



Ch23003 PDS 42-1

JOINT CASUALTY RESOLUTION CENTER  
LIAISON OFFICE  
AMERICAN EMBASSY  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96346

Reference: T80-023  
7 April 1980

FROM: JCRC-LNB

SUBJ: Interview of Mr. *SC* French Pilot from Laos

TO: Commander, JCRC  
Barbers Point, HI 96862

REF: USDAO Bangkok 15097, DTG 050516Z APR 80.

As reported in the referenced message, *SC* (AKA *SC*) was interviewed on 4 April 80 at Nong Khai Court House and, claiming that he had been misunderstood or misquoted by newspaper reporters, denied any first-hand knowledge of American POW/MIAs in Laos. *SC* related the following information to the JCRC interviewer:

On 11 January 1977 while working for *SC* at Vientiane, *SC* was seized by communist police and accused of receiving 4000 dollars (American) from the C.I.A. *SC* noted that four days prior to his arrest a Laotian pilot had flown a C-46 from Laos to Udorn, Thailand, and after this incident airport officials were very tense concerning the possibility that someone else might also escape from Laos. After being arrested, *SC* went to Phong Savan, Xieng Khouang, Plain of Jars, and spent three days there. He then went to a "seminar" located near Ban Ban, Muong Kham, Xieng Khouang Province (UG 4971). During the first year of his detention *SC* reported that the work was very hard. There was no permission to leave camp and "no Sunday". During his second year of detention *SC* was transferred to another camp about five kilometers away. Here *SC* was able to write letters and receive medicine and mail from the French Embassy in Vientiane, the Red Cross, and Amnesty International Belgium. *SC* showed the JCRC representative some of these letters and they all expressed concern for *SC*'s situation, described their efforts to obtain *SC*'s release from prison, and passed information concerning *SC*'s family in France.

*SC* claims that during those times he was granted permission to leave the camp, he was able to make friends with Chinese merchants in Ban Ban. One of *SC*'s friends was a man known as *Neu*. *SC* claims that when *Neu* was sick, *SC* gave him medicine that he had received from Amnesty International and he saved *Neu*'s life. In March 1979 while *SC* was visiting *Neu*, *Neu*'s son, a Pathet Lao driver, ran up and embraced his father. After embracing his father, the son saw



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SC and asked his father what this "imperialist" SC was doing in their home. Name explained that SC was a friend and was "like a son", whereupon the son said to SC that "there are other American imperialists like you, except they are much whiter and taller, in (unknown) village in Sam Neua". SC says he can not remember the name of the village in Sam Neua where the alleged Americans were being held. SC claims that the only item of information he knows about Name son is that he drives trucks between Sam Neua and Xieng Khoang. SC had no information on the number of Americans involved, their present location, place of capture, time of capture, their names, their units or the capturing units, or status or health of the Americans. SC said he might be able to establish contact again with Name but it would be extremely dangerous and probably result in Name getting killed. SC said he did not ask any questions about the alleged Americans because it would have made Name son suspicious and thus perhaps might have been fatal to SC. SC did not ever again hear about the alleged Americans.

Shortly after this incident, SC decided to flee Laos. SC said he was afraid of the changes in the political climate and that the Pathet Lao might send him to Sam Neua "where he would certainly die". SC claims he fled Ban Ban on 1 March 80 and walked to Paksane where he hitchhiked a ride on a logging truck into Vientiane. At Vientiane SC stayed with acquaintances and spent some time recovering his French passport and other identification documents. SC then went to see some old school friends, now high-ranking communist officials, to see if they could help him. One official, the Data Mr. Name (phonetic), invited SC to work in his office. SC said he would think it over but first he wanted to go to France to see his family. On the night of 31 March 80 SC swam the Mekong River to Thailand and was put in the Sri Chiang Mai Immigration Jail. On 4 April, SC appeared before the magistrate in Nong Khai and was fined 1000 baht.

JCRC representative copied several addresses which might possibly be of interest:

- a. SC address while in "seminar":  
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- b. The man who wrote to SC from Amnesty International:  
 Name  
 Pacc

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c. SC wife's address:  
Name

Date

Personal history: SC was born in SD SD of a French father and Cambodian mother. SC father is an artist and now lives in Udorn, Thailand. SC was educated in Saigon and Vientiane. He began working as a pilot in 1959. SC claims to have worked for the SD from 1959 to 1963. SC claims that from 1961 to 1963 he was in Russia learning how to fly YAK-18's and IL-14's. He claims that later in 1963 he went to "someplace in Texas" to learn to fly C-47's. SC claims he worked for the SD from 1964 to 1969 and remembers a Name for whom he worked in SD. Later SC got his own airplane, a Dornier, which was completely lost to him after his arrest. SC speaks native French, Lao, and Thai. His English is good and he claims to speak excellent Russian. SC wife is ethnic Chinese.

Comments: The above represents the substance of the JCRC interview of SC. We are aware that much of the substance of SC alleged POW/MIA knowledge reported above is at variance with the initial stories reported in the press. In addition, it appears to be also at variance with later "clarifications" reported in the press (e.g., SC is alleged to have said that he was told of five Americans in captivity in Vientiane). Our discussions with acquaintances among local press corps lead us to conclude that, contrary to SC contention that he was misunderstood or misquoted, he in fact did state to reporters that he had seen Americans alive in Laos. (We have just had a call from a reporter who says that SC has just told him of hearing about 100 Americans in captivity in Laos.) He made no such mention during the JCRC interview. We have also talked with others who have interviewed SC following the JCRC interview. SC, in relating to one of his interviewers about the earlier JCRC interview, stated that the JCRC representative had paid his 1000 baht fine for illegal entry into Thailand. This, of course, is a total fabrication. Other more recent reports from various contacts have called into question SC contention that he "escaped" from Ban Ban, the implication being that he was more likely released. SC alleged concern over the "changes in the political climate" and his fear of dying in captivity which drove him to escape from Laos seem inconsistent with his claimed visit with high-ranking communist officials before his departure from Vientiane.

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~~Sc~~ account to the JCRC interviewer of the recovery of his French passport and documents (not reported here in detail in order to protect a source) is totally contradicted by the facts. In summary, ~~Sc~~ ~~im~~ presses us as a quite charming, but glib individual who has few scruples when it comes to sorting fact from fiction.

AN

Lt Col, USAF  
JCRC Liaison Officer

Cy to:  
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