Oral History
Sr Col ng Vuong
Air Defense

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ADMINISTRATIVE MESSAGE

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AMPN/SUBJ/INTERVIEW OF REQUESTED SOURCE, NGUYEN VUONG//

REF/A/FAX/DET 2/27JUNE93//

AMPN/SUBJ: LIST OF PERSONS FOR INTERVIEW, ENTRY NUMBER 31 OF 83//

RMKS/1. BACKGROUND. ON 21 JUNE 1993, A JOINT U.S./VIETNAM ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM INTERVIEW TEAM INTERVIEWED RETIRED SENIOR COLONEL (SRCOL) NGUYEN VUONG, A 53 YEAR OLD HANOI RESIDENT. MR. VUONG, A FORMER INFANTRY OFFICER, WAS AN EDITOR AND RESEARCHER FOR THE AIR AND AIR DEFENSE MEMOIRS, VOLUMES I AND II. THE TEAM MET AT THE CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL NEWS AGENCY COOPERATION, VIETNAM NEWS AGENCY, NUMBER 8 TRAN HUNG DAO STREET, HANOI, TO INTERVIEW MR. VUONG, LISTED IN REFERENCE AS A POTENTIAL SOURCE OF INFORMATION CONCERNING U.S. PERSONNEL MISSING IN ACTION (MIA) IN VIETNAM. THE U.S. CONTINGENT CONSISTED OF TSGT [redacted], JTF-FA ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM COORDINATOR; AND P02 [redacted], JTF-FA ANALYST/LINGUIST. THE VIETNAMESE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT CONTINGENT CONSISTED OF LTC LE KY, MINISTRY OF DEFENSE; AND MR. TRINH QUOC KHANH, MINISTRY OF INTERIOR. MR. VUONG HAD NOT BEEN INTERVIEWED BY A JOINT TEAM BEFORE.

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2. SUMMARY. THE SOURCE, MR. VUONG, PROVIDED NO INFORMATION CONCERNING U.S. PERSONNEL MIA IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. HE SUMMARIZED HIS PART IN WRITING THE AIR AND AIR DEFENSE FORCE MEMOIRS. THE SOURCE CLAIMED HE HAD NEVER, SINCE 1973, SEEN OR HAD KNOWLEDGE OF U.S. PERSONNEL, LIVING FREELY OR AGAINST THEIR WILL, IN VIETNAM.

3. DETAILS.

A. AFTER FORMAL INTRODUCTIONS, LTC LE KY EXPLAINED THE JOINT TEAM'S MISSION AND TSGT [redacted] BEGAN THE INTERVIEW WITH THE FOLLOWING TWO KEY QUESTIONS:

(1) SINCE 1973, HAVE YOU EVER SEEN OR HAD KNOWLEDGE OF U.S. PRISONERS OF WAR (PW) CAPTIVE IN VIETNAM? MR. VUONG REPLIED HE HAD NOT.

(2) SINCE 1973, HAVE YOU EVER SEEN OR HAD KNOWLEDGE OF AMERICAN "STAY-BEHINDS" IN VIETNAM? MR. VUONG REPLIED HE HAD NOT.

B. HAVING ANSWERED THE FIRST TWO QUESTIONS, MR. NGUYEN VUONG (NGUYEENX VWONGJ) CONTINUED, SAYING HE HAD FIRST SEEN AMERICANS IN 1955, AT THE AGE OF 15, WHEN HE FOUGHT AGAINST THE "AMERICAN MILITARY MISSION" (NFI) IN VIETNAM. DURING THE WAR AGAINST AMERICA HE WAS A REAR SERVICES INFANTRY OFFICER AND IN 1970 RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN WRITING THE AIR AND AIR DEFENSE FORCE MEMOIRS.

C. MR. VUONG'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE BOOK WAS AS AN EDITOR AND RESEARCHER. HE GATHERED INFORMATION FROM TWO SOURCES: ARTICLES AND INDIVIDUALS. HE RECALLED RESEARCHING ARTICLES FROM THE PEOPLE'S ARMY NEWSPAPER (QUAAN DOOIJ KHAAN ZAAN) AND THE PEOPLE'S NEWSPAPER (NHAAN ZAAN), SOME OF WHICH DATED BACK TO 1964. THE INDIVIDUALS HE INTERVIEWED FOR THE BOOK WERE PARTICIPANTS IN FAMOUS BATTLES, SOME, HE EXPLAINED, CELEBRATED AS HEROES IN THE NEWSPAPERS. MR. VUONG STATED HE NEVER HAD RESPONSIBILITY FOR RESEARCHING PHOTOGRAPHS. WHEN ASKED ABOUT RECORDS COMPILED WHILE WRITING THE MEMOIRS, MR. VUONG REPLIED HE HAD NO IDEA WHERE RECORDS CONCERNING THE MEMOIRS WOULD BE TODAY.

D. MR. VUONG STATED THAT UNTIL THIS INTERVIEW, HE HAD NEVER DIRECTLY MET ANY AMERICANS. HOWEVER, ONE DAY IN 1971 OR 1972, WHILE ON LEAVE FROM THE ARMY, HE BRIEFLY SAW A GROUP OF APPROXIMATELY 20 U.S. PRISONERS BEING PARADED DOWN TRANG TIEN STREET (PHOOS TRANGF TIEENF), NEAR HOAN KIEM LAKE (HOOF HOANF KIEEMS), IN HANOI. HE DID NOT VIEW THE PRISONERS AT CLOSE RANGE AND COULD PROVIDE NO DESCRIPTIONS OR DETAILS CONCERNING THE GROUP. MR. VUONG EXPLAINED THAT THE PRACTICE OF PARADING AMERICAN PRISONERS THROUGH THE STREETS OF HANOI DURING THE WAR INCREASED NATIONAL MORALE AND ALLOWED THE VIETNAMESE TO PROPAGANDIZE INTERNATIONALLY.

E. MR. VUONG SAID HE RECALLED THE PEOPLE'S ARMY NEWSPAPER HAVING A DAILY, SERIALIZED, ARTICLE ABOUT THE "HANOI HILTON" (NHAF KHACHS SANJ HILTON) PW CAMP, BUT RECALLED NO DETAILS.

F. WITH NO FURTHER QUESTIONS FOR MR. VUONG, THE JOINT TEAM

AGREED TO CONCLUDE THE INTERVIEW.

4. CORRELATIONS TO EXISTING POW/MIA CASES. NONE.

5. POTENTIAL LEADS. NONE.

6. MATERIAL EVIDENCE: NONE. THIS SOURCE BROUGHT NO RECORDS, NOTEBOOKS, DIARIES, OR ANY MATERIAL EVIDENCE ASSOCIATED WITH UNACCOUNTED FOR U.S. PERSONNEL.

7. COMMENTS.

A. MR. VUONG APPEARED TO BE GENUINELY CONCERNED WITH THE PW/MIA ISSUE, ALTHOUGH HE GAVE NO USEFUL INFORMATION CONCERNING PW'S OR MIA'S. HE BROUGHT TWO RECENT CUU CHIEN BINH (CWUJ CHIEENS BINH) MAGAZINES TO THE INTERVIEW, FROM WHICH HE READ ALOUD BRIEF EXCERPTS FROM TWO ARTICLES ABOUT THE U.S. AND VIETNAMESE MIA ISSUE.

B. THE MEMBERS OF THE JOINT TEAM CONFERRED ON THE QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED DURING THIS INTERVIEW. TEAM MEMBERS AGREED THAT THE NEED TO RE-INTERVIEW THIS SUBJECT WOULD DEPEND ON WHETHER FURTHER QUESTIONS FOR MR. VUONG ARISE DURING THE COURSE OF THE ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW TEAM'S FUTURE WORK.//

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