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**JOINT CASUALTY RESOLUTION CENTER**  
LIAISON OFFICE  
AMERICAN EMBASSY  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96346

Reference: T81-045  
14 September 1981

FROM: JCRC-LNB

SUBJ: Refugee Report, Sighting of Four Caucasians in Hanoi Villa

TO: Commander, JCRC  
Barbers Point, HI 96862

Former ARVN Major Vu Trong Khanh, AKA Vu Lang (DPOB: 1930, Hanoi) was interviewed at Phanat Nikhom, Thailand, on 10 September 81. He stated that he had seen four caucasian males he believed to be Americans in a holding facility at Hanoi throughout a three month period from February 1977 to May 1977. Khanh said he was one of three ex-ARVN officers taken from Ha Son Binh re-education camp to Hanoi for "investigation" in February 1977. Although blindfolded while enroute, Khanh was able to determine after his arrival in Hanoi that he had been taken to a villa on Tran Nhat Duat Street, Zone 16, Hoan Kien, which belonged to the Ministry of Interior and was called the Laboratory for Scientific Research (So Nghien-Cuu Khoa Hoc Ky Luat). The facility was a two story "French style" building manned by Public Security Police (Cong An). The upstairs portion of the building contains about 14 rooms which resemble cells. The rooms were not connected to each other but rather were lined up on either side of a hallway, each having a door that opened into the hallway. There were no windows in the rooms except for a circular hole of perhaps 8" diameter in each door at about eye level. From the first day they were put in this facility, Khanh said, they regularly saw four caucasian males in blue issue clothing walk past their door each morning at about 5 a.m. on their way to bathe at the lower level. Khanh said he was able to get a good look at all four caucasians because there were lights in the hallway (none in the rooms). He described them as having shaved heads and appearing thin and emaciated. One had a beard of reddish brown hair, stood 1.8 meters tall, and was about 45 years of age in Khanh's opinion. Another, also 1.8 meters tall, wore glasses and had a dragon tattoo that ran the length of his lower right arm. Khanh said there were also some letters on the tattoo which he did not see clearly. This second man appeared younger than the first, perhaps 40 or 41, according to Khanh's estimation. The other two were a little shorter than the first two mentioned, standing about 1.7 meters tall, also about 40-41 years old, and had no distinguishing marks. One of these two walked with a slight limp but Khanh did not know why. No wounds were evident on any of the four caucasians. Other than the man with the beard, all were clean shaven. They were barefoot every time Khanh observed them. The caucasians were always escorted by a guard whenever they left their room and therefore Khanh and the two other ex-ARVN officers were cautious about addressing them. One time, however, one of the caucasians asked Khanh's cellmate (former paratroop Lt Col Do Dinh Tuyen) who they were and Tuyen replied that they were ARVN officers. The guard

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told the ARVN officers not to talk to the caucasians, but did not say anything to the caucasians. On another occasion one of the caucasians told Tuyen that they had been there for one year, according to Khanh. Other than that, Khanh could recall no further information passed in the limited comments made by the caucasians. Khanh said he is certain they were Americans, but could not recall the caucasians or any of the staff in the facility saying that they were. Khanh based his assumption on the way the caucasians acted, talked, and sang. The four caucasians lived in one large cell about 4 meters square at the end of the hall on the opposite side from Khanh's cell. Khanh and Lt Col Tuyen shared one cell (about 2 1/2 meters square), and the other ARVN officer, former Colonel Lo Cong Danh, had the adjacent cell to Khanh and Tuyen. There were no other detainees in the other cells.

Background information on Khanh and the other ex-ARVN officers is as follows:

Vu Trong Khanh left Hanoi in 1946 at the age of 16 and resettled in Saigon. He served as an officer in the Republic of Vietnam Army for 22 years having attained the rank of Lt Col before being demoted in a politically motivated disciplinary action. He said he used the name Vu Lang during military service. Since 1965 he served in Bien Hoa Sector (Province), most recently as the commander of regional forces Lien Doi (Battalion) #4 until the fall of Saigon. He was sent for re-education in June 1975 initially to Long Binh for one month, then was taken north to Thanh Cam camp in Thanh Hoa until November of 1975 at which time he was transferred to Ha Tay in Ha Son Binh (formerly Son Tay). He was held at Ha Tay until February 1980 when he was returned south to Chi Hoa prison where he remained until his release on 22 July 1980. It was during his detention at Ha Tay that he was taken to Hanoi for "investigation". Khanh said his health was very bad at the time of his release and he was unable to work because of his weakened condition. He became healthy enough by May 1981 to escape from Vietnam across Cambodia, with the help of a Khmer who spoke Vietnamese for which Khanh paid one ounce of gold. Passage across Cambodia (starting from Tay Ninh) was accomplished by bus, truck, and railroad train (Phnom Penh to Battambang). Near the Thai border Khanh met troops "loyal to Sihanouk" and they took him to a Thai military unit. Khanh was interrogated and then allowed into the refugee camp at NW9 (northeast of Aranyaprathet). Khanh left his wife and four children in Saigon. Khanh is presently at Phanat Nikhom seeking resettlement in the U.S. His UN number is CB 12302. He does not have a T-number as yet.

Lt Col Do Dinh Tuyen was a paratrooper who last worked at the command headquarters in Saigon. According to Khanh, Tuyen is fluent in English (Khanh does not speak much English), and had many American friends, none of whom Khanh could identify. Tuyen was also released from reeducation about the same time as Khanh and they saw each other almost daily after that in Saigon. Khanh asked Tuyen to join him in his escape across Cambodia but Tuyen declined saying he had to get his affairs in order first, but would definitely attempt to escape later. Tuyen did not reveal to Khanh what method of escape he would attempt. Khanh thinks Tuyen might want to take his family out as well, and therefore may show up among the boat people. Tuyen's residence is near the former "UN Office" in Saigon (address unknown).

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Col Lo Cong Danh was formerly the commandant of the Thu Duc ARVN Officers Candidate School. Khanh believes Danh is still in re-education, probably still at Ha Tay.

Khanh was not able to provide a reason why he was selected for this "investigation" in Hanoi in 1977, but apparently the communists were trying to link Khanh with CIA or other espionage-related activity. During the three months he was under investigation, Khanh said he endured long hours of questioning and torture as did the other two ARVN officers. Khanh showed the interviewer numerous horizontal scars on his abdomen and chest which he said were caused by beatings. Khanh said he never saw any indication that the caucasians had been similarly mistreated. The interrogations took place in a special office which Khanh labeled "Investigation/Torture Room" on his sketch (attached).

Khanh was asked to point out the location of the facility on the map of Hanoi. He explained that he had been blindfolded both entering and leaving Hanoi and consequently did not see any landmarks. He could see nothing from his room but when he left the building to bathe he saw red tile roofed villas and trees beyond the walls. He heard vehicular traffic outside the wall but no trains or streetcars.

Khanh said the caucasians were still at the facility when he was sent back to Ha Tay. He never heard any subsequent news concerning these caucasians.

Other than these four caucasians Khanh did not see any one during his detention that might have been an American. He did see a lot of writing (grafitti) on the walls at Ha Tay which he said was put there by Americans years before. He could not recall any names but said the newest date he saw was Christmas 1972.

*Paul D. Mather*

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Atch:  
Facility sketch

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