

TOPIC: From 1950-1954 Around Tang O

DATE COLLECTED: May 29, 1972 AT: Cha Lo Pha

INTERVIEWEE: Tasseng Cha Lo Pha, Muong Meung

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THIS INFORMATION MAY ALSO BE FOUND UNDER THE FOLLOWING TOPICS: (1) Tang O
(2) KMT (3) Lahu (4) Muong Meung.

NARRATIVE:

In the late 1940's and the early 1950's the village of Tang O was located about one half kilometer north of its present location. At that time, there were only a few house and all the residents were Lau. In the early 1950's after the take over by the communists in China, the KMT fled to Burma. Subsequently the KMT used to send teams of 5 or 6 men to Tang O, who use to come by the road from Muong Lin (Burma) to the Mekong and cross over to Tang O just north of Tang O. Upon arriving the KMT ordered the villagers to assist in gathering foodstuffs by telling them to go out to neighboring villages, then Lahu, and tell those villages to bring animals and rice to Tang O for the KMT.

After a couple of years, the villagers of Tang O became very worry of this bothersome and laborinus task placed upon them with each KMT visit. There was a great deal of consideration made to move the village to a new location out of the paths of the KMT.

Finally the matter of moving the village was decided in about 1951 or 1952 when the KMT made a visit to Tang O to seek foodstuffs. In an agreement with the Issarra (according to the Tasseng) the KMT had agreed to attack the French camp at Thon Pheung because they needed supplies. Provided the KMT defeated the camp the Isarra would come along behind and collect foodstuffs from the villages in the vacinity. In order to perform this attack, the KMT told the

Tasseng at Tang O to show them the way to Thon Pheung. At Thon Pheung there were 50 Lao legends and 3 French advisors.

Upon arriving at Thon Pheung, the KMT fired upon the camp. The soldiers in the camp fled but before fleeing some volleys were fired by the French, one of them killing the Tasseng of Tang O. When word of the Tasseng's death reached Tang O, the villagers voted to move from that location across the Mekong into Burma, inland about several kilometers. They remained on the Burma side until some year and a half later to two years when they decided to return to the Lao side. They settled at the present location.

Meanwhile, after the KMT had attacked Thon Pheung, and expecting the Isarra to follow up on their commitment, the Isarra did not follow through. The KMT were so angry they immediately started for Muong Meung arriving at Muong Meung they attacked and forced the Isarra to flee to the forests. The KMT then recruited large quantities of animals from buffaloes to pigs and rice. They taxed Muong Meung heavily and then returned across the river to Muong Lin with their supplies and animals.

As rapidly as the Isarra had fled to the cover of the forests, they returned to Muong Meung upon the departure of the KMT. Isarra remained almost three years in control of Muong Meung until the French in Ban Houei Sai moved to remove the Isarra from control. The French moved on Muong Meung killing some of the Isarra but forcing most of them to withdraw from Muong Meung and return to their native villages.

The commander of the French garrison in Ban Houei Sai visited Muong Meung shortly after the Isarra had been forced to withdraw. During that visit he promised a reward of 50 man of silver for every Isarra or collaborator which could

be assassinated. In Cha Lo Pha two Lahu returned who had collaborated with the Isarra. As a result of the French commanders promise of rewards, several Lahu got together in Cha Lo Pha and killed the two Isarra sympathesizers. They killed the two by holding the victims were cut off and taken to Muong Meung where the assassins collected 100 mann of silver.