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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//  
USCINCPAC LO WASHDC//  
DIA WASHDC//  
NSC WASHDC  
SECSTATE WASHDC//CA/OCS/CCS/EAP/VLC//

UNCLASSIFIED 0434 SEP 93

PASS TO DOD POW-MIA CENTRAL DOCUMENTATION OFFICE

SUBJ: PRIORITY CASE INVESTIGATION TEAM REPORT: CASE  
1046

REFS: A. DIA LEAD SHEET CASE 1046, 2 JUN 1993  
B. JTF-FA CASE ASSESSMENT CASE 1046, 01 JUN 1993  
C. CJTFFA DET ONE BANGKOK TH, 230120Z NOV 92

1. BACKGROUND: FROM 14 THROUGH 18 AUGUST 1993, THE PRIORITY CASE INVESTIGATION TEAM (PCIT) SEARCHED FOR DOCUMENTATION AND EXPLORED LEADS ASSOCIATED WITH FOUR CASES WHICH OCCURRED IN DAC LAC 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 1046.

2. SUMMARY: FROM 14 THROUGH 18 AUGUST 1993, THE PCIT INVESTIGATED CASE 1046 IN DAC LAC PROVINCE. THE TEAM INTERVIEWED ONE WITNESS IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCE OF INFORMATION FOR THIS CASE. IN ADDITION, THREE REQUESTED SOURCES WERE INTERVIEWED BY THE ORAL HISTORY

PROGRAM TEAM IN HANOI. THROUGHOUT THE COURSE OF THIS INVESTIGATION, NO NEW INFORMATION PERTINENT TO THIS CASE WAS OBTAINED. THE DAC LAC PROVINCE TASK TEAM WAS UNABLE TO LOCATE ANY ADDITIONAL FIRSTHAND OR HEARSAY WITNESSES KNOWLEDGEABLE OF ANY ASPECT OF THE CASE AND VIETNAMESE OFFICIALS IN DAC LAC DENIED THE EXISTENCE OF ANY SUPPORTING ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTATION. BASED ON INFORMATION OBTAINED AND MATERIAL EVIDENCE RECOVERED FROM THE CRASH SITE ASSOCIATED WITH CASE 1046 DURING THE 20TH JOINT FIELD ACTIVITY, RECOMMEND THE CRASH SITE BE EXCAVATED BY A JOINT RECOVERY TEAM.

### 3. DETAILS:

- A. ON 14 AUGUST 1993, THE JOINT U.S./VIETNAMESE PCIT HELD A THREE HOUR STRATEGY CONFERENCE WITH MEMBERS OF THE DAC LAC 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 DAC LAC PROVINCE COMMITTEE HOUSE IN BAN ME THUOT CITY, AND WAS ATTENDED BY MEMBERS OF THE PCIT AND DAC LAC PROVINCE REPRESENTATIVES Y'LY NICK DAM, DEPUTY PROVINCE PEOPLES COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN; DINH VAN KHIET (DINH VAWN KHIETS), DEPUTY PROVINCE PEOPLES COMMITTEE CHIEF OF STAFF; NGO HA (NGOO HAJ), PROVINCE VNOSMP TEAM LEADER; NGUYEN THANH CHIEN (NGUYEENX THANHF CHIEENS), PROVINCE EXTERNAL AFFAIRS OFFICE; AND CAPTAIN NGUYEN DUC THANH (NGUYEENX DWCS THANHF), PROVINCE MILITARY FORCES REPRESENTATIVE. DURING THE MEETING, THE VIETNAMESE WERE PRESENTED WITH A LIST OF SOURCES WHICH, THE U.S. SIDE BELIEVED, COULD PROVIDE INFORMATION RELATIVE TO CASE 1046. THESE INCLUDED:

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

- (A) B3 FRONT

- (B) MILITARY REGION 5 (MR5) HEADQUARTERS (HQ)

- (C) DAC LAC PROVINCE MILITARY HQ

- HOUSE (D) DAK MIL DISTRICT HQ AND TRADITION

- (E) 24TH INDEPENDENT REGIMENT (RGT)

- (F) 33RD INDEPENDENT RGT

- (G) 95TH INDEPENDENT RGT

- (H) 40TH ARTILLERY RGT

- (I) DAC LAC PROVINCE

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

- (A) NGUYEN VAN YEN (NGUYEENX VAWN YEEN) (AKA HAI), A FORMER GUIDE IN THE DAK PRI AREA OF DAC LAC PROVINCE.

- (B) Y'KRO'NG, A FULRO MEMBER BELIEVED TO BE HELD BY VIETNAMESE AUTHORITIES IN THE DA LAT AREA.

- (C) AMA NAM, A FULRO MEMBER BELIEVED TO BE HELD BY VIETNAMESE AUTHORITIES IN THE DA LAT AREA.

- (D) THE AUTHORS OF THE 1980 BOOK, "THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS PEOPLES' ARMED FORCES IN THE ANTI-AMERICAN STRUGGLE FOR THE NATIONAL SALVATION," THEY ARE:

- - NGUYEN VAN MINH (NGUYEENX VAWN MINH)

- - NGUYEN DINH THAO (NGUYEENX DINH THAOR)

- - DOAN NHU KIEN (DOANF NHW KIEEN)

- - NGUYEN THIEN LUONG (NGUYEENX THIEEN LWONG)

- - MAJOR GENERAL HOANG MINH THAO (HOANG MINH THAOR)

- - BRIGADIER GENERAL DANG VU HIEP (DAWNGJ VUX

HIEEPJ)

- 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 1046 HAS EVER BEEN DISCOVERED. THE SUBJECT OF WARTIME DOCUMENTATION WAS DISCUSSED AT LENGTH WITH DAC LAC 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 AND IT WAS 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 DAC LAC 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.

- D. INTERVIEWS:

- (1) THE DAC LAC PROVINCE TEAM DETERMINED THAT FOUR OF THE NINE INDIVIDUALS IDENTIFIED BY THE PCIT WERE RESIDENTS OF THE PROVINCE AND WOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW UPON REQUEST. ACCORDING TO VNOSMP TEAM LEADER PHAM TEO, THREE OF THE REQUESTED WITNESSES, NGUYEN VAN YEN (AKA HAI), Y'KRO'NG, AND AMA NAM, HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY INTERVIEWED BY JCRC/JTF-FA INVESTIGATORS AND PROVIDED NO INFORMATION PERTINENT TO THE DETERMINATION OF FATE FOR THE INDIVIDUALS ASSOCIATED WITH CASE 1046. THEREFORE, ADDITIONAL INTERVIEWS WITH THESE THREE INDIVIDUALS WERE NOT REQUESTED. THE FOURTH INDIVIDUAL, NGUYEN THIEN LUONG, WAS INTERVIEWED AT THE THANG LOI HOTEL, BAN ME THUOT CITY. THREE OTHER REQUESTED SOURCES FOR THIS CASE (REQUESTED IN REF A)

WERE INTERVIEWED BY MEMBERS OF THE ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM IN HANOI. DETAILS OF THESE INTERVIEWS ARE PROVIDED BELOW. ADDITIONAL RESEARCH BY PROVINCE OFFICIALS INTO THE LOCATION OF THE REMAINING THREE POTENTIAL WITNESSES DETERMINED THE FOLLOWING:

- - DOAN NHU KIEN IS CURRENTLY WORKING AT THE MILITARY HEADQUARTERS IN HAI PHONG.
- - MAJOR GENERAL HOANG MINH THAO CURRENTLY RESIDES IN HANOI.
- - BRIGADIER GENERAL DANG VU HIEP CURRENTLY RESIDES IN HANOI.

(2) ON 18 AUG 93, THE PCIT INTERVIEWED NGUYEN THIEN LUONG IN A CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE THANG LOI HOTEL IN BAN ME THUOT CITY, DAC LAC PROVINCE. LUONG, AGE 60, CURRENTLY RESIDES AT HOUSE 5A, PHAN CHU TRINH STREET IN TRUNG CO DISTRICT, BAN ME THUOT CITY. HE RETIRED FROM THE MILITARY IN 1987 AND CURRENTLY RUNS THE PROVINCE VETERAN'S ASSOCIATION OFFICE. LUONG PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING:

(A) LUONG BEGAN HIS MILITARY CAREER AT THE AGE OF 14, SERVING WITH THE 308TH INFANTRY DIVISION IN LAOS. IN 1964, HE FIRST MOVED INTO THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS AND SERVED WITH AN ELEMENT OF THE 35TH INFANTRY DIVISION. FROM 1966 THROUGH 1970, LUONG WAS ASSIGNED TO THE 95TH RGT, 10TH INFANTRY DIVISION. IN 1970, HE WAS REASSIGNED TO THE "WESTERN SECTOR" HEADQUARTERS AND THEN WENT ON TO BECOME THE DIRECTOR OF THE HISTORICAL SECTION FOR THE POLITICAL DIRECTORATE OF THE PAVN 3RD CORPS IN 1975. IN 1982, HE WAS REASSIGNED TO THE DAC LAC AREA, WHERE HE RETIRED.

(B) LUONG EXPLAINED THAT DURING HIS TENURE WITH THE 95TH RGT, BOTH THE 95TH'S AND 66TH'S AREAS OF OPERATIONS WERE CENTERED IN THE GIA LAI-KONTUM AND MANG GIA PASS AREAS. HE ADDED THAT TWO BATTALIONS OF THE 95TH RGT WERE INVOLVED IN A WELL-KNOWN BATTLE WITH ELEMENTS OF THE U.S. 173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE ON HILL 875. THIS BATTLE LASTED FOR SEVERAL DAYS AND RESULTED IN HEAVY CASUALTIES ON BOTH SIDES.

(C) THROUGHOUT HIS ENTIRE WARTIME

EXPERIENCE, LUONG NEVER SAW OR HEARD ABOUT ANY AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR. HE ALSO CLAIMED TO HAVE NEVER WITNESSED ANY AMERICAN CASUALTIES LEFT BEHIND ON THE BATTLE FIELD. HE DESCRIBED THE TACTICS USED BY BATTALIONS OF THE 95TH RGT AS "HIT AND RUN" WITH ENGAGEMENTS NORMALLY LASTING ONLY TEN TO FIFTEEN MINUTES. THESE TACTICS WERE FREQUENTLY EMPLOYED DURING AMBUSHES CARRIED OUT ON CONVOYS TRAVELING THROUGH THE MANG GIA PASS. SINCE THE U.S. ALWAYS USED AIR POWER AND ARTILLERY TO SUPPORT UNITS WHICH CAME UNDER FIRE, THE VIETNAMESE HAD TO CONCENTRATE THEIR EFFORTS AND THEN IMMEDIATELY WITHDRAW. IN CASES WHERE THERE WAS INSUFFICIENT TIME FOR RETREAT, LUONG'S FORCES WOULD MOVE IN CLOSE TO THE U.S. POSITION UNDER ATTACK TO TRY AND AVOID THE AIR STRIKES AND ARTILLERY.

- (D) LUONG CONDUCTED RESEARCH FOR THE BOOK "THE PEOPLE'S ARMED FORCES OF THE WESTERN HIGHLANDS DURING THE WAR OF NATIONAL SALVATION AGAINST THE AMERICANS" FROM 1976 TO 1978 WHILE ASSIGNED TO THE PAVN 3RD CORPS HISTORICAL SECTION. HE INTERVIEWED A LARGE NUMBER OF WAR VETERANS TO GATHER THIS INFORMATION AND RECALLED THAT, OCCASIONALLY, AN INDIVIDUAL WOULD BRING ALONG AN OLD NOTEBOOK OR DIARY TO THE INTERVIEW SESSION TO USE FOR REFERENCE. LUONG TOOK POSSESSION OF SOME OF THIS PERSONAL REFERENCE MATERIAL, EXPLOITED THE INFORMATION HE CONSIDERED TO BE APPLICABLE, AND THEN DISPOSED OF IT. HE WAS UNABLE TO SAVE THESE NOTEBOOKS BECAUSE, AT THAT TIME, THE 3RD CORPS WAS ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN CONFLICTS ALONG THE CAMBODIAN BORDER WITH KHMER ROUGE FORCES AND HE DID NOT HAVE A PERMANENT HQ. THIS SITUATION BECAME EVEN WORSE AFTER VIETNAM INVADED CAMBODIA IN 1978. THROUGHOUT HIS RESEARCH, LUONG RECEIVED NO INFORMATION ON AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR (PW).

- (E) LUONG DID NOT PROVIDE ANY INFORMATION ON WARTIME PW CAMPS. HE STATED THAT INFORMATION OF THIS TYPE WAS MANAGED BY A SPECIAL BRANCH OF THE POLITICAL DEPARTMENT AND WAS CONSIDERED HIGHLY SENSITIVE. HE RECALLED THE NAMES OF TWO INDIVIDUALS WHO USED TO WORK IN THE ENEMY PROSELYTING SECTION OF THE 3RD CORPS (FORMERLY THE PAVN B3 FRONT). HE IDENTIFIED THESE INDIVIDUALS AS KHUONG XUAN QUE (KHWONG XUAAN QUEES) AND

NGHIA (NFI). (NOTE: KHUONG XUAN QUE WAS INTERVIEWED BY JTF-FA ORAL HISTORY PERSONNEL IN HANOI ON 17 MAY 93.) ALTHOUGH HE HAD NOT HEARD FROM EITHER OF THESE INDIVIDUALS FOR MANY YEARS, THE LAST HE KNEW, THEY WERE ASSOCIATED WITH THE PAVN 3RD CORPS. HE ADDED THAT THE COMMANDER OF THE PAVN 3RD CORPS, MAJOR GENERAL HO DE (HOOF DEE), FORMERLY COMMANDED THE 66TH RGT, 10TH DIV PAVN. WHILE INVESTIGATING CASES IN GIA LAI PROVINCE, PHAM TEO (VNOSMP PCIT TEAM LEADER), NGUYEN THE CONG, AND MEMBERS OF THE GIA LAI PROVINCE TEAM VISITED PAVN 3RD CORPS HEADQUARTERS TO INQUIRE ABOUT THESE POTENTIAL WITNESSES, BUT THEIR CURRENT WHEREABOUTS COULD NOT BE DETERMINED.

- (F) LUONG CONCLUDED HIS TESTIMONY BY STATING THAT HE HAD NEVER HEARD OF ANY AMERICANS REMAINING IN VIETNAM AFTER 1973 UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES WHATSOEVER. HE ADDED THAT LIFE IN VIETNAM WAS TOO DIFFICULT FOR AMERICANS TO LIVE HERE OF THEIR OWN FREE WILL.

- (3) ON 19 AUGUST 1993, NGUYEN VAN MINH WAS INTERVIEWED BY A JOINT U.S./VIETNAM ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM INTERVIEW AT THE GOVERNMENT GUEST HOUSE, NUMBER 2 LE THACH STREET, HOAN KIEM DISTRICT, HANOI. THE U.S. CONTINGENT CONSISTED OF TSGT RONALD D. WARD, JOINT TASK FORCE-FULL ACCOUNTING (JTF-FA) ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM COORDINATOR; AND PO2 JOHN L. HARVEY, JTF-FA ANALYST/LINGUIST. THE VIETNAMESE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT CONTINGENT CONSISTED OF LTC LE KY, MINISTRY OF DEFENSE; AND MR. NGUYEN VAN THANG LOI, MINISTRY OF INTERIOR. MINH SUPPLIED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

- (A) MINH WORKED AS A REPORTER FOR THE LIBERATION ARMY NEWSPAPER IN B3 FRONT, THE VIETNAMESE WESTERN HIGHLANDS, BETWEEN 1966 AND 1975. PRIOR TO THAT, HE TAUGHT COLLEGE LEVEL POPULAR LITERATURE IN HANOI. FROM 1977 TO 1980 HE CONTRIBUTED TO WRITING THE HISTORY OF THE WESTERN HIGHLANDS FRONT AS SENIOR EDITOR FOR THE PROJECT.

- (B) AS A REPORTER FOR THE LIBERATION ARMY NEWSPAPER, MINH WAS STATIONED AT B3 FRONT HEADQUARTERS (HQ) AND WROTE ARTICLES BASED ON

OPERATIONAL BATTLEFIELD REPORTS. HE SELDOM TRAVELED TO ACTUAL BATTLEFIELD LOCATIONS AND RELATED THAT AT FRONT HQ, HE WAS REMOVED FROM THE TACTICAL FRONT AND "COULD NOT HEAR THE GUNFIRE". THE B3 FRONT COMMAND ECHELON DIRECTED OPERATIONS MAINLY BY RADIO.

- (C) DURING THIS PERIOD, MINH NEITHER VISITED NOR KNEW THE LOCATION OF ANY PRISONER OF WAR (PW) CAMPS. CONCERNING PRISONERS, HE ONLY KNEW THAT, IN GENERAL, THE PAVN FOLLOWED A HUMANITARIAN PW POLICY. AT TIMES, HE INCLUDED PW INFORMATION IN HIS ARTICLES, BUT HE COLLECTED THE SOURCE INFORMATION FROM OPERATIONAL REPORTS SENT FROM FIELD UNITS TO FRONT HQ. HE HAD BEEN TO B3 FRONT HOSPITAL V211 (APPROXIMATELY A DAY'S WALK FROM B3 FRONT HQ), BUT CLAIMED NO KNOWLEDGE OF A PW CAMP NEAR THAT LOCATION AND NEVER SAW FOREIGNERS THERE. MINH SAID SENIOR COLONEL KHUONG XUAN QUE, FORMER B3 FRONT PROSELYTING OFFICER, WOULD KNOW ABOUT PW CAMPS BECAUSE ENEMY PROSELYTING PERSONNEL HAD A REASON TO VISIT THE CAMPS. THE MAJORITY OF PAVN PERSONNEL IN B3 FRONT WERE PROHIBITED FROM GOING TO PRISON CAMPS. MINH SAID THE CAMP SYSTEM, INCLUDING THE ROUTES FOR EVACUATING PRISONERS TO THE NORTH, WAS SECRET AND UNKNOWN TO THE MAJORITY OF PAVN PERSONNEL. DURING HIS TIME IN THE WESTERN HIGHLANDS, HE KNEW NOTHING OF A B3 FRONT OPERATIONS LOG WHICH MIGHT HAVE CONTAINED INFORMATION ON PW'S.

- (D) BEGINNING IN 1977, MINH CONDUCTED RESEARCH FOR THE BOOK AT PAVN 3RD CORPS HQ IN PLEIKU, AND WAS ALLOWED LIMITED ACCESS TO THE CORPS' CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS ARCHIVES. THE PROCEDURE WAS FOR HIM TO REQUEST DOCUMENTS CONCERNING A CERTAIN INCIDENT OR BATTLE, SUPPLYING THE DATE, AREA, AND OR PARTICIPATING UNITS TO THE CLERK, WHO WOULD THEN RETRIEVE THE MATERIAL. THE CLERK USED AN INDEX OR DIRECTORY TO LOCATE THE DOCUMENTS. MINH COULD NOT ENTER THE ACTUAL DOCUMENTS STORAGE AREA, BUT WORKED IN A NEARBY ROOM. HE COULD ONLY ACCESS DOCUMENTS ONE TIME, AND HAD TO LEAVE WHATEVER NOTES HE TOOK IN THE FACILITY OR DESTROY THEM. MINH SUGGESTED THE JOINT TEAM SEEK ACCESS TO THE 3RD CORPS CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS ARCHIVE TO FIND INFORMATION POSSIBLY RELATED TO UNACCOUNTED FOR U.S. PERSONNEL IN B3 FRONT. HE SAID THAT ALL THE DOCUMENTS HE USED FOR THE

BOOK WERE OF OPERATIONAL NATURE AND CONTAINED VERY FEW DETAILS CONCERNING U.S. PRISONERS. IF PW'S WERE MENTIONED AT ALL, IT WAS ONLY IN TERMS OF NUMBERS OF PRISONERS CAPTURED. HE DID NOT DISCOUNT THE POSSIBILITY THAT OTHER TYPES OF DOCUMENTS, SUCH AS PROSELYTING DOCUMENTS, MIGHT ALSO BE IN THE ARCHIVE. HE SAID WAS THAT THE 3RD CORPS TRANSFERRED TO THE CHINA-VIETNAM BORDER AREA IN 1979 AND THEN RETURNED TO THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS IN 1985 OR 1986. HE BELIEVED IT PROBABLE THE CORPS HAD DESTROYED THE DOCUMENTS DURING THAT PERIOD. AT THE TIME HE DID HIS RESEARCH IN PLEIKU, THE 3RD CORPS HAD NO REGULATION GOVERNING THE DESTRUCTION OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS, BUT HE DID NOT KNOW IF THE UNIT HAD SINCE ADOPTED SUCH A REGULATION.

- (E) FINALLY, MINH CLAIMED NO KNOWLEDGE OF U.S. PERSONNEL, LIVING FREELY OR AGAINST THEIR WILL, IN VIETNAM SINCE 1973.

- (4) ON 21 AUGUST 1993, NGUYEN DINH THAO WAS INTERVIEWED BY A JOINT U.S./VIETNAM ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM TEAM AT THE GOVERNMENT GUEST HOUSE, NUMBER 2 LE THACH STREET, HOAN KIEM DISTRICT, HANOI. THE U.S. CONTINGENT CONSISTED OF MR. KEITH GARY FLANAGAN, DET 2, JOINT TASK FORCE-FULL ACCOUNTING (JTF-FA) CASUALTY RESOLUTION SPECIALIST AND PO2 JOHN L. HARVEY, JTF-FA ANALYST/LINGUIST. THE VIETNAMESE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT CONTINGENT CONSISTED OF LTC LE KY, MINISTRY OF DEFENSE; AND MR. NGUYEN VAN THANG LOI, MINISTRY OF INTERIOR. THAO SUPPLIED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

- (A) THAO SAID THAT HE BECAME INVOLVED WITH THE BOOK "THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS PEOPLE'S ARMED FORCES IN THE ANTI-AMERICAN STRUGGLE FOR THE NATIONAL SALVATION" FOLLOWING THE LIBERATION OF THE SOUTH. HE SAID THAT THERE WERE TWO GENERALS AND THREE OTHER AUTHORS ASSIGNED TO WRITE THE BOOK. THE BOOK, PUBLISHED IN 1980, WAS WRITTEN FROM BOTH POLITICAL AND MILITARY ASPECTS. THAO WROTE THE PREFACE, CHAPTERS FOUR AND FIVE, AND THE CONCLUSION.

- (B) THERE WERE SEVERAL SOURCES WHICH THE AUTHORS USED TO GATHER INFORMATION FOR THE BOOK. THE AUTHORS USED WESTERN NEWS SOURCES, INTERVIEWED BATTLE

PARTICIPANTS AND MEDICAL WORKERS, READ THE PEOPLE'S ARMY (QUAAN DOOIJ NHAAN ZAN) AND PEOPLE'S (NHAAN ZAN) NEWSPAPERS, AS WELL AS READ MILITARY OPERATIONAL REPORTS AS SOURCES. THE MILITARY OPERATIONAL REPORTS WERE CLASSIFIED AND KEPT AT A B3 SECRET DOCUMENT FACILITY IN NHA TRANG DURING 1977 AND 1978. THESE REPORTS CONTAINED ONLY B3 FRONT BATTLE STATISTICS, SUCH AS THE NUMBER OF TROOPS KILLED, CAPTURED, AND WOUNDED. THEY DID NOT CONTAIN THE NAMES OR ANY SPECIFIC PW INFORMATION. WHEN AT THE DOCUMENT FACILITY, HE WAS ALLOWED TO TAKE NOTES ABOUT THE REPORTS HE WAS READING, BUT HAD TO DESTROY THE NOTES BEFORE LEAVING. THAO OPINED THAT SOME OF THE DOCUMENTS MAY HAVE BEEN SENT TO HANOI, WHILE MOST HAVE PROBABLY BEEN DESTROYED SINCE 1978.

- (C) THAO STATED THAT BY 1968, MOST AMERICAN FORCES HAD WITHDRAWN FROM THE WESTERN HIGHLANDS AND MANY OF THE RECORDS HAD BEEN DESTROYED BY THE TIME HE WENT TO FIND THEM IN 1977. HE ADDED, THE WESTERN NEWS SOURCES WERE PARTICULARLY VALUABLE DURING THE WAR BECAUSE OF THEIR TIMELY REPORTING OF U.S. UNIT LOCATIONS.

- (D) THAO SAID HE NEVER HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET ANY AMERICAN PW'S. HE SAID THAT MOST BATTLE PARTICIPANTS AND MEDICAL PERSONNEL DID NOT SPEAK ENGLISH AND COULD NOT HAVE KNOWN ANY SPECIFICS ABOUT CAPTURED U.S. TROOPS. EVEN THE ESCORT PERSONNEL WHO TOOK PRISONERS FROM THE FRONT TO PW HOLDING FACILITIES WOULD NOT KNOW ANYTHING SPECIFIC ABOUT THE PRISONERS. THE ENEMY PROSELYTING PERSONNEL AT THE PW CAMPS WERE VERY SPECIALIZED AND TRAINED TO DEAL FIRST HAND WITH CAPTURED AMERICANS AND THEY WERE THE ONLY ONES WHO KNEW ANY SPECIFICS ABOUT THE AMERICAN PW'S. THAO WAS UNAWARE IF THE ENEMY PROSELYTING CADRE KEPT RECORDS, BUT IF ANYONE DID KEEP PW RECORDS IT WOULD HAVE BEEN THEM.

- (E) ALTHOUGH HE HAS NO FIRST HAND KNOWLEDGE OF U.S. PW'S HELD IN B3 FRONT, THAO SAID THAT HE KNOWS TAKING PRISONERS CREATED MANY DIFFICULTIES FOR VIETNAMESE TROOPS. THE AMERICAN PRISONERS DID NOT MOVE WELL IN THE JUNGLE, CREATING UNSAFE SITUATIONS FOR THE

VIETNAMESE, ESPECIALLY DURING B-52 STRIKES. HE ALSO SAID THAT FEEDING AND CLOTHING THE PRISONER WAS TOO DIFFICULT AND COSTLY FOR MANY OF THE PEOPLE'S ARMY OF VIETNAM (PAVN) UNITS.

- (F) THAO RECALLED SEEING A MOVIE ABOUT AMERICAN PW'S AT CHRISTMAS TIME SOMETIME DURING THE WAR, IN WHICH PRISONERS SANG CHRISTMAS SONGS AND MADE PRESENTS FOR EACH OTHER. HE SAID THAT KHUONG XUAN QUE, A CADRE OF THE ENEMY PROSELYTING OFFICE, A MAN NAMED THU (NFI), AND SEVERAL OTHERS ORGANIZED THE PARTY FOR THE PW'S.

- (G) THAO SAID THAT THE U.S. WAS VERY GOOD AT RECOVERING THE BODIES OF LOST SOLDIERS DURING THE WAR, BUT THERE IS PROBABLY VERY LITTLE CHANCE OF FINDING REMAINS OF U.S. SERVICEMEN NOW. HE SIGHTED THE CHANGES IN THE WESTERN HIGHLAND'S TERRAIN BECAUSE OF SEVERE WEATHER, HEAVY U.S. BOMBING DURING THE WAR, AND A LACK OF RECORDS AND WITNESSES AFTER 25 YEARS AS REASONS FOR THIS.

- (5) ON 17 MAY 1993, A JOINT ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW TEAM INTERVIEWED REQUESTED SOURCE KHUONG XUAN QUE, A 51 YOA HANOI RESIDENT AND FORMER B3 FRONT ENEMY PROSELYTING CADRE FROM 1965 UNTIL 1973. THE TEAM MET AT THE ANTE-BUILDING MEETING ROOM OF THE GOVERNMENT GUEST HOUSE, 2 LE THACH STREET, HOAN KIEM DISTRICT, HANOI TO INTERVIEW QUE. HE PROVIDED NO INFORMATION CONCERNING CASE 1046. HIS STATEMENTS CONCERNING SEVERAL UNACCOUNTED FOR AMERICANS HELD IN THE B3 FRONT AREA WERE VAGUE AND AT TIMES CONFLICTING. THOUGH DURING THE COURSE OF HIS ENEMY PROSELYTING DUTIES, HE FREQUENTED B3 FRONT PW CAMPS AND HOLDING FACILITIES, HE PROVIDED NO INFORMATION ON CAMP DESIGNATORS OR LOCATIONS. NEITHER COULD HE PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE DISPOSITION OF WARTIME PW RECORDS. (FOR A COMPLETE ACCOUNT OF KHUONG XUAN QUE'S STATEMENTS, SEE ORAL HISTORY REPORT OF INTERVIEW, 15 JUNE 1993.)

#### 4. PCIT COMMENTS:

- A. COOPERATION: DAC LAC PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS PROVIDED OUTSTANDING COOPERATION AND SUPPORT TO THE PCIT

DURING ALL FOUR INVESTIGATIONS CONDUCTED IN THE PROVINCE. PROVINCE OFFICIALS HAD RECEIVED THE LEAD SHEET INFORMATION FROM THE VNOSMP PRIOR TO THE ARRIVAL OF PCIT. THEY HAD ALREADY BEGUN THE PROCESS OF LOCATING WITNESSES AND MAKING SURE THEY WOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW. FOLLOWING THE INITIAL MEETING WITH MEMBERS OF THE PCIT, A DETAILED PLAN WAS ESTABLISHED IN ORDER TO BEST MAKE USE OF THE TIME AVAILABLE. THIS PLAN ENSURED OPERATIONS WERE CONDUCTED IN A TIMELY AND WELL ORGANIZED MANNER AND ENHANCED PCIT PREPARATION FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW. MEMBERS OF THE PROVINCE TEAM TRAVELLED SEVERAL HUNDRED KILOMETERS AND SPENT NUMEROUS HOURS EACH DAY LOCATING AND PICKING UP WITNESSES FOR INTERVIEW. WHEN IT WAS LEARNED THAT A POTENTIAL WITNESS FOR ANOTHER CASE WAS OUT OF TOWN ON VACATION AND THAT HE WOULD RETURN AFTER THE PCIT HAD MOVED ON TO OTHER PROVINCES, THE PROVINCE TEAM MADE ARRANGEMENTS TO NOTIFY THE PCIT WHEN THIS INDIVIDUAL RETURNED AND ARRANGED FOR HIM TO BE INTERVIEWED AT THAT TIME.

- B. WITNESS RELIABILITY:

- (1) NGUYEN THIEN LUONG WAS COOPERATIVE AND MORE THAN WILLING TO RELATE ANY INFORMATION HE COULD. ALTHOUGH HE WAS QUITE TALKATIVE AND HIS STATEMENTS APPEARED TO BE EXTREMELY OPEN AND SINCERE, HE COULD OFFER NO INFORMATION ON CASE 1046 OR ANY OTHER CASES BEING INVESTIGATED IN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS.

- (2) NGUYEN VAN MINH: MINH WAS STRAIGHTFORWARD IN HIS STATEMENTS AND OFFERED INFORMATION AND OPINIONS IN A CANDID, ANIMATED MANNER. THE U.S. INTERVIEW TEAM DETECTED NO SIGNS OF COACHING OR SCRIPTING. ASSESS THIS SOURCE'S RELIABILITY TO BE GOOD.

- (3) NGUYEN DINH THAO: THOUGH THAO HAD LITTLE USEFUL INFORMATION TO PROVIDE CONCERNING THE PW/MIA ISSUE, HIS STATEMENTS WERE STRAIGHTFORWARD AND SHOWED NO SIGNS OF COACHING. ASSESS THIS SOURCE'S RELIABILITY TO BE GOOD.

(4) KHUONG XUAN QUE: QUE HAD NO INFORMATION RELATING TO CASE 1046. THE INFORMATION HE DID PROVIDE IS SUSPECT DUE TO CONTRADICTIONS IN THE STATEMENTS.

- C. ANALYSIS/CONCLUSION: THIS WAS THE SECOND INVESTIGATION OF CASE 1046. 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 EYEWITNESSES TO THE DEATH OR BURIAL OF THE FOUR AMERICAN SERVICEMEN ASSOCIATED WITH CASE 1046 WERE LOCATED. IN ADDITION, THE TEAM OBTAINED NO HEARSAY INFORMATION PERTINENT TO THE DETERMINATION OF FATE FOR THE INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED.

- (3) NO VIETNAMESE UNITS WERE IDENTIFIED AS HAVING BEEN INVOLVED IN THE CASE 1046 LOSS INCIDENT OR HAVING BEEN IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY WHEN THE INCIDENT OCCURRED.

- (4) BASED ON INFORMATION OBTAINED AND MATERIAL EVIDENCE RECOVERED FROM THE CRASH SITE ASSOCIATED WITH CASE 1046 DURING THE 20TH JOINT FIELD ACTIVITY, RECOMMEND THE CRASH SITE BE EXCAVATED BY A JOINT RECOVERY TEAM.##