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ORIGIN CJTF2 INFO DCM POL SA DAO PW/MIA EXA DALO INHB (9)

VZCZC

RR RUHQHQ RUEKJCS RUEKJCS RUHQHQ RUEKJCS RUEKJCS  
RUHVAAA RUEADW RUEHC RUEAIIA  
DE RUEHBK #9955/01 145 \*\*  
ZNR UUUUU

R 250806Z MAY 93  
FM CJTFPA DET ONE BANGKOK TH  
TO RUHQHQ / CDR JTF-PA HONOLULU HI  
INFO RUEKJCS / SECDEF WASHDC//OCJCS-P4-MIA/J5//  
RUEKJCS / SECDEF WASHDC//OASD-ISA/PW-MIA//  
RUHQHQ / USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//J3//  
RUEKJCS / USCINCPAC LO WASHDC//  
RUEKJCS / DIA WASHDC//POW-MIA//  
RUHVAAA / CDRUSACILHI HICKAM AFB HI//  
RUEADW / NSC WASHDC  
RUEHC / SECSTATE WASHDC//CA/OCS/CCS/EAP//  
RUEAIIA / CIA WASHDC//OEA/SEA/IB/DDO/EA/ICOG//  
BT

CLASS: UNCLASSIFIED  
CHR38: CJTF 05/25/93  
APPRV: CJTF:DAG  
DRFTD: CJTF:WHN  
CLEAR: NONE  
DISTR: CJTF  
ORGIN: OCR

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BANGKOK TH 19955

UNCLASSIFIED 0152 MAY 93

DIA PASS TO POD POW-MIA CENTRAL DOCUMENTATION OFFICE

SUBJ: SRV INTERVIEW SENIOR COLONEL (SRCOL) PHAM DUC DAI

1. BACKGROUND. ON 14 APRIL 1993, SSGT WILLIAM H. NEWELL III, JTF-PA DET 2 ANALYST, ACCOMPANIED BY MR. ROBERT J. DESTATTE, DET 2 RESEARCHER/HISTORIAN, INTERVIEWED SENIOR COLONEL (SRCOL) PHAM DUC DAI, DIRECTOR OF THE PEOPLE'S ARMY OF VIETNAM ARMED FORCES MUSEUM, IN HANOI, VIETNAM. THE PURPOSE OF THE INTERVIEW WAS TO CLARIFY AND EXPAND ON INFORMATION IN A PERSONAL JOURNAL AND INTERVIEW SOURCE PROVIDED TO U.S. SENATOR J. KERRY IN NOVEMBER 1992. THE JOURNAL CONTAINED SOURCE'S HANDWRITTEN DESCRIPTION OF THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF FOUR U.S. SERVICEMEN IN THUONG HOA HAMLET ((THUONGJ HOAF)) (BS6297), BINH SON DISTRICT, QUANG NGAI PROVINCE, ON 21 APRIL 1967. SOURCE'S ACCOUNT PROBABLY IS ASSOCIATED WITH CASE 0646.

2. SUMMARY. SOURCE SAID THE WRITTEN ACCOUNT IN HIS PERSONAL JOURNAL WAS BASED ON HIS INTERVIEWS OF LOCAL WITNESSES WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE EVENTS SURROUNDING THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF THE FOUR U.S. SERVICEMEN ON 21 APRIL 1967. HE SAID HE WAS IN THE VILLAGE AT THE TIME OF THE INCIDENT, BUT DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE INCIDENT. HE NEVER SAW THE BODIES OF THE FOUR U.S. SERVICEMEN. HE BELIEVED THE BODIES WERE BURIED IN BINH PHUOC VILLAGE ((XAK BINHF PHUOWCS)) (BS 6396). SOURCE PROVIDED NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF PERSONS WHO EITHER PARTICIPATED DIRECTLY IN THE EVENTS SURROUNDING THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF THE FOUR MEN OR WHO COULD DIRECT INVESTIGATORS TO OTHER PERSONS WHO MIGHT HELP LOCATE THE GRAVES.

3. DETAILS. SOURCE, 64 YOA, WAS A MILITARY REGION-

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LEVEL POLITICAL CADRE FOR THE MILITARY REGION 5 (MR 5) POLITICAL DIRECTORATE, AT THE TIME OF THE INCIDENT, HE HAS IN THUONG BOA HAMLET AREA TO ACCESS THE SITUATION OF US AND SOUTH KOREAN TROOPS STATIONED IN THAT AREA. SOURCE STATED THAT US COMBAT PATROLS WERE REGULARLY CONDUCTED IN THAT AREA. ON 21 APR 67, THERE WAS AN INCREASE IN NIGHT ACTIVITY, TO INCLUDE FLARES AND PATROLS, AND THE FOLLOWING DAY SOURCE QUERIED THE VILLAGERS REGARDING THE EVENTS OF THE PREVIOUS DAY. THE VILLAGERS RECAPITULATED THE EVENTS, AS ANNOTATED IN SOURCE'S JOURNAL, OF FOUR AMERICANS THAT RETURNED FROM A COMBAT PATROL TO THUONG BOA HAMLET LATE AND WERE KILLED BY LOCAL GUERRILLAS. THE BODIES WERE IMMEDIATELY STRIPPED OF IDENTIFICATION MEDIA AND SUBMERGED WITH ROCKS ALONG THE RIVER BANK. THAT EVENING US TROOPS WENT TO THUONG BOA AND QUESTIONED THE VILLAGERS IN REGARD TO THE FOUR MISSING AMERICANS. MS. LIEU ((LIEUX)) INTENTIONALLY MISLED THE AMERICAN AUTHORITIES AND STATED THAT SHE LAST SAW THE AMERICANS IN A BOAT AS TWO OF THEM WERE PADDLING AND THE OTHER TWO WERE BAILING WATER OUT OF THE BOAT. THE NEXT DAY US TROOPS CONDUCTED A MAJOR SEARCH OPERATION FOR THE MISSING AMERICANS ON LAND AND UNDERWATER IN THE HAMLET AREA.

4. DURING THE APPROXIMATELY FIRST 48 HOURS AFTER THE FOUR SOLDIERS WERE KILLED, VILLAGERS REMOVED THE BODIES FROM THE RIVER AND CONCEALED OR NASTILY BURIED THEM NEAR THE RIVER IN THUONG BOA HAMLET TO AVOID DETECTION BY U.S. TROOPS SEARCHING IN THE AREA. STILL WITHIN THE FIRST 48 HOURS, VILLAGERS REBURIED THE BODIES IN THE VILLAGE CEMETERY. WITHIN ABOUT ONE WEEK AFTER THE INCIDENT, VILLAGERS MOVED THE BODIES ACROSS THE RIVER AND REBURIED THEM IN BINH PHUOC VILLAGE ((XAK BINHF PHUOWCS)) IN THE GENERAL AREA OF GRID COORDINATES BS 6396.

5. THE VILLAGE GUERRILLA UNIT GAVE SOURCE DOG TAGS, MILITARY IDENTIFICATION CARDS, AND OTHER PERSONAL DOCUMENTS TAKEN FROM THE FOUR U.S. SERVICEMEN. SOURCE PERSONALLY TOOK THOSE ITEMS TO HEADQUARTERS MILITARY REGION FIVE AND TURNED IT OVER TO THE STAFF OF THE POLITICAL DEPARTMENT OF MR-5. SOURCE SAID HE WAS PLEASANTLY SURPRISED SEVERAL WEEKS AGO WHEN THE U.S. ARCHIVAL RESEARCH TEAM IN DA NANG (MR-5) DISCOVERED THESE ITEMS IN THE MR-5 MUSEUM. HE RELATED AN ANECDOTE

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NOT RELATED TO THE POW/MIA ISSUE TO ILLUSTRATE THAT MANY DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS WERE LOST OR DESTROYED DURING THE WAR. SOURCE SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHEN OR HOW THE DOG TAGS AND DOCUMENTS FROM THE FOUR SERVICEMEN IN QUESTION WERE TRANSFERRED TO THE MR-5 MUSEUM.

6. SOURCE SAID HE VISITED THUONG HOA HAMLET IN ABOUT LATE-FEBRUARY OR EARLY-MARCH 1993 AND CONFIRMED THAT SOME OF THE PERSONS WHO PARTICIPATED IN OR HAD KNOWLEDGE OF THIS INCIDENT ARE STILL LIVING IN THE LOCAL AREA. HE SUGGESTED THAT INVESTIGATORS SHOULD CONTACT THE FOLLOWING PERSONS WHO MIGHT HELP LOCATE THE GRAVES OF THE FOUR U.S. SERVICEMEN:

(1) MR. THANH ((THANHF)) ((SOURCE DID NOT RECALL FAMILY NAME)). AT THE TIME OF THE INCIDENT MR. THANH WAS THE COMMUNIST PARTY SECRETARY OF THE THUONG HOA VILLAGE PARTY CHAPTER ((BIS THUW CHI BOOJ XAX)). CURRENTLY, HE LIVES IN BINH DONG VILLAGE ((KAX BINH DDOONG)) (BT 625005). AS THE PARTY SECRETARY, HE WOULD HAVE BEEN AWARE OF ALL DETAILS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS INCIDENT AND THE HISTORY OF THE GRAVES OF THE FOUR U.S. SERVICEMEN IN QUESTION. EVEN IF HE DID NOT DIRECTLY PARTICIPATE IN THE BURIAL, HE SHOULD BE ABLE TO HELP LOCATE ANY SURVIVING RECORDS AND WITNESSES THAT COULD HELP LOCATE THE GRAVES.

(2) PHAM VAN CHINH ((PHAMJ VAWN CHINH)). CURRENTLY RESIDES IN HAMLET 2, QUANG PHU VILLAGE ((KAX QUANGR PHUS)) ((COORDINATES NOT AVAILABLE)), QUANG NGAI PROVINCE. SOURCE AND MAJ TOAM, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE MR-5 MUSEUM, VISITED MR. CHINH AT HIS HOME IN LATE-FEBRUARY OR EARLY-MARCH 1993. MR. CHINH'S WIFE, MRS. LIEU ((LIEUX)) DIRECTLY PARTICIPATED IN THE EVENTS SURROUNDING THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF THE FOUR U.S. SERVICEMEN. SOURCE ESTIMATED MR. CHINH AND HIS WIFE ARE IN THE MID-TO-LATE 40S. AT THE TIME OF THE INCIDENT, MR. CHINH WAS THE COMMANDER OF THE COMMUNIST B3RD LOCAL FORCE BATTALION OF THE QUANG NGAI PROVINCE COMMAND OPERATING IN SOUTHERN QUANG NGAI PROVINCE. ALTHOUGH MR. CHINH DID NOT DIRECTLY PARTICIPATE IN THE EVENTS SURROUNDING THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF THE FOUR U.S. SERVICEMEN, HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP INVESTIGATORS LOCATE OTHER KNOWLEDGEABLE SOURCES.

(3) MRS. LIEU ((LIEUX)). SEE PHAM VAN CHINH, ABOVE.

(4) MS. THU HONG ((THU HOONGF)). MS. THU HONG DIRECTLY PARTICIPATED IN EFFORTS TO CONCEAL THE BODIES WHILE THEY WERE SUBMERGED AT THE RIVER BANK SHORTLY AFTER THE FOUR MEN WERE KILLED. SHE HAS ABOUT 14-15 YEARS OLD AT THE TIME AND PROBABLY HAS NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN SUBSEQUENT MOVEMENT AND BURIAL OF THE FOUR BODIES. IF MS. THU HONG DOES NOT KNOW THE FINAL BURIAL SITE OF THE FOUR MEN, SHE COULD POSSIBLY DIRECT INVESTIGATORS TO OTHER PERSONS WHO MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP

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LOCATE THE GRAVES. SOURCE SAID MS. THU HONG CURRENTLY LIVES IN THUONG BOA HAMLET ((SEE ABOVE)) AND WORKS AT THE SUGAR FACTORY.

(5) MS. THANH VAN ((THANH VAAN)). MS. THANH VAN HAS ABOUT IN HER LATE TEENS AT THE TIME OF THE INCIDENT. SHE IS THE DAUGHTER OF MR. THANH, DESCRIBED ABOVE AND IS CURRENTLY IN POOR HEALTH. SHE IS AWARE OF SOME EVENTS SURROUNDING THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF THE FOUR U.S. SERVICEMEN. SHE IS ALSO ACQUAINTED WITH MR. CHINH, DESCRIBED ABOVE.

(6) IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE PERSONS, SOURCE ALSO SAID THE FOLLOWING THEN RESIDENTS OF THUONG BOA HAMLET, WHOSE NAMES HE READ FROM A PERSONAL CALENDAR BOOK FOR APRIL 1957, MIGHT HAVE SOME KNOWLEDGE OF THE EVENTS IN QUESTION: MS. LAN, MS. NGOC, BOA, LANE.

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