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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON DC 20330-1000

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

June 30, 2005

SAF/LLP
1160 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330-1160

The Honorable Lane Evans
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Veterans' Affairs
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-6335

Dear Mr. Evans

This is in response to your letter of June 3, 2005, to the Secretary of the Air Force requesting information concerning the dates and location of Ranch Hand activities based in Thailand during the Vietnam Era, but in particular, any information concerning:

- (1) the basing of C-123's and Ranch Hand activities in February of 1967 referenced in a Memorandum written by Russell A. Downey to General Momyer (Item ID Number 00229);

Answer: Our records show that the C-123 aircraft were never based at any of the Thailand air bases, but Ranch Hand did use the bases as stops en route to missions in Laos. We have not found any specific information regarding activities in February 1967.

- (2) storage of herbicides at the Takhli Royal Thai Air Force Base, base warehouse for use of the 315th A/C Sq. in 1966-1967;

Answer: To our knowledge, no herbicides were stored in Thailand. Insecticides, however, were used during a 1962 locust eradication project and for mosquito control in 1966-1967.

- (3) 12th Special Operations Squadron at Udon (or Udorn) RTAFB in December of 1968 and January of 1969 under the command of Lt. Col. David E. Stockton (Headquarters 432nd Tactical Reconnaissance Wing (PACAF));

Answer: During December 1968 and January 1969, the 12th Special Operations Squadron (SOS) was stationed at Bien Hoa Air Base, Republic of Vietnam, not Udorn Royal Thai Air Force Base. This was confirmed with Colonel Stockton.

- (4) the stationing of C-123 aircraft used for herbicide defoliation activities at Nakhon Phanom air base or other locations;

Answer: Because the aircraft were used for multiple purposes, it is difficult to now glean information as to exactly which aircraft were used for herbicide defoliation. The information we do have is largely available in "Operation Ranch Hand, The Air Force and Herbicides in Southeast Asia 1961 - 1971," by Buckingham, William A., Jr. The publication is available through the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC.

- (5) Any information concerning spraying of vegetation with herbicides such as Agent Orange, Agent Pink, Agent Green, Agent Blue, Agent Purple, or Agent White at Takhli, Udon (or Udorn) or Nakhon Phanom bases or the Phu-mu Signal Site.

Answer: Because commanders were at liberty to use herbicides for defoliation around their activities using either handheld or vehicle mounted units, with no accountability required, we do not have any more specific information.

We appreciate your interest in this matter and trust the information provided is useful.

Sincerely



F. SCOTT BOYD, Colonel, USAFR
Programs and Legislation Division
Office of Legislative Liaison