

HUNTED LIKE ANIMALS

Hunted Like Animals is an eye-opening documentary about an on-going, but unknown, genocide — against the Hmong people in the jungles of Laos. Coerced into joining the CIA's anti-communist efforts during the Viet Nam war, this ethnic minority became a Secret Army. When the U.S. pulled out of Southeast Asia in 1975 and the Lao kingdom was overthrown by the communists, the Hmong became targets of retaliation and persecution. Hundreds of thousands fled the country; others ran to remote mountainous regions of Laos. Over thirty years and two generations later, the Hmong in hiding are still mercilessly hunted, attacked, raped, tortured and killed by the military. Since 2004, the crackdown has intensified and those who can escape seek refuge in Thailand. The traumatized refugees have not been promised protection or help. Instead, they are threatened with deportation back to Laos, the very place from which they barely escaped. In this documentary, the refugees speak for the estimated 20,000 voiceless people still trapped in the jungle, surrounded by Lao and Vietnamese soldiers — and hunted like animals.

© 2007 REBECCA SOMMER. DIRECTED, PRODUCED, FILMED AND EDITED BY REBECCA SOMMER. ADDITIONAL FOOTAGE BY FACT FINDING COMMISSION. ADDITIONAL FUNDING BY SOCIETY FOR THREATENED PEOPLES. EDITORIAL CONSULTATION BY ELLEN MCGUFFIE. COVER PHOTOGRAPHY BY ZONG L. VANG. COVER DESIGN BY ERICA HEINZ.

THIS FILM WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE COURAGE OF THE HMONG-LAO REFUGEES, AND BY THE SPECIAL ADVICE AND SUPPORT OF THE US-BASED HMONG-LAO COMMUNITY.

DESPITE CANCELLATION by VIETNAM

FILM SHOWING !!



HUNTED LIKE ANIMALS

FRIDAY, 25 May 2007

10:30 AM, 217 E 42nd street

@ Cashama

Sponsored by Earth Peoples, Hmong Lao Human Rights Council, NGO Committee on Human Riughts



PRESS RELEASE

NEW YORK, May 25 2007 — Despite censorship by the Permanent Mission of VIETNAM to the UN, which caused the cancellation of 2 Film screenings of special side events this year during the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous issues upon Vietnams' request to the UN system - **we are proud to invite you to watch one of the two cancelled documentaries THIS FRIDAY.**

"The United Nations should never allow a state to suppress information on human rights violations - rather the UN should do everything to enable the weak, the discriminated, the oppressed to speak out and strengthen the work of NGOs instead of undermining them by preventing the documentation of truth." *Renate Domnick, STP*

The film, produced with the support of the US-based Hmong-Lao community, documents the systematic military aggression against the Hmong ethnic minority hiding in the jungles of Laos, and the reasons why thousands of Hmong from the jungle fled to Thailand.

Rebecca Sommer, an independent documentary filmmaker and human rights advocate, spent over a year on researching and recording video on the issue of the Hmong - in the fall of 2005 and spring of 2006.

"Even though the UN has no access to the over 7700 current Hmong refugees in the camp, and no access to the conflict areas inside Laos — this film brings the words and testimonies of the Hmong Lao out to everyone," said Rebecca Sommer. "*Hunted like Animals* was distributed as a lobby tool. We disseminated this year over 1500 DVDs to UN agencies, committees and Reporters (Geneva, NYC, Bangkok), to heads of states, relevant governmental departments, and NGOs."

Additional High-8 footage, shot and narrated by Hmong hiding in the jungles of Laos, is interwoven into the film like a tapestry, and gives graphic evidence of the ongoing and increasing aggression of the Lao PDR military, including artillery and chemical warfare.

The violence dates back to the Viet Nam war. Coerced into joining the CIA's anti-communist efforts, the Hmong ethnic minority was the CIA's Secret Army. When the U.S. pulled out of Southeast Asia in 1975 and the Lao kingdom was overthrown by the communists, the Hmong became targets of retaliation and persecution, Hundreds of thousands fled Laos, others ran to remote mountainous regions. Over ten-thousands are estimated to still survive.

The film lays to rest misinformation that has been perpetuated for decades. Efforts by the Thai and Lao governments to conveniently label the Hmong refugees in Thailand economic refugees looking for a better life, or simply rebels, are becoming unspeakable falsehoods when seeing and hearing the Hmong Lao talk for themselves.

Chue Chou Tchang, President of the Hmong America Mutual Assistance Association, said, "We are convinced that *Hunted like Animals* will be our most effective tool for telling the story of our people and their plight to governments, to non-governmental organizations, and to the United Nations and its agencies. The Hmong refugees in Huay Nam Khao, Phetchabun, Thailand, want the world to know about the genocide they have endured for over 30 years, and they want the world to help them and their relatives who are still hiding in the jungle."

QUOTES

"In our capacity as advisor to this film, we find it unique, largely due to the fact it has been actively supported by a broad circle of Hmong people. We highly recommend this film and believe this film will serve as a bridge that will stretch all the way from our people living in desperation to the international world community."

Vaughn Vang, Executive Director, Hmong Lao Human Rights Council

"The governments of the West, as well as the United Nations, unfortunately did not react when genocide was committed on the Bosnians and the Tutsi People in Rwanda. Fortunately at least the killings in Darfur have moved people all over the world, united in the Save-Darfur campaign, to protest, to act, to press governments to intervene. *Hunted like Animals* will draw attention to the hidden genocidal crimes on children, women and men of a people unknown to the world public."

Tillman Zulch, President, Society for Threatened Peoples

"*Hunted Like Animals* is a *must-see* not only for politicians, diplomats and human rights activists, but for anyone whose heart is in the right place... I wholeheartedly recommend this documentary both for its strong message and for its skillful cinematography. My particular admiration goes to Rebecca Sommer for having realized this oeuvre in spite of many obstacles. Her perseverance and dedication as well as her outstanding artistic qualities deserve highest merit."

THIS FILM WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SHOWN THIS FRIDAY WITHOUT THE GENEROUS DONATION OF THE SPACE BY COLLECTIVE P.A.S.T AT CASHAMA

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