



LIBRARIES

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Letters by Frederic Benson. 1973

Benson, Frederic C.

[s.l.]: [s.n.], 1973

<https://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/JMHK4QVWR6VMX8E>

This material may be protected by copyright law (Title 17, US Code).

For information on re-use see:

<http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/Copyright>

The libraries provide public access to a wide range of material, including online exhibits, digitized collections, archival finding aids, our catalog, online articles, and a growing range of materials in many media.

When possible, we provide rights information in catalog records, finding aids, and other metadata that accompanies collections or items. However, it is always the user's obligation to evaluate copyright and rights issues in light of their own use.



U. S. AID MISSION
TO LAOS

EMBASSY
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

6 December 1973

VIENTIANE, LAOS

Mr. Frederic C. Benson
Vientiane, Laos

Dear Fritz:

I want to express my personal appreciation of the work you did as part of the "refugee team" in Laos. This letter of appreciation is not meant as a letter of recommendation, but you are free to use it as such if you so choose. While this is not an official letter, I am sure the Agency for International Development recognizes the work you have done in Laos. Despite the complex political problems in Laos, your sincere efforts to help the people who needed help was appreciated. Many times over the years you probably wondered if the Lao people really appreciated the efforts you made. Remarks made to me indicated that you were considered as a friend in the widest meaning of the word. As you are well aware the culture in this corner of the world places a high value on friendship. If that element is missing, all the material assistance in the eyes of the Lao becomes meaningless.

Your employment with USAID was terminated due to a general budget cut and also the trend of reducing American presence overseas. The fact that you had to be terminated did in no way reflect on your previous work. The fact that you were on a short-term contract status and that there were other staff more senior in grade made it necessary to terminate your personal services contract.

Your record shows that you arrived in August 1968 as a volunteer in the International Voluntary Service. In July 1970 you joined USAID on a contract and worked in the headquarters in Vientiane preparing briefing maps for visitors. Prior to your work in Vientiane, I am sure you will always remember the experience of having been through an attack on your quarters by a combined NVA/PL battalion in July of 1969 at Ban Talat, 40 miles north of Vientiane.

Your quickness to adapt to any situation and produce excellent reports provided you with an active tour of north Laos.


You provided up-to-the-minute reports of the refugee situation during the dry season offensive in 1970-71 in Region II. In November of 1971 you filled in for an emergency in Ban Houei Sai. You then were called back to Ban Xon in December to February of 1971-72 dry season offensive to work with refugees during an emergency in that area. In between you handled the emergency relief branch while the chief was on home leave. You were doing this job when Vientiane suffered from a severe flood during August of 1971. Your spirit in pitching in, often burning the midnight oil, was greatly appreciated by myself.

In March of 1972 you took on a new challenge in Luang Prabang and handled all refugee movements in that area, particularly during the communist offensives against the Luang Prabang road junction and the northern river approaches.

While I would personally like to have you on my staff, I believe it would be more beneficial to your future if you returned to school and finished your studies.

I want to wish you and your wife all the best and if there is ever anything I can do for you, please feel free to call on me.

Sincerely,


Jack L. Williamson
Refugee Affairs Officer

JLW:mhb