

## BACKGROUND PAPER

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

- Observed three prisoners, two believed to be Caucasian Americans, at old VNN base at Kien An, 30 Apr 75. Prisoners' hands tied; dressed in green uniforms; intermittently covered by plastic sheet.
- Sources recall guards said the Caucasians were Americans, one a Major, captured when their helicopter bound for Hon Tre Island ran out of fuel.
- Dates, locations, circumstances parallel Arlo Gay's experience. Gay returned to U.S. in September 1976.
  - Gay arrested at Hon Tre Island, on or about 30 April 1975, together with ARVN crew and passengers of helicopter that ran out of fuel.
  - Next morning communists took Gay and six ARVN officers from the helicopter to the mainland where they were placed on a sampan and taken to a re-education camp.
  - One ARVN, LTC Thoai, has slightly Eurasian appearance; was seated next to Gay on sampan; conversed with Gay in excellent English; and could have been mistaken for an American. One ARVN was a Major.
  - Sampan stopped once near old VNN or U.S. navy base; location described appears to be Kien An.
  - Thousands of Vietnamese, including large number at the old navy base (Kien An), observed Gay in the sampan.
  - Gay's hands bound; light shirt, brown slacks, no shoes. Couldn't remember if ARVN still in uniforms. Prisoners intermittently covered with a plastic sheet.
- Dissimilarities primarily related to the hearsay information that the sources attributed to the guards.

### - CONCLUSION:

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 Mssrs. Can, Ngan, and Tam observed in the sampan at Kien An were Mr. Arlo Gay and the ARVN officers with whom he was detained.