

**PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION**

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

Land Mines

LEAHY - HAGEL LANDMINE BILL

- Bans new deployments of anti-personnel landmines by the United States beginning on Jan. 1, 2000. (It would not affect existing U.S. minefields in Korea or anywhere else.)
- Permits the President to delay application of the ban on the Korean Peninsula.
- Exempts anti-tank mines and command detonated Claymore mines.
- Is cosponsored by a majority of the Senate.

Tim - requested Leahy to meet w/ Hillary
J.C.



April 29, 1997

Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mrs. Clinton:

We had the pleasure to meet in October at a White House ceremony to launch the *Superman* comic, an effort to warn Bosnian children about the dangers posed by landmines. You may recall that Ken Rutherford and I were invited to represent the LANDMINE SURVIVORS NETWORK, a growing association of mine victims worldwide. The Network's goal is to provide survivors with the rehabilitation they need to become productive members of their communities once again.

As Americans who have lost our own limbs to landmines, Ken and I have experienced firsthand the terror of these indiscriminate weapons. I was a university student in Israel when I was injured in 1984, and Ken was injured in 1993 while setting up micro-enterprise projects in Somalia for the International Rescue Committee. Today, we are working closely with other landmine survivors in Bosnia, Afghanistan, Cambodia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Angola to channel urgently needed assistance to impoverished mine victims who lack proper medical attention and rehabilitation.

In mid-May, our Cambodian colleague, Tun Channereth, is traveling from Phnom Penh to Washington, DC, to tell Americans about the devastation wrought by landmines in his own country. Channereth lost both his lower legs to a mine explosion near the Khmer-Thai border in 1982. I have enclosed a brief biography. His story is powerful but, sadly, not unique. Today, there are more than 40,000 amputees from landmines in Cambodia, and the number grows each day.

We would be honored if you or your staff would meet with Channereth during his first visit to the United States. He is very eager to meet you and to return home with a message of hope for other Cambodian mine victims and their families. Please call me at 202-223-0873 to let me know if it is possible to set up a brief meeting at the White House on May 15, 16 or 19. I am grateful for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Jerry White
Director

6/10/97
Tim Reiser
request —
I called Jerry
White to
apologize for
no response
from us.
CML

①

TUN CHANNERETH

Reth is 34 years old and originally from Battambang. As a boy he lived 12 years in Phnom Penh until the Khmer Rouge took over the city. He, along with all the rest of the urban population were forced out and Reth's family resettled in Trapeang Veng, Siem Reap Province. In 1977, Reth's father died. He had been called by the Khmer Rouge for re-education like many others and never returned. Starved and hoping to find his friends and family, Reth moved to the Khmer-Thai border. There, unable to secure food because of the relief policy of only giving food to women, he became a soldier in the resistance army.

He married Sam Rach-Sovinn in 1981 in the camp. Called up again when his wife was 4 months pregnant he took part in a big battle during which he and his companions walked into a minefield. On 18-12-82, he lost both his legs. Reth describes it like this:

The group of soldiers had managed to get halfway to their destination when they came across a mined area. Reth stepped on a mine and both his legs were rendered useless by the explosion.

Stripped of all his weapons, Reth was left to die alone in the forest, because the rest of the soldiers retreated to help those less seriously injured. Later, he was found by two of the reconnaissance party who had been sent ahead. He begged them to let him have an axe so he could cut off the dead weight of his legs. The soldiers refused but Reth managed to chop one leg and then drag himself across the minefield. He was quickly put into a hammock and taken back drifting in and out of consciousness losing dangerous amounts of blood.

Reth was taken to Khao-I-Dang camp in Thailand. There he remembers the doctor asking him two questions before he finally lost consciousness: " What is your name ? Who do you fight for. " He remembered tears in the doctor's eyes. When he regained consciousness he found himself in bed number 2 with both his legs having been amputated. Beds numbered 1 to 5 were kept only for the most seriously ill of patients. The patients in beds number 1 and

3 both died within two days. These deaths gave him the resolve to fight for his life.

He stayed in the hospital for four months, being allowed only two aspirins a day to stem the pain from his legs. After being released from the hospital Reth spent two months in rehabilitation learning how to walk again with the use of bamboo artificial legs. The intense pain caused by the shrapnel forced high into his legs by the explosion quickly made him realise that he would spend the rest of his life in a wheelchair. He wanted to return to Site 2 to die.

Later in the camp, he decided to live again. He led the first campaign for technical training for the handicapped. He won and learned many skills. Reth and his wife and five children were amongst the last Cambodians to be repatriated in 1993. He came back to Cambodia with little hope for the future but with the technical skills needed for wheelchair production. Now he is the designer of wheelchairs adapted according to the individual needs of the handicapped, whether they are amputees or Polio victims or persons with congenital defects.

As well as technical expertise, Reth has the ability and experience to understand the patients and to encourage and teach them how to overcome their immobility. This is most striking in his assistance to handicapped children. He is himself now the happy father of 6 beautiful children ranging from 11 years to 9 months. Every week with Pros, his one-legged friend, he sets out by motorbike to visit handicapped in remote areas. He laughingly describes their take-off - two people with one leg between them - we could add "and with two great hearts!"

Motivated by his own experience, he is a convinced campaigner to ban landmines. He is one of the four initial signatories who launched the signatures campaign in favour of the landmine ban. During 1995, he met the King of Cambodia, the Pope, the Queen of Spain, the President of Ireland and the British Parliament begging all of them to ban landmines forever. He also spoke at the UN Meeting on Landmines in Vienna 1995 and presented 1.7 million signatures to Chairman Molander. Reth keeps begging ordinary people everywhere to support the ban.

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4502

4/28

Ellen.

MAY - 9 1997

Could you give this
to Hillary Clinton?

Thanks —

Tim