

104TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 129

Expressing the sense of Congress that Thailand should release the 6 Hmong/Lao refugee camp leaders arrested for refusing to repatriate to Laos in 1994 and that Thailand should allow resettlement of eligible Hmong refugees in Thai refugee facilities at Ban Na Pho, Sikhiu and Phanat Nikhom.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 27 (legislative day, DECEMBER 22), 1995

Mr. DORNAN submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress that Thailand should release the 6 Hmong/Lao refugee camp leaders arrested for refusing to repatriate to Laos in 1994 and that Thailand should allow resettlement of eligible Hmong refugees in Thai refugee facilities at Ban Na Pho, Sikhiu and Phanat Nikhom.

Whereas Hmong and Lao combat veterans under the command of Major General Vang Pao, Commander of Military Region II of the Royal Lao Army, fought with courage and valor to protect their homeland and the national security interests of the United States and Thailand from invading North Vietnamese Communist forces during the Vietnam war;

Whereas Hmong forces saved downed American and Thai pilots and guarded top secret United States intelligence facilities in Laos that allowed the United States to conduct all-weather and night bombing of North Vietnam;

Whereas the Hmong were targeted with genocide and ethnic cleansing in 1975 and thereafter when the North Vietnamese military and Communist Pathet Lao guerrillas consolidated their control over Laos and established the Lao Peoples Democratic Republic, a one-party Communist regime;

Whereas for over 2 decades, Thailand, in cooperation with the United States and the international community, has generously provided sanctuary and assistance to many of the Hmong asylum seekers and refugees fleeing Laos;

Whereas Hmong refugees repatriated to Laos from Thailand in recent years have disappeared or have been murdered (in Laos), including the disappearance of Hmong clan leader Vue Mai following his voluntary repatriation and the murders of Gnua Chue Her and Kou Her by Pathet Lao forces;

Whereas Thailand has taken steps to close the Hmong refugee camps within its borders, but has pledged officially not to force Hmong refugees or asylum seekers back to the Communist government in Laos;

Whereas returning to Laos remains an undesirable option for many Hmong/Lao refugees because its economic and social policies violate the basic human rights of its people and restrict freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion and other basic human liberties, and prohibits independent human rights organizations from en-

tering the country and monitoring returned Hmong refugees;

Whereas former Chairman Lee Hamilton and current Chairman Ben Gilman sent a House Foreign Affairs Committee staff delegation to Thailand in August 1994, to report on the status of Hmong refugees in Thailand;

Whereas despite significant United States funding for Hmong refugee care and transfer, the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee staff delegation was denied entry to Ban Na Pho repatriation camp to investigate and report on the status of refugees;

Whereas 6 Hmong/Lao refugee camp leaders from Ban Na Pho, Bliia Thai Xiong (BV-3834), Vang Bee (BN 4259), Xay Hua Yang (BV-871), Fai Yee Xiong (ST-991), Kham Pham (NP-15439), and Tong Xee Yang (BV8677), were arrested and imprisoned on September 22, 1994, by Thai Ministry of the Interior (MOI) and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) officials after the 6 sent out of the camp to Congressmen Hamilton and Gilman a petition signed by thousands of their fellow Hmong refugees declaring opposition to forced repatriation and communicating their desire to resettle in a non-Communist third country;

Whereas the 6 refugee camp leaders were moved following their arrest from Ban Na Pho refugee repatriation camp to the Suan Phlu Detention Center in Bangkok where the conditions were reported to be deplorable by various human rights organizations;

Whereas Ruprecht von Arnim, UNHCR Representative in Thailand, responded in a December 7, 1994, letter to Congressmen Gilman, Leach, and Gunderson that the 6

prisoners were “in good health and are receiving preferential treatment, including English classes. They are only complaining of boredom;”;

Whereas on December 31, 1994, a fact-finding mission to Thailand, which included congressional staff and representatives of the Lao Veterans of America, visited the 6 Hmong camp leaders in Suan Phlu in Bangkok, Thailand, where they found poor, cramped conditions in which the 6 slept on the concrete floor with many other people and found largely untrue the stated assertions of Ruprecht von Arnim; and

Whereas the 6 Hmong/Lao leaders were moved from Suan Phlu to another detention center at Sikhiu where they are still under arrest and imprisoned with their families: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring),*

3 **SECTION 1. SENSE OF THE CONGRESS.**

4 It is the sense of the Congress that—

5 (1) Thailand should immediately release the 6
6 Hmong/Lao camp leaders and their remaining family
7 members in Thailand so that they may leave
8 Thailand and rejoin their families in the United
9 States and elsewhere;

10 (2) Thailand should immediately open Ban Na
11 Pho repatriation camp and Sikhiu Detention Center
12 and permit all eligible Hmong combat veterans and

1 refugees there to leave Thailand for resettlement in
2 third countries;

3 (3) the President and the Secretary of State of
4 the United States should use every diplomatic means
5 available to ensure that the maximum allowable
6 Hmong refugees are accepted for admission into the
7 United States in 1995–1996; and

8 (4) the President and the Secretary of State of
9 the United States should use every diplomatic means
10 available to ensure the protection of the safety and
11 human rights of the Hmong refugees in Ban Na
12 Pho refugee repatriation camp, Sikhiu Detention
13 Center, Phanat Nikhom refugee resettlement camp,
14 the Buddhist temple of Wat Tham Krabok and else-
15 where in Thailand.

16 **SEC. 2. TRANSMITTAL OF RESOLUTION.**

17 The Clerk of the House of Representatives should
18 transmit copies of this resolution to the Foreign Minister
19 of Thailand in Bangkok, to the Prime Minister of Thai-
20 land in Bangkok, to the Embassy of Thailand in the
21 United States, to the President of the United States, to
22 the United States Secretary of State, and to the United
23 Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

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