

**KIM CHI HOTEL
6 DOC NGU STREET BA DINH HANOI**

08 JUNE 95 HANOI

STATEMENT BY FORMER CONGRESSMAN BILL HENDON

I CAME TO HANOI TO TAKE U.S. EXPERTS TO A PRISON INSIDE A MOUNTAIN INSIDE THE MILITARY SECURITY ZONE IN VINH PHU PROVINCE, SRV. THE ZONE CAN BE LIKENED TO A MILITARY RESERVATION IN THE U.S., LIKE FT. BRAGG OR FT. CAMPBELL OR THE LIKE, STRETCHING FOR MILES. EYEWITNESS TESTIMONY, FROM A FORMER VIETNAMESE PROSECUTOR (LAWYER) INDICATES THIS PRISON INSIDE THE MOUNTAIN INSIDE THE MILITARY SECURITY ZONE IN VINH PHU PROVINCE IS A SECOND TIER PRISON I.E., A PRISON THAT HELD U.S. POWS DURING THE WAR AND FROM WHICH NO U.S. POWS RETURNED AT OPERATION HOMECOMING. THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS RECEIVED CREDIBLE REPORTS IN THE 1980'S THAT 200 - 300 U.S. POWS WERE BEING DETAINED IN THIS PRISON INSIDE THE MOUNTAIN INSIDE THE MILITARY SECURITY ZONE IN VINH PHU PROVINCE. THREE DAYS AGO, I CONVEYED TO COL. RICHMOND, CDR JTFFA DET 2 HERE IN HANOI, INFORMATION I HAVE RECEIVED THAT A LARGE NUMBER OF U.S. POWS WERE BEING HELD IN THE PRISON INSIDE THE MOUNTAIN INSIDE THE MILITARY SECURITY ZONE IN VINH PHU PROVINCE APPROXIMATELY 50 DAYS AGO.

THE VINH PHU MILITARY SECURITY ZONE, WHICH STRETCHES FOR MANY MILES ALONG THE RED RIVER, IS DESCRIBED BY MR. VU CHI CONG, DIRECTOR OF THE VIETNAMESE OFFICE FOR SEEKING MISSING PERSONS (VNOSMP) AS "A MILITARY SECURITY ZONE OFF LIMITS TO FOREIGNERS, NO EXCEPTION." (AP, HONG KONG STANDARD 6 AP 94) ASSOCIATED PRESS FURTHER REPORTS MR. CONG AS SAYING "EVEN OFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE U.S. MIA OFFICE IN HANOI HAVE BEEN REFUSED ENTRY TO THE SITE." (AP HONG KONG STANDARD 6 AP 94) ON 6 JUNE 95, THE HEAD OF THE JOINT TASK FORCE/FULL ACCOUNTING IN HANOI, LTC MELVIN RICHMOND, TOLD ASSOCIATED PRESS/HANOI THAT HIS INVESTIGATORS HAD NOT BEEN DENIED ACCESS INTO THIS MILITARY SECURITY ZONE IN VINH PHU PROVINCE (INSIDE OF WHICH LIES THE UNDERGROUND PRISON INSIDE THE MOUNTAIN). WHEN AP PERSONNEL CONVEYED LTC RICHMOND'S STATEMENT TO ME, I BEGAN A CHECK OF OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT JOINT FIELD ACTIVITY REPORTS TO DETERMINE IF LTC RICHMOND WAS BEING TRUTHFUL IN HIS ASSERTION THAT HIS INVESTIGATORS HAD NOT IN FACT BEEN DENIED ACCESS TO THE VINH PHU MILITARY SECURITY ZONE. THOUGH THE HEAD OF THE VNOSMP HAD PUBLICLY STATED THAT ACCESS WAS DENIED, A SEARCH OF JOINT FIELD ACTIVITY (JFA) REPORTING CLEARLY SHOWS THAT U.S. INVESTIGATORS FROM THE JTFFA HERE IN HANOI HAVE BEEN DENIED ACCESS TO THE VINH PHU MILITARY SECURITY ZONE ON AT LEAST FOUR OCCASIONS WHEN THEY ATTEMPTED TO EXCAVATE THE CRASH SITE OF A USAF F-111A WHICH CRASHED AT A SITE WHICH IS NOW DEEMED INSIDE THE VINH PHU SECURITY ZONE IN 1972. U.S. INVESTIGATORS, ACCORDING TO JFA RECORDS, ATTEMPTED TO ENTER THE VINH PHU MILITARY SECURITY ZONE DURING THE 26TH JFA 4 - 11 NOVEMBER 93, REQUEST BY MAJ. ZUBA - DENIED; DURING FEBRUARY 94 - DENIED; DURING THE JOINT FIELD ACTIVITY OF 23 AUG - 14 SEPT 94 - DENIED (U.S. TEAM LEADER CAPT. TIMOTHY THURMOND, DENIAL BY NGUYEN NGOC ANH, VINH PHU PROVINCE CHIEF); AND MOST RECENTLY ON 25 JAN 95 DENIED (U.S. TEAM LEADER RODNEY D. SMITH, DENIAL FROM DO VAN MINH).

THE VINH PHU MILITARY SECURITY ZONE, THEN, IS CLEARLY OFF LIMITS TO U.S. INVESTIGATORS. THE ZONE IS SO SENSITIVE THAT U.S. INVESTIGATORS HAVE BEEN DENIED ACCESS JUST TO EXCAVATE AN F-111A CRASH SITE. IT IS NOW CLEAR THAT THE REASON JTF/FA EXPERTS WILL NOT ACCOMPANY ME AND THE PRESS TO THE UNDERGROUND PRISON INSIDE THE MOUNTAIN INSIDE THE MILITARY SECURITY ZONE IN VINH PHU PROVINCE IS BECAUSE THEY HAVE REPEATEDLY DENIED ACCESS TO THIS MILITARY SECURITY ZONE IN WHICH THE PRISON LIES.

AS THE U.S. INVESTIGATORS HAVE REPEATEDLY ASKED FOR ACCESS TO THE VINH PHU MILITARY SECURITY ZONE AND HAVE BEEN DENIED, I TOO HAVE MADE REPEATED ATTEMPTS TO MEET WITH U.S. OFFICIALS HERE IN THE PRESENCE OF THE MEDIA TO DISCUSS ARRANGEMENTS TO ACCOMPANY U.S. EXPERTS FROM THE MIA OFFICE IN HANOI AND THE STONEY BEACH EXPERT FROM BANGKOK TO THE SITE. I AM IN MY HOTEL ROOM, ROOM 102, AWAITING THE ARRIVAL OF THESE EXPERTS AND THEIR 4 WHEEL DRIVE VEHICLE SO THAT WE CAN DEPART IMMEDIATELY FOR THE UNDERGROUND PRISON INSIDE THE MOUNTAIN IN THE MILITARY SECURITY ZONE IN VINH PHU PROVINCE.

BILL HENDON