

HEARINGS
REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES
Before the

Bm

SELECT COMMITTEE ON POW/MIA AFFAIRS

UNITED STATES SENATE

DEPOSITION OF COS, VIENTIANE (1968-70)

Friday, May 29, 1992

Washington, D.C.

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Attachment 3

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4 order to maintain it, which took a lot of people.

5 Q. When you arrived, was there still a residual support to
6 resistance groups in South Vietnam?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Do you recall any operations that were still going on
9 of a paramilitary type or support type in South Vietnam?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Was there anything still going on in Laos?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Had the station closed down in Laos?

14 A. No.

15 Q. I understand was the last station chief.

16 Was the station still open?

17 A. The station was still open. An officer was appointed
18 to replace him. was already elsewhere. I'm not
19 entirely certain of the exact timing of the closing of the
20 station, but it was done while I was Chief of Station. I know
21 that. I was Chief of Division, excuse me.

22 Q. Chief of Division.

23 A. It came about because of the enormous restrictions
24 imposed upon the embassy. If you remember this, the Lao were
probably the unfriendliest of those where we still had relations.

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1 They confined everybody in the embassy to the city limits of
2 Vientiane and they reduced the embassy to a total of 12 people,
3 of which they would only grant three diplomatic immunity, which
4 did not leave any for us.

5 You really must understand that there were not, there
6 was not much in the way of residual operations in Indochina.

7 It was possible to deal across the border in black
8 operations into Laos. A decision was made to close the Vientiane
9 station at a time when I was not very familiar with it. But I
10 point out again that directly above me, literally, was Ted
11 Shackley, and beneath me was his former deputy and a number of
12 very highly qualified East Asia officers.

13 It was not I who closed the station but the DDO and
14 perhaps the DCI.

15 Q. Who was his deputy below you, working below you, did
16 you say?

17 A. I didn't say. But it was --

18 THE WITNESS: -- again, I don't know. Do we have a
19 problem with this. Excuse me.

20 [Witness confers with counsel]

21 THE WITNESS: Well, I'll tell you. was
22 the man.

23 BY MR. McCREARY (Resuming):

24 Q. That name has come to our attention before.

25 A. Okay.

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1 MR. McCREARY: Let me just say that we have deposed
2 other CIA officers. There's a privacy issue, a confidentiality
3 issue. But your name has come to us because of conversations
4 with others at which CIA attorneys have been present. So we are
5 on the record here and we are at a level of classification that
6 is appropriate, I think, to discuss these matters without getting
7 into too many details which you may veto in the interest of the
8 agency --

9 MR. BOWMAN: Correct.

10 MR. McCREARY: -- to protect those. But I think names
11 are fair game. Is that correct?

12 MR. BOWMAN: Correct.

13 BY MR. McCREARY (Resuming):

14 Q. I think that context statement is very helpful to
15 understand, to our understanding.

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22 Everything had been consolidated into Bangkok.. This is
23 something, again, which happened before me but had involved the
24 Thai Government in the withdrawal of a very large number of
25 Americans, military as well as Agency, from Thailand, in a sort

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1 of seaming. I kind of became aware of some of these things as
2 time went on. But that is a fair statement.

3 We had only Chiang Mai and Bangkok, and Chiang Mai took
4 over the functions for insofar as there were any. I mean,
:
:

8 Q. What would have happened to the files and those maps
9 and so on, anything that the Agency considered of value? When
10 you opened the door to , there were maps on the
11 wall. There were still file cabinets, I suppose, or something.

12 A. No, no.

13 Q. No, nothing?

14 A. The files were all withdrawn. Everything was
15 withdrawn. Those maps were like decorations and I couldn't tell
16 you whether that was a true statement of the situation. But it
17 was obviously left there in a kind of sentimental way. -- It was no
18 longer relevant to anything.

19 Q. Except to some extent to our investigations today I
20 must add.

21 Would those files have been evacuated through Bangkok
22 or would they have come to Headquarters and been reduced to
23 microfilm, or what would you say?

24 A. I do not know.

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The division chief is very remote from the field. Operations are run in the field. The division chief becomes aware of operations which shouldn't be run or where there is a controversy or where there is a very high interest in general.

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I was in the orientation phase and in the drawdown phase in my first year or so. I found that Bangkok station, which was being run in my view extremely efficiently by people who were very familiar with what they were doing, with the Thais and the relationship with the Thais was very important. I have no doubt whatever that all classified material was withdrawn and I think would have found its way back to Headquarters. But I cannot honestly say that.

17

Q. Your testimony, then, is that this was not your responsibility to withdraw the material? This occurred before you arrived?

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A. That's correct.

21

Q. Is the same statement true with respect to the station in Laos? You testified it did close down while you were division chief. Would you have been involved in the administration of that, settling the administration, if you will?

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A. At a considerable distance.