported by the units.

22 In Vientiane, the station itself, I don't think
23 we would have done it.

24 Q. Would your station have briefed Ambassador
25 Godley --

1 A. Oh, absolutely.

2 Q. -- on the contents of the report?

3 A. Oh, he would have seen the report. Oh, no
4 doubt about that. I mean, this report would never have
5 gone in without him seeing it, without the Political
6 Section, and the attaches, and, likewise, Army and Air.
7 They would have seen it. This would have been, I feel
8 confident, a well coordinated presentation, because it's
9 of interest to so many different components of the
10 mission, and of the government, for that matter.

11 MR. MCCREARY: I'd like to have a copy of that
12 made and we'll mark it as an exhibit.

13 THE WITNESS: Let's see, I just can't think.
14 September, Godley wasn't away at that time.

15 MR. MCCREARY: For the record, Exhibit 4 will
16 be the resume of

17 [The document referred to
18 was marked Exhibit
19 No. 4, for identification.]

20 MR. MCCREARY: Exhibit 5 will be

21
22 [The document referred to
23 was marked Exhibit
24 No. 5, for identification.]

25 THE WITNESS: I'm trying to think of what was

1 happening in September of 1971. I guess what I just said,
2 the Ambassador had to have seen this. It's conceivable
3 that the Ambassador was on leave and might not have seen
4 the report. I don't know. But the mission would have
5 seen this, the chief of mission, the charge or the DCM,
6 Monte Stearns. This would have been a well staffed
7 presentation.

8 BY MR. MCCREARY (Resuming):

9 Q. Does that represent an authoritative position,
10 as authoritative as it gets in the field, more or less?

11 A. Not quite as authoritative, no, as a source
12 description. If you see something which is a situation
13 appraisal, if you see something on Laos with that on it,
14 that comes from me. I mean, I wrote it.

15 This is something that a reliable source, this
16 is a compilation done by our staff of all information
17 available to us at the time from a variety of sources. In
18 other words, I don't consider it as authoritative, even
19 though I'd written it myself. I mean, it's perfectly
20 authoritative.

21 Q. I understand. That's clear.

22 A. As for my not remembering it as well, there are
23 a lot of things I don't remember.

24 In September of 1971, we were in the build-up
25 period of the Plaine des Jars, the period of