



AMERICAN INDIAN COMMUNITY HOUSE
708 Broadway, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10003 (Entrance 404 Lafayette street)
Subway 4 /5/ 6 – Astor Place . (212) 598-0100

Sunday, 21 May 2005
8.30 p.m.

Indigenous Hmong Accuse Military of Genocide and Crimes against Humanity in Laos

“Rebel groups” engaged in “active resistance” is what you have been told to believe. That is pure “spin”, meant to create false impressions to allow the extermination of dwindling numbers of Hmong still hiding in the high mountain jungles of Laos. The purpose of this event is to reveal the truth: that Hmong Lao still hiding in the jungle today are desperate, hunted, starving survivors – most of whom have never even seen rice. Most of them born in the jungle and on the run, they have lived like hunted animals and have lived off roots and wild plants for as long as 30 years, while Laotian and Vietnamese armies have been working ceaselessly to exterminate them -- using conventional weapons, including grenades and artillery, and unconventional ones, such as chemical weapons deployed by air.

Two documentaries on the desperate situation of Hmong Lao refugees in Thailand and their relatives still in the mountainous jungles of Laos will be shown, and expert witnesses from Laos will tell their stories – which began 30 years ago during the Vietnam conflict, when the Hmong people in “neutral” Laos were recruited by the US CIA to create a Secret Army – to fight a secret war. More than half of the adult Hmong Lao population became “CIA soldiers”.

After the US pulled out of Laos and Vietnam in 1973, the Pathet Lao, who seized power in Laos in 1975, targeted the Hmong – especially the Secret Army Hmong – for merciless retaliation and retribution, which has been carried out for the past 30 years and which is still taking place today.

This illegal extermination takes place in a "Xaysomboun Special Zone" in Laos, which is off-limits to foreigners. Journalists caught entering the provinces where the Hmong are hiding are arrested. Eyewitnesses traveling adjacent to these areas confirm hearing automatic gunfire and heavy artillery coming from the higher parts of the mountains.

The Lao PDR Government officially denies any armed conflict with the Hmong minorities.

The alarming rate of Hmong Lao from the conflict areas seeking political asylum in Thailand is a direct result of a crackdown on Hmong minorities in the depths of the jungles in Laos. By building a grid system of roads through the jungle, using surveillance from the air and by building strategic military outposts, the Lao PDR Military has been successful in uncovering and eliminating Hmong hiding places, forcing survivors to be permanently on the run.

This is a humanitarian crisis that needs intervention by the international community.