

The Phnom Penh Post

Documentary film co-producer defends dealings with tribunal

James O'Toole

April 21, 2010

THE co-producer of an award-winning documentary on former Khmer Rouge cadres has accused judges at Cambodia's war crimes tribunal of presenting a "selective" view of his dealings with the court, after tribunal officials tried unsuccessfully to get a copy of the film prior to its release.

Rob Lemkin is the co-producer of *Enemies of the People*, a film that follows fellow producer and director Thet Sambath's efforts to track down and interview cadres including Nuon Chea, the regime's Brother No 2, who is currently being held by the court pending indictments in its second case.

In an order published last week, the court's co-investigating judges (CIJs), You Bunleng and Marcel Lemonde, said it was "deeply regrettable" that the filmmakers had declined to hand over the film for use in the Case 002 investigation despite promising to do so in media reports.

In an emailed statement on Tuesday, however, Lemkin said he had been consistent in his dealings with the judges, explaining that he had made it clear to Lemonde since December of last year that passing the film to the court before its public release would constitute a breach of promises made to interviewees.

"What the ECCC has repeatedly asked us to do is breach our agreement with our sources, something no self-respecting journalist or filmmaker will ever do," Lemkin said. "We have been entirely consistent in our position throughout our dealings with officers of the court and are disappointed that the CIJs have chosen to present a selective picture of the exchange."

Lemkin added that he and Thet Sambath, who also works as a senior reporter for the Post, are currently at work on a second film, and hope that both their films "may be of some use to the trial chamber when it finally comes to determine what happened in Democratic Kampuchea".

UN court spokesman Lars Olsen said Tuesday that tribunal officials had no comment beyond the CIJs' order.