

T85-220 (Pass 1786)

Source, a 40 YOA male Hmong refugee and former 2LT, provided information concerning the crash of a U.S. aircraft and death of two pilots in Xiang Khouang Province, Laos.

Information:

Source stated that sometime during late 1972 (not sure of month but possibly October) he saw the crash of a U.S. jet aircraft (type unknown) near Phong Savanh, Xieng Khouang Province Laos. Source stated that at the time he was in prisoner of war status after having been captured by PL/PAVN forces in Thong Hai Hin during September 1972. Source stated that about one month after his capture he was placed on a timber cutting detail in the forest near Khang Khai Village.

Source stated that while cutting timber sometime during the afternoon around 1600 hours he saw a flight of two similar aircraft arrive over Phong Savanh and one of the aircraft dived down and dropped bombs near Phong Savanh Airfield (UG 0851). While attacking, the aircraft was hit by PAVN anti-aircraft fire and crashed near Phong Savanh Airfield. Prior to the crash of the aircraft Source saw two pilots eject and two fully deployed white parachutes descend on the side of a small mountain approx 200 meters from the outskirts of Khang Khai Village and just north of a lake called Nong Sadet Chao Suppanavong (Prince Suppanavong Lake) (according to Source's description possibly the lake located vic UG 1553).

Sometime during early 1973 (possibly February) Source was in the area where the two parachutes went down and saw two human remains, one lying in a small streambed and another on the bank of the stream. Both bodies were badly decomposed and appeared to have been eaten by animals (Source speculated that the bodies were eaten by rats). Source picked up one large skull and speculated that it was an American skull due to the size. Source heard from the chief of the Xieng Khouang Provincial Jail called "Kuk Khang" by inmates and guards, that the two remains were those of the two pilots who had parachuted out in late 1972. The jail chief, known to Source as Siluang (LNU) a company grade Pathet Lao Army Officer, said that the two U.S. pilots had been killed by PAVN soldiers shortly after they landed. Source heard that both of the pilots had been armed with two pistols each and that they had killed six PAVN soldiers who went out to capture them. Source heard that an additional force of 30 PAVN troops then surrounded the area where the pilots were hiding and shot one of them in the forehead and the other in the arm, breaking the arm of the pilot. Source heard that when the PAVN troops finally killed both pilots they had suffered 31 KIA and 5 WIA. Source stated that he believed the story because at the time he saw the aircraft shot down the second aircraft had circled the area but had not attacked the PAVN troops who were in the area where the American pilots descended. Source did not observe any dogtags or personal effects with the remains and did not hear about any survivors.

Source stated that sometime during March 1973 he returned to the area and the remains had been removed. Source heard from the jail chief Siluang that the remains had been collected by PAVN troops for shipment back to Vietnam. Later that same month Source saw four trucks in Khang Khai (two each "CA" trucks and two each "66" trucks) which were fully loaded with human remains. Source heard (again from Siluang) that PAVN troops had been collecting PAVN and American remains throughout the Xieng Khouang area for shipment back to Vietnam and that some of the remains collected were Lao, Hmong, and Thai in addition to those of PAVN and U.S. remains. Source was not able to provide further information concerning the alleged U.S. remains.