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CJTFFA DET ONE BANGKOK TH
CDR JTF-FA HONOLULU HI//J2//, PRIORITY
INFO SECDEF WASHDC//OCJCS-PW-MIA/J5//
SECDEF WASHDC//USDP:RSA//
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//J3//
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NSC WASHDC
SECSTATE WASHDC//CA/OCS/CCS/EAP/VLC//

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PASS TO DOD POW-MIA CENTRAL DOCUMENTATION OFFICE

SUBJ: PRIORITY CASE INVESTIGATION TEAM REPORT: CASE
0997

REFS: A. DIA LEAD SHEET CASE 0997, 2 JUN 1993
B. JTF-FA CASE ASSESSMENT CASE 0997, 14 JUN 1993
C. CJTFFA DET ONE BKK, THAILAND, 201306Z JAN 93

1. BACKGROUND: FROM 19 THROUGH 23 AUGUST 1993, THE PRIORITY CASE INVESTIGATION TEAM (PCIT) SEARCHED FOR DOCUMENTATION AND EXPLORED LEADS ASSOCIATED WITH THREE CASES WHICH OCCURRED IN KONTUM PROVINCE. PCIT MEMBERS INCLUDED MSGT WILLIAM R. DEETER (U.S. TEAM LEADER), WILLIAM P. COUTURE (DIA ANALYST/LINGUIST), LTC PHAM TEO (PHAMJ TEOF) (VNOSMP TEAM LEADER), AND NGUYEN THE CONG (NGUYEENX THEES COONG) (MINISTRY OF INTERIOR). THIS REPORT CONTAINS THE DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATION INTO CASE 0997.

2. SUMMARY: FROM 19 THROUGH 23 AUGUST 1993, THE PCIT INVESTIGATED CASE 0997 IN KONTUM PROVINCE. DURING THE INVESTIGATION, NO INFORMATION PERTINENT TO THIS CASE WAS OBTAINED. THE KONTUM PROVINCE TASK TEAM WAS UNABLE TO LOCATE ANY FIRSTHAND OR HEARSAY WITNESSES KNOWLEDGEABLE

OF ANY ASPECT OF THE CASE. VIETNAMESE OFFICIALS IN KONTUM DENIED THE EXISTENCE OF ANY SUPPORTING ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTATION. THERE IS NOT ENOUGH INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON THIS CASE TO MAKE A RECOMMENDATION.

3. DETAILS:

A. ON 20 AUGUST 1993, THE JOINT U.S./VIETNAMESE PCIT HELD A THREE HOUR STRATEGY CONFERENCE WITH MEMBERS OF THE KONTUM PROVINCE PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE TO PRESENT INVESTIGATION REQUIREMENTS AND ESTABLISH A COURSE OF ACTION FOR THE INVESTIGATION OF CASES THAT OCCURRED WITHIN THE PROVINCE. THE MEETING TOOK PLACE AT THE PROVINCE PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE HEADQUARTERS, KONTUM CITY, AND WAS ATTENDED BY MEMBERS OF THE PCIT AND KONTUM PROVINCE REPRESENTATIVES TRAN QUANG VINH (TRAAF QUANG VINH), ASSISTANT CHAIRMAN KONTUM PROVINCE PEOPLES COMMITTEE; DANG DUC KHAM (DAWNGJ DWCS KHAM), TEAM LEADER; HOANG CANH DY (HOANGF CANHR ZY), PROVINCE MILITARY COMMAND REPRESENTATIVE; AND PROVINCE TEAM MEMBERS TRUONG ANH DUC (TRWONG ANH DWCS); NGUYEN THANH TRUNG (NGUYEENX THANH TRUNG); PHAN VAN BANG (PHAN VAWN BANGR); AND TO NGOC LONG (TOO NGOCJ LONG). DURING THE MEETING, THE VIETNAMESE WERE PRESENTED WITH A LIST OF SOURCES WHICH THE U.S. SIDE BELIEVED COULD PROVIDE INFORMATION RELATIVE TO CASE 0997. THESE INCLUDED:

- (1) ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS/UNITS:

- (A) HEADQUARTERS, PAVN B-3 FRONT
- (B) GIA LAI KONTUM PROVINCE MILITARY ARCHIVES
- (C) V211 HOSPITAL, FORMERLY V84 HOSPITAL
- (D) REAR SERVICES GROUP 559

- (2) THE VIETNAMESE WERE ALSO ASKED TO LOCATE AND MAKE AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS:

- (A) PAVN CAPTAIN PHAM HUU DUONG, FORMER CADRE FOR B-3 FRONT POW CAMP.

- (B) CAPTAIN PHUNG VAN Y, OF PAVN GROUP 875
- (C) FORMER OFFICERS OF THE PAVN 24TH REGIMENT (RGT):
 - - MAJOR THUOC (FORMER COMMANDER)
 - - MAJOR HA (DEPUTY COMMANDER)
 - - MAJOR THINH (POLITICAL OFFICER)
 - - CAPTAIN THUYEN (CHIEF OF STAFF)
- (D) FORMER OFFICERS OF THE PAVN 4TH BATTALION (BN), 24TH RGT:
 - - CAPTAIN CHUAN (FORMER COMMANDER)
 - - BUI VAN THAM (DEPUTY COMMANDER)
 - - THUONG (POLITICAL OFFICER)
- (E) FORMER OFFICERS OF THE PAVN 5TH BN, 24TH RGT:
 - - DINH THE TON (FORMER COMMANDER)
 - - LAN (DEPUTY COMMANDER)
 - - BUI MINH LE (POLITICAL OFFICER)
- (F) NGUYEN VIET PHUONG, AUTHOR OF THE BOOK "STRATEGIC MILITARY TRANSPORTATION ALONG THE HO CHI MINH TRAIL DURING THE ANTI-AMERICAN RESISTANCE" OR THE FOLLOWING TWO MAJOR GENERAL'S UNDER WHOSE DIRECTION THE BOOK WAS WRITTEN.
 - - MAJOR GENERAL DINH THIEN
 - - MAJOR GENERAL HOANG DIEN
- (G) THE AUTHORS OF CENTRAL HIGHLANDS MILITARY GROUP:
 - - DINH NGAI
 - - NGUYEN SI TRINH
 - - NGUYEN DANH DAN
 - - NGUYEN DUC NGU
- B. THE VIETNAMESE AGREED TO FULLY SUPPORT EACH OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS PROPOSED BY THE PCIT, BUT STATED THE TASK OF LOCATING WARTIME DOCUMENTATION ASSOCIATED WITH THIS, OR ANY OTHER CASE, WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT.
- C. ARCHIVAL: DURING THIS AND ALL PREVIOUS RESEARCH AND INVESTIGATION EFFORTS, NO DOCUMENTATION

ASSOCIATED WITH CASE 0997 HAS EVER BEEN DISCOVERED. THE SUBJECT OF WARTIME DOCUMENTATION WAS DISCUSSED AT LENGTH WITH KONTUM PROVINCE OFFICIALS, WHO WERE UNAWARE OF ANY EXISTING PROVINCIAL RECORDS PERTAINING TO U.S. SERVICEMEN KILLED OR CAPTURED DURING THE WAR. IT WAS POINTED OUT THAT MAIN FORCE AND GUERRILLA UNITS THROUGHOUT THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS WERE EXTREMELY MOBILE AND SELDOM REMAINED AT A FIXED LOCATION FOR EXTENDED PERIODS. GUERRILLA AND DISTRICT LEVEL COMBAT UNITS REFRAINED FROM KEEPING ANY SORT OF WRITTEN RECORDS WHICH, IF CAPTURED, COULD COMPROMISE THEIR OPERATIONS. MAIN FORCE COMBAT UNITS DID NOT REMAIN AT FIXED LOCATIONS LONG ENOUGH TO ESTABLISH PROPER STORAGE FACILITIES NOR DID THEY HAVE THE MEANS OF TRANSPORTING DOCUMENTATION FROM PLACE TO PLACE. IT WAS, THEREFORE, STANDARD POLICY FOR THE MAIN FORCES TO BURN OR BURY ALL DOCUMENTATION PRIOR TO RELOCATING. THIS WAS DONE TO MAINTAIN OPERATIONAL SECURITY AND TO REDUCE THE LOGISTICAL BURDEN. DURING THESE FREQUENT RELOCATIONS, SOLDIERS WOULD CARRY ONLY THE BARE NECESSITIES REQUIRED TO FIGHT AND SURVIVE. VIETNAMESE OFFICIALS IN KONTUM PROVINCE EXPLAINED THAT, WHILE DOCUMENTATION, IN THE FORM OF HAND WRITTEN NOTEBOOKS OR PERSONAL DIARIES, MAY STILL EXIST, THEY WERE UNAWARE OF ANY WRITTEN WARTIME RECORDS WHICH MAKE REFERENCE TO MISSING AMERICANS. THEY WERE INFORMED OF THE JOINT U.S./VIETNAMESE DOCUMENTATION CENTER, WHICH OPENED IN HANOI IN JUNE OF 1993, AND PLEDGED TO FORWARD ANY APPLICABLE RECORDS THEY FOUND TO THIS FACILITY. DURING THE COURSE OF THE INVESTIGATIONS IN KONTUM, LTC PHAM TEO (VNOSMP PCIT TEAM LEADER) VISITED THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE PAVN 10TH DIVISION AND DISCUSSED WARTIME DOCUMENTATION WITH THE DIVISION'S COMMANDER; HOWEVER, NO RECORDS PERTAINING TO U.S. SERVICEMEN KILLED OR CAPTURED DURING THE WAR WERE FOUND.

- D. INTERVIEWS:

- (1) THE KONTUM PROVINCE TEAM DETERMINED THAT NONE OF THE POTENTIAL WITNESSES REQUESTED BY THE PCIT WERE RESIDENTS OF THE PROVINCE AND THEY WERE UNABLE TO OFFER ANY INFORMATION REGARDING THESE INDIVIDUALS' CURRENT WHEREABOUTS. DURING PHAM TEO'S VISIT TO THE PAVN 10TH DIVISION HEADQUARTERS, HE ATTEMPTED TO ASCERTAIN THE LOCATION OF THE FORMER MEMBERS OF THE 24TH

RGT, BUT NONE OF THE INDIVIDUALS IDENTIFIED ON THE POTENTIAL WITNESS LIST ARE STILL ASSIGNED TO THE DIVISION'S SUBORDINATE 24TH, 66TH, OR 95TH REGIMENTS. ON 16 JULY 1993, JTF-FA ORAL HISTORY PERSONNEL INTERVIEWED NGUYEN VIET PHUONG, A REQUESTED SOURCE FOR THIS CASE. HE PROVIDED NO INFORMATION RELATED TO THIS CASE. THE REPORT OF THIS INTERVIEW HAS NOT YET BEEN ISSUED.

- (2) DURING THE INVESTIGATION OF CASE 0372 IN GIA LAI PROVINCE, DOCTOR VU KHAC DIEP (VUX KHACS DIEEPJ) PROVIDED LIMITED INFORMATION ON TWO REQUESTED SOURCES FOR THIS CASE.

- (A) DIEP RECALLED THAT A FELLOW PHYSICIAN, PHAM HUU DUONG (PHAMJ HWUX ZWONG), A REQUESTED SOURCE FOR CASE 0997, HAD SUSTAINED A LEG WOUND AND WAS CAPTURED WHILE ON A COMBAT OPERATION SOMETIME DURING THE WAR. HE HAD BEEN ASSIGNED TO A COMBAT MEDICAL TREATMENT TEAM (DOOIJ DIEEUF TRIJ), DESIGNATED DT4. DIEP HEARD THAT, WHILE A PRISONER, DUONG APPARENTLY DESCRIBED THE COMMAND STRUCTURE OF THE HOSPITAL TO ALLIED FORCES. DIEP RECALLED THAT DUONG WAS ORIGINALLY FROM VINH PHU (VINHX PHUS), BUT HE HAD NO INFORMATION ON HIS CURRENT WHEREABOUTS.

- (B) IN AUGUST 1975, DIEP ACCOMPANIED CAPTAIN PHUNG VAN Y (PHUNG VAWN Y), IDENTIFIED AS A POTENTIAL WITNESS FOR CASE 0997, ON A MISSION AIMED AT RECOVERING PAVN REMAINS WHICH HAD BEEN BURIED IN A HOSPITAL CEMETERY. DIEP NOTED THAT MANY OF THE GRAVES HAD BEEN DESTROYED BY B-52 STRIKES AND THE TERRAIN HAD BEEN DECIMATED. DIEP HAD NO IDEA OF Y'S PRESENT LOCATION OR CURRENT STATUS.

- (3) VNOSMP PCIT TEAM LEADER LTC PHAM TEO, A FORMER MEMBER OF GROUP 875, INSISTED THAT THERE WAS NEVER AN INDIVIDUAL NAMED PHUNG VAN Y ASSIGNED TO THIS UNIT. TEO OPINED THAT DURING AN EARLIER INTERVIEW SESSION, THE NAME PHUNG VAN Y WAS ASSOCIATED WITH GROUP 875 BASED ON THE DATE HE ACCOMPANIED DOCTOR DIEP ON THE AFOREMENTIONED RECOVERY MISSION, I.E. 8/75 (AUGUST 1975).

4. PCIT COMMENTS:

- A. COOPERATION: KONTUM PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS PROVIDED OUTSTANDING COOPERATION AND SUPPORT TO THE PCIT DURING ALL THREE INVESTIGATIONS CONDUCTED IN THE PROVINCE. THE MEMBERS OF THE KONTUM TEAM ABANDONED THEIR NORMAL DUTIES AND WORKED WITH THE PCIT FULL-TIME DURING THE INVESTIGATION THERE. FOLLOWING THE INITIAL MEETING WITH MEMBERS OF THE PCIT, THE PROVINCE TEAM ESTABLISHED A DETAILED PLAN OF OPERATIONS WHICH ENSURED THAT INVESTIGATIONS WERE CONDUCTED IN A TIMELY AND WELL ORGANIZED MANNER. THIS ENHANCED PCIT PREPARATION FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW. MEMBERS OF THE PROVINCE TEAM TRAVELLED HUNDREDS OF KILOMETERS AND SPENT NUMEROUS HOURS EACH DAY SEARCHING FOR AND PICKING UP WITNESSES FOR INTERVIEW. THE TEAM WAS QUICK TO RESPOND TO ANY REQUEST, AND IN EVERY INSTANCE, DID THEIR UTMOST TO HELP ACCOMPLISH THE PCIT MISSION.

- B. WITNESS RELIABILITY: NO WITNESSES WERE INTERVIEWED.

- C. ANALYSIS/CONCLUSION: THIS WAS THE SECOND INVESTIGATION OF CASE 0997. BASED ON THE RESULTS OF THIS PCIT INVESTIGATION, AND THE PREVIOUS EFFORT, THE FOLLOWING CONCLUSIONS ARE OFFERED:

- (1) NO ARCHIVAL RECORDS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS CASE WERE LOCATED.

- (2) NO FIRSTHAND WITNESSES TO THE DEATH OR BURIAL OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATED WITH CASE 0997 WERE LOCATED. IN ADDITION, THE TEAM OBTAINED NO HEARSAY INFORMATION PERTINENT TO THE DETERMINATION OF FATE FOR THE INDIVIDUAL INVOLVED.

- (3) NO VIETNAMESE UNITS WERE IDENTIFIED AS PARTICIPATING IN THE BATTLE DURING WHICH THE AMERICAN SERVICEMAN ASSOCIATED WITH THIS CASE BECAME MISSING.

- (4) THERE IS NOT ENOUGH INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON THIS CASE TO MAKE A RECOMMENDATION.##