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ADMINISTRATIVE MESSAGE

ROUTINE

UNCLAS //N03460//
FINAL SECTION OF 02

MSGID/GENADMIN/CDR JTF-FA/J2//
SUBJ/INTERVIEW OF REQUESTED SOURCE, MG TRAN BACH DANG//

RMKS/
U.S. SERVICEMEN SIMPLY LEFT VIETNAM, OTHERS DESERTED AND PERHAPS SOME WENT TO THAILAND, SINGAPORE, OR OTHER COUNTRIES, BUT THERE WERE CERTAINLY NONE LEFT IN VIETNAM. HE ALSO SAID THAT THERE WAS NO WAY FOR THE VIETNAMESE TO ACCOUNT FOR THESE INDIVIDUALS, BUT THERE WERE NO "STAY BEHINDS" IN VIETNAM.

H. MG DANG SAID THAT THE RECOVERY OF REMAINS WAS A SEPARATE MATTER. HE SAID THAT THE SRV HAD RECOVERED ALL REMAINS OF U.S. PERSONNEL WHICH COULD HAVE BEEN FOUND AND HAD ALREADY RETURNED THEM TO THE U.S. HE SAID THAT HE WAS AWARE THAT THERE WERE REMAINS IN HAWAII WHICH COULD NOT BE POSITIVELY IDENTIFIED AND SPECULATED THAT THE CHANCES FOR IDENTIFICATION OF THESE CASES IS POSSIBLY TEN PERCENT. HE SAID THOSE WHO ARE LEFT UNACCOUNTED FOR WILL REMAIN UNACCOUNTED FOR BECAUSE THERE IS NOTHING LEFT TO RECOVER. ON THIS POINT, MG DANG WAS VERY ADAMANT. HE OFFERED TO SIGN A STATEMENT STATING THAT "EVEN IF RELATIONS ARE RE-ESTABLISHED BETWEEN THE U.S. AND VIETNAM, THERE IS NO WAY TO ACCOUNT FOR THE REMAINS OF MIA'S."

I. MG DANG THEN DISCUSSED AN INCIDENT INVOLVING A FRENCH-VIETNAMESE MAN WHO HAD BEEN PROSECUTED TWICE IN HO CHI MINH CITY COURTS FOR REMAINS DEALING WITHOUT PROVIDING DETAILS. HE SAID THAT THE ISSUE OF RECOVERING REMAINS HAS ALREADY CAUSED MANY PROBLEMS.

J. MG DANG CLAIMED NO KNOWLEDGE OF WAR-TIME DOCUMENTS OR RECORDS. HE SAID THAT HE WAS AWARE OF TWO RUSSIAN DOCUMENTS WHICH HAVE CAUSED PROBLEMS. HE SAID THAT PERHAPS IT CAN BE DETERMINED THAT THEY ARE GENUINE RUSSIAN DOCUMENTS, BUT THE INFORMATION IS FALSE. CONCERNING THE CAPTURE OF PW'S, MG DANG SAID THAT IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE THAT THE U.S. SIDE CAN CONTINUE TO RECEIVE INFORMATION ON INDIVIDUAL CASES, BUT IF THE INFORMATION IS ONLY HEARSAY AND DOES NOT COME FROM DIRECT PARTICIPANTS, IT TOO IS OF NO VALUE.

K. MG DANG SAID THAT HE FEELS THAT THERE IS NO FUTURE FOR A

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LARGE COUNTRY LIKE THE U.S. WHICH REFUSES TO ACCEPT THE TRUTH, ADDING [illegible]. THIS IS A HUMANITARIAN ISSUE FOR BOTH SIDES. HE SAID THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SRV AND CHINA WAS A GOOD EXAMPLE FOR THE U.S. TO CONSIDER. AFTER THEIR BORDER WAR, THE TWO NATIONS NOW HAVE RELATIONS AND THERE IS NO PROBLEM IN THE MIA ARENA. MG DANG SAID THAT HE FELT THE NEW BATTLEFIELD TODAY FOR THE SRV WAS TO WIN THE HEARTS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. HE SAID THERE IS NO TRUTH TO ALLEGATIONS OF PW'S BEING HELD IN VIETNAM TODAY AND THAT ALL NATIONS SHOULD REALIZE THE RIGHTS OF OTHER NATIONS TO DEVELOP, BUT THE U.S. STILL HOLDS VIETNAM AS A POLITICAL HOSTAGE WITH THE MIA ISSUE.

L. AT THIS POINT, MG DANG SAID THAT HE APPRECIATED THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK OPENLY AND CANDIDLY. HE SAID THAT THERE COULD HAVE BEEN NO REASON TO JUSTIFY HOLDING BACK U.S. PW'S, BECAUSE DOING SO WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN VERY INTELLIGENT, CONSIDERING THE STRENGTH AND POWER OF THE U.S. MG DANG SAID HE REALIZED THAT NOTHING HE COULD SAY WOULD ASSIST THE U.S. SIDE IN RESOLVING POW/MIA CASES AND THAT HE HAD NOTHING SPECIFIC TO PROVIDE TO THE JOINT TEAM. FOR EXAMPLE, HE SAID, HE COULD NOT PROVIDE THE TEAM WITH INFORMATION ON SPECIFIC CAMPS OR LOCATIONS. HE ADDED THAT HE FELT IT WAS TIME TO PUT AN END TO THE ISSUE SO THAT BOTH COUNTRIES COULD MOVE AHEAD IN THEIR RELATIONS.

M. MG DANG OFFERED PERSONAL CONJECTURE ABOUT THE CONCEPT OF HOLDING BACK EVEN ONE U.S. PW. HE ASKED, IF AN AMERICAN PW HAD BEEN HELD BACK AFTER 1973, HOW COULD THE COST OF FEEDING, CLOTHING, AND SHELTERING THE PRISONER BE JUSTIFIED FOR 20 YEARS? HE ALSO ASKED FOR CONSIDERATION OF THE MATTER FROM THE ASPECT OF RANK; IF THE INDIVIDUAL PW WAS A MAJOR, A LIEUTENANT, OR A PRIVATE, WHAT COULD THE LEADERSHIP POSSIBLY EXPECT TO GAIN THAT WOULD JUSTIFY SUCH A COST? MG DANG SAID, IN HIS OPINION, THE ANSWER TO HIS QUESTIONS ARE THAT THE LEADERSHIP COULD NOT HAVE JUSTIFIED SUCH AN EXPENSE AND THAT THE LEADERSHIP WOULD HAVE NOTHING TO GAIN. IN ORDER TO END THIS LINE OF REASONING, MG DANG SAID THAT IF THE VIETNAMESE ATTITUDE ON THIS SUBJECT WAS REALLY UNDERSTOOD, IT WOULD BE OBVIOUS THAT THE LEADERSHIP COULD NOT HAVE POSSIBLY ALLOWED THE RETENTION OF PW'S.

N. WITH NO FURTHER QUESTIONS FOR MG TRAN BACH DANG, THE JOINT TEAM AGREED TO CONCLUDE THE INTERVIEW.

4. CORRELATIONS TO EXISTING POW/MIA CASES. NONE.

5. POTENTIAL LEADS: NONE.

6. MATERIAL EVIDENCE: NONE. THE SOURCE BROUGHT NO RECORDS, NOTEBOOKS, DIARIES OR ANY MATERIAL EVIDENCE ASSOCIATED WITH UNACCOUNTED FOR U.S. PERSONNEL.

7. COMMENT.

A. THE SOURCE ACKNOWLEDGED HE HAD NO INFORMATION OF IMMEDIATE USEFULNESS FOR THE JOINT TEAM AND USED THE INTERVIEW AS A FORUM TO PONTIFICATE ABOUT HIS PERSONAL VIEWS OF THE ISSUE.

B. REQUEST THE VNOSMP MAKE MG TRAN BACH DANG AVAILABLE FOR REINTERVIEW IF NECESSARY.//

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