

SOURCES: Mssrs. Tieu Sen Can, Nguyen Van Ngan, and Le Van Tam.

- On 30 April 1975, these men observed three prisoners, including two men whom they believed were Caucasian Americans, at the Kien An Naval Base, in South Vietnam. The prisoners were in a sampan that was being refueled. The sources recalled that the prisoners' hands were tied, they were dressed in green uniforms, and except for brief intervals they were covered with a piece of black plastic to protect them from rain. As the sources recalled the guards had told onlookers that the Caucasians were Americans, one a Major, who had been aboard a helicopter bound for Hon Tre Island when it ran out of fuel and was forced to land at Kinh Dai Village.
- The sources' description of the dates, locations, and circumstances of the three prisoners and their evacuation by sampan to a detention facility closely parallels Mr. Arlo Gay's account of his arrest and detention. Mr. Gay was released and returned to the U.S. in September 1976.
- Mr. Gay was arrested by communist troops on or about 30 April 1975, at Hon Tre Island when he waded ashore at a former Republic of Vietnam Navy (VNN) outpost to seek fuel for his boat. By coincidence, several Republic of Vietnam Army (ARVN) officers whose helicopter had run out of fuel landed at the same outpost a few minutes before Mr. Gay waded ashore. Unfortunately, the post was in communist hands, and Mr. Gay and the persons aboard the helicopter were arrested. Because of their simultaneous arrival, the communist captors initially suspected that Mr. Gay had a prearranged meeting with the persons aboard the helicopter.
- The next morning the communists took Mr. Gay and the helicopter passengers, including a Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Thoai and an unidentified Major, to the mainland where they were placed in a sampan and taken to a re-education camp. The following is an excerpt of Mr. Gay's recollection of the sampan journey:

Mr. Gay was dressed in a light shirt, brown slacks, and no shoes. He could not remember if the six ARVN personnel were still in uniform. He noted that LTC Thoai looked different from the other Vietnamese prisoners. LTC Thoai's several days growth of unusually heavy gray whiskers and gray hair and his physical features gave him a slightly Eurasian appearance. LTC Thoai was seated next to Mr. Gay and conversed with him in excellent English. At one point the sampan stopped briefly near what Mr. Gay believed was a former US or VNN navy base. Although Mr. Gay did not recall the name of the base, the location he described appears to be Kien An. A large number of predominantly hostile Vietnamese observed Mr. Gay at this stop. Mr. Gay noted that he was seen by thousands of Vietnamese during his initial movement, and that their attitudes ranged from curious to hostile. Mr. Gay's hands were loosely bound while in the sampan. Intermittent attempts were made to cover the prisoners with a piece of plastic sheet; however, the sheet was often removed and was not an effective screen or cover.

- Mr. Gay agreed that some onlookers could have mistaken LTC Thoai for an American. The other dissimilarities between Mr. Gay's experience and the accounts received from Messrs Can, Ngan, and Tam, are related primarily to the hearsay information they attributed to the guards.
- Because of the similarity of their accounts and Mr. Gay's experience, and the fact that the preponderance of evidence available to the DIA indicates that Mr. Gay was the only American stranded in this region of Vietnam during the time in question, we conclude that the prisoners whom Messrs. Can, Ngan, and Tam observed in the sampan at Kien An were Mr. Arlo Gay and the ARVN officers with whom he was detained.