



A STRATEGY FOR THE LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
1988 AND BEYOND

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CAMA SERVICES INC.

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CAMA'S INDOCHINA STRATEGY

In recent years CAMA has enjoyed a broad new interest from the Christian & Missionary Alliance (C&MA) constituency. This has been brought about by two factors. First, there is a tidal wave of interest in short term missions in the west and CAMA has provided many lay people with an opportunity for field involvement. This has been positive for the most part. Second, the release of the CAMA video "Turning Relief Into Belief" has touched a sensitive place in the hearts of many in the C&MA. Not only did this film show suffering people getting help but it described the resulting faith of many who received emergency refugee aid.

It would appear from this that CAMA is here to stay (something that could not always be said). However, as CAMA's role has enlarged over the past five years so has the need to be more precise about what it is CAMA is trying to do.

To some extent the film did outline CAMA's purpose. But there is still a need, I believe, to reflect more thoroughly on what we want to achieve in our ministry. This is particularly true when it comes to CAMA's involvement in Indochina because here we are not speaking about turning "Relief Into Belief." In Indochina we are talking of turning development (and in some cases businesses) into missionary efforts.

In speaking of the effort in Indochina we are speaking about a type of missionary strategy which in some ways breaks with the standard missionary practice of the C&MA. That practice (which has proven so successful), has been to send full time, theologically trained missionaries to do church planting and evangelism.

The Indochina strategy breaks stride with our standard efforts in four ways. First, this effort involves both theologically trained people and lay people. Second, its participants will not be full time at missionary work. Third, it involves a tent making strategy. Finally, it involves tent making within the sphere of "relief and development" work.

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