

OPIC CJTF INFO DCM POL SA DAO PW/MIA EXA IALO INHB (9)

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INFO RUEKJCS / JOINT STAFF WASHDC//OCJCS-PW-MIA/J5//

RUEKJCS / SECDEF WASHDC//OASD-ISA/PW-MIA//

RUHQOE / USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//J3//

RUEKJCS / USCINCPAC LO WASHDC//

RUEKJCS / LIA WASHDC//POW-MIA//

RUEAIIA / CIA WASHDC//DEA/SEA/IF/DDO/ICOG//

RUEVAAA / CDRUSACIIHI HICKAM AFB HI//

RUEALW / NSC WASHDC

RUEHC / SECSTATE WASHDC//CA/OCS/CCS/EAP//

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UNCLASSIFIED 0241 JAN 93

DIA PASS TO DCD POW-MIA CENTRAL DOCUMENTATION OFFICE

SUBJ: SEV ORAL HISTORY, INTERVIEW WITH PAVN ~~REDACTED~~
~~REDACTED~~ AKA NGUYEN VAN LY

REF: DET 1, JTFFA MSG 200341Z JAN 93

1. WFF WAS THE SUMMARY REPORT OF ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED IN VIETNAM BY JTFFA SPECIAL ASSISTANT, MR G.E. BELL, DURING THE PERIOD 2 TO 10 JAN 93. PARA LC OF REF REFERS TO LTC PHAN VAN KHUONG, THE FORMER CHIEF OF THE MILITARY-ENEMY PROSELYTING OFFICE (MEPO) OF MILITARY REGION (MR) TRI THUAN. LTC KHUONG WAS INTERVIEWED IN HUE ON 12 JAN 93. THE FOLLOWING REPORT PROVIDES THE RESULTS OF THE INTERVIEW. THE INTERVIEW WAS MONITORED BY ASSIGNED COUNTERPART AND MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE (MNI) RFP. LTC PHAN TEO, AND MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR (MOI) REP, MR HA BINH THAN.

2. SOURCE, A 67 YCA NATIVE OF HUE, REGROUPED TO THE NORTH IN 1964 AND RETURNED TO THE HUE AREA IN 1968 WHEN THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (NLF) WAS ESTABLISHED. SOURCE'S FIRST CONTACT WITH US POW'S WAS SOMETIME DURING LATE 1963 OR EARLY 1964 WHEN HE OBSERVED ONE CAUCASIAN POW IN THE "A NGO" CAMP LOCATED IN THE VIETNAM-LAO BORDER AREA WEST OF A LUOI. SOURCE BEARD THE MAN WAS A MILITARY OFFICER WITH THE RANK OF CAPTAIN WHO WAS CAPTURED BY ETHNIC MINORITIES IN WESTERN THUA THIEN PROVINCE. SOURCE BEARD THE MAN WAS HELD INITIALLY AT A PLACE CALLED "A VAO", WHICH WAS LOCATED NEAR THE LAO BORDER AND INSIDE LAOS. SOURCE OBSERVED THE AMERICAN TO BE IN GOOD HEALTH AND GOOD SPIRITS. SOURCE BEARD FROM GUARDS THAT THE MAN AT FIRST REFUSED TO EAT VIETNAMESE FOOD DUE TO THE ODCR, BUT AFTER HE BECAME FAMILIAR WITH

IT HE LIKED IT. SOURCE ALSO BEARD THAT THE AMERICAN ESCAPED FROM THE CAMP BUT WAS RECAPTURED A FEW HOURS LATER. SOURCE ONLY OBSERVED THE AMERICAN ON ONE OCCASSION AND BEARD HE WAS ONLY HELD IN A NGO FOR ABOUT 10 DAYS BEFORE BEING EVACUATED TO NORTH VIETNAM. SOURCE ASKED THE AMERICAN WHY HE HAD TRIED TO ESCAPE AND THE MAN REPLIED "A BEGGAR MUST EAT AND A POW MUST TRY TO ESCAPE". SOURCE SAID HE HAS IMPRESSED BY THE MAN'S LOGIC. WHEN ASKED CONCERNING A CAMP IN THE AREA CALLED "LANG TA", SOURCE SAID HE RECALLED THE NAME BUT DID NOT KNOW IF THERE WAS A WARTIME CAMP LOCATED THERE.

3. SOURCE'S SECOND ENCOUNTER WITH US POW'S OCCURRED SOMETIME DURING THE LATE 1960'S OR EARLY 1970'S (SOURCE NOT SURE OF YEAR BUT RECALLED THAT THE OBSERVATION TOOK PLACE AFTER THE 1968 "TET" OFFENSIVE). SOURCE RECALLED THAT TWO US MILITARY PERSONNEL WERE CAPTURED DURING FIGHTING IN PHU DA AXA PHU THANH VILLAGE (YD 9218), HUONG PHU (FORMERLY PHU VANG) DISTRICT. THE TWO MEN WERE BOTH CAUCASIANS AND ENLISTED MEN. SOURCE BELIEVED THEY WERE BOTH INFANTRYMEN. SOURCE HAS NOT ABLE TO PROVIDE A PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION, AND COULD ONLY RECALL THAT ONE OF THE MEN WAS NOTICEABLY BIGGER THAN THE OTHER. SOURCE BEARD THE TWO AMERICANS THROW DOWN THEIR WEAPONS AND ASKED TO SURRENDER AT THE TIME OF THEIR CAPTURE. SOURCE BEARD THAT THE TWO MEN WERE ON OPERATIONS WITH AN ARVN UNIT WHEN THE FIGHTING ERUPTED. SOURCE ALSO BEARD THE TWO MEN WERE HIDDEN IN A TUNNEL IN PHU DA VILLAGE FOR A DAY THEN MOVED WEST. SOURCE FIRST OBSERVED THE TWO MEN WHEN THEY ARRIVED AT SOURCE'S COMMO-LIAISON STATION LOCATED ON A HAND CUT, ONE TO ONE AND ONE-HALF METER WIDE TRAIL THROUGH THE JUNGLE SOUTHWEST OF HUE WHICH WAS DESIGNATED LOCALLY AS "ROUTE 31". THIS ROUTE CONTINUED FROM HUE TO THE A LUOI AREA ON THE LAC BORDER, AND RAN GENERALLY PARALLEL TO CURRENT ROUTE 12 (NOTE: PRESENT ROUTE 12 IS SHOWN AS ROUTE 547 ON US WARTIME MAPS). THE TWO AMERICANS SANG REVOLUTIONARY SONGS IN THE VIETNAMESE LANGUAGE FOR SOURCE BEFORE CONTINUING ON THE TRAIL IN THE DIRECTION OF A LUOI. SOURCE WAS NOT ABLE TO RECALL FURTHER DETAILS CONCERNING THE TWO AMERICANS. SOURCE ASSUMES THE TWO MEN WERE EVACUATED TO NORTH VIETNAM AND RELEASED DURING 1973.

4. SOURCE'S THIRD ENCOUNTER WITH US POW'S OCCURRED

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SHORTLY AFTER THE "TIT" GENERAL OFFENSIVE (I.E. CIRCA 31 JAN 68). SOURCE OBSERVED FOUR MALE CAUCASIAN AMERICANS AT THE SAME COMMO-LIAISON STATION ON ROUTE 31 REPORTED ABOVE. SOURCE ONLY SAW THE MEN BRIEFLY AND COULD NOT PROVIDE A PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OR IDENTIFICATION DATA. SOURCE HEARD THE MEN WERE CAPTURED IN HUE CITY SHORTLY BEFORE HE OBSERVED THEM. SOURCE DID NOT HEAR ANYTHING FURTHER CONCERNING THE FOUR MEN AND ASSUMES THEY WERE EVACUATED TO NORTH VIETNAM AND RELEASED DURING 1973.

5. SOURCE'S FOURTH AND FINAL ENCOUNTER ALSO OCCURRED SHORTLY AFTER THE BEGINNING OF THE "TIT" GENERAL OFFENSIVE, AND ALSO AT THE SAME COMMO-LIAISON STATION ON ROUTE 31. SOURCE SAID HE OBSERVED TWO FEMALE CAUCASIANS WEARING NORMAL CIVILIAN ATTIRE. SOURCE SAID HE HEARD THE TWO FEMALES WERE SCHOOL TEACHERS WHO HAD BEEN TEACHING ENGLISH IN HUE PRIOR TO BEING CAPTURED. SOURCE SAID THE TWO WERE QUESTIONED BRIEFLY AND THEN ISSUED CONICAL HATS AND TWO SETS OF NEW CIVILIAN CLOTHING BEFORE BEING TAKEN TO PHONG DIEN WHERE THEY WERE RELEASED.

6. SOURCE SAID MILITARY REGION TRI THIEN HAD ONE CONSOLIDATED ORGANIZATION FOR BOTH US AND ARVN PERSONNEL. THIS ORGAN WAS THE MILITARY-ENEMY PROSELYTING OFFICE (MEPO) (PHONG BINH-DICH VAN). THE MEPO ALSO HAD AN ORGANIC AMERICAN PROSELYTING SECTION (BAN MY VAN). AT THUA THIEN PROVINCE LEVEL THERE WAS A MILITARY-ENEMY PROSELYTING SECTION, BUT NO SEPARATE AMERICAN PROSELYTING ELEMENT. AT DISTRICT LEVEL THERE WAS ONLY A MILITARY PROSELYTING SECTION, WITH NO ENEMY OR AMERICAN PROSELYTING SUPPLEMENTS. SOURCE SAID THAT NO RECORDS PERTAINING TO US PERSONNEL WERE MAINTAINED AT THE ADMINISTRATIVE LEVELS, AND SUCH RECORDS WERE ONLY MAINTAINED AT THE MILITARY REGION LEVEL. SOURCE DID NOT KNOW THE CURRENT WHEREABOUTS OF RECORDS OF THE FORMER MEPO FOR TRI THIEN MR. SOURCE RECALLED THAT FRONT 7 (MAT THAN BAY) WAS A TACTICAL ORGANIZATION SUBORDINATE TO THE PAVA HIGH COMMAND IN HANOI. FRONT 7 OPERATED INDEPENDENTLY FROM TRI THIEN MR, BUT THE MR FREQUENTLY SUPPORTED TACTICAL OPERATIONS CONDUCTED BY FRONT 7 IN THE QUANG TRI-THUA THIEN AREA. FRONT 7 ONLY HAD A SMALL ENEMY PROSELYTING OFFICE, AND NO MILITARY OR AMERICAN PROSELYTING ELEMENTS.

7. WHEN ASKED CONCERNING HIS KNOWLEDGE CONCERNING CURRENT OR FORMER CADRE CAPABLE OF PROVIDING INFORMATION OF POW/MIA INTEREST, SOURCE WAS ABLE TO RECALL THE FOLLOWING PERSONNEL: NGUYEN VAN GIAI, A NATIVE OF THUA THIEN, WAS THE DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE TRI THIEN MR MEPO. SOURCE BELIEVES GIAI IS CURRENTLY RESIDING IN PHU FAI DISTRICT TOWN AND HIS WIFE IS TEACHING SCHOOL IN VINH HA VILLAGE, PHU VANG. LTC XUYEN TAM (TAAM), A NATIVE OF QUANG TRI, WAS THE DEPUTY OF THE QUANG TRI PROVINCE MILITARY-ENEMY PROSELYTING SECTION (MEPS) DURING THE WAR. HE IS NOW RETIRED AND RESIDING IN OLD QUANG TRI CITY (THI XA QUANG TRI CU, I.E. THE FORMER PROVINCE SEAT BEFORE THE COMMITTEE HEADQUARTERS WAS MOVED TO DCNG HA CITY). LTC THAO (LNU), A NATIVE OF THUA THIEN, WAS A

CADRE ASSIGNED TO THE MEPO OF TRI THIEN DURING THE WAR. HE IS NOW RETIRED AND RESIDING IN HUE. SON (SOWN), A NATIVE OF PHU YEN, WAS THE CHIEF OF THE AMERICAN PROSELYTING OFFICE OF TRI THIEN MR. SON WAS ABLE TO SPEAK ENGLISH WELL. HE IS BELIEVED TO BE RETIRED AND RESIDING IN PHU YEN PROVINCE. CAO NANG, A NATIVE OF THUA THIEN, WAS A CADRE IN THE QUANG TRI PROVINCE MEPS. HE IS NOW RETIRED AND RESIDES ON BA TRINH STREET IN HUE CITY. NGUYEN PA MINH, A NATIVE OF NORTHERN VIETNAM AND HEAD OF THE MILITARY PROSELYTING ELEMENT OF THE MEPO FOR TRI THIEN MR, RETURNED TO THE NORTH AFTER THE WAR ENDED, CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND WHEREABOUTS UNKNOWN TO SOURCE. SR CPT NGUYEN THONG (THOONG), A NATIVE OF PUONG THUY AND CADRE OF THE POLITICAL DEPARTMENT (CUC CHINH TRI) OF TRI THIEN MR, WAS AN ENGLISH SPEAKER. HE BECAME CAPTURED TO NORTHERN VIETNAM IN 1964 AND RETURNED TO THE SOUTH DURING THE EARLY 1960'S, CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND WHEREABOUTS UNKNOWN TO SOURCE.

8. CONCERNING THE THUA THIEN PROVINCE SECURITY COMMITTEE CAMP AKA "T-1", SOURCE WAS ABLE TO RECALL THE FOLLOWING: DURING THE WAR CAMP T-1 WAS LOCATED IN A DOT ETHNIC MINORITY VILLAGE ON THE LAO BORDER. THE INITIAL CAMP COMMANDER WAS HAU (HAUJ). HAU WAS KIA WHILE ON A

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MISSION IN NORTHERN VIETNAM, AND HIS REPLACEMENT WAS MR XUAN (XUAN). MR XUAN, A NATIVE OF THUA THIEN, IS NOW RETIRED AND RESIDING IN NAM DONG, THUA THIEN. SOMETIME DURING THE LATE 1960'S, XUAN WAS REPLACED BY A MAN CALLED MINH. MINH, A NATIVE OF PHONG DIEN, WAS A REGRCUPLE AND HE RETURNED TO NORTH VIETNAM BEFORE THE WAR ENDED. MINH WAS REPLACED BY MR VUONG MAU (MAU), A NATIVE OF THUA THIEN, WHO IS NOW RETIRED AND RESIDING IN HUE CITY. MAU WAS REPLACED BY A MAN CALLED THAC (THAC), A NATIVE OF PHU LUONG VILLAGE, PHU VANG DISTRICT, WHO IS NOW RETIRED AND RESIDING IN HUE CITY. SOURCE CLAIMED TO HAVE NO SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE CONCERNING CAMP T-1, BECAUSE HE WAS MILITARY AND CAMP T-1 WAS UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE PUBLIC SECURITY APPARATUS. CONCERNING THE QUANG TRI PROVINCE SECURITY COMMITTEE CAMP AKA T-2, SOURCE HEARD ABOUT THE CAMP BUT CLAIMED TO HAVE NO FURTHER INFORMATION.

9. CONCERNING CADRE PREVIOUSLY ASSOCIATED WITH US POW/MIA BUT NO LONGER AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW, SOURCE PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING: LTC NGUYEN THE HUNG (HUNG), A CADRE OF THE MEPO OF TRI THIEN MR, WAS KIA DURING THE WAR. LTC PHAN HUAN (HUAAN), A NATIVE OF NAM HA AND CADRE ASSIGNED TO THE MEPO OF TRI THIEN MR, WAS KILLED IN A MOTORCYCLE ACCIDENT AFTER THE WAR ENDED. HO VAN BAN AKA HO VAN BON (BON), A CADRE OF THE MEPO, WAS KIA DURING THE WAR. LE QUANG THANG (THANGS), A CADRE OF THE MEPO, WAS ALSO KIA DURING THE WAR. LFT NGUYEN PHUONG, A NATIVE OF PHUONG THUY AND CADRE ASSIGNED TO THE MEPO, WAS KIA DURING THE WAR. (NOTE: WHEN ASKED IF HE WAS ABLE TO RECALL A CADRE NAMED "LI MUON", SOURCE SAID HE BELIEVED LFT PHUONG MIGHT HAVE USED THIS NAME AS A COVER NAME DURING THE WAR). SR CPT CUONG (CUONG), A NATIVE OF NORTHERN VIETNAM AND HEAD OF THE AMERICAN PROSELYTING ELEMENT OF THE MEPO FOR TRI THIEN MR, WAS KIA IN AN AMBUSH DURING 1975 WHILE ON A PROSELYTING MISSION IN PHU LOC DISTRICT. (NOTE: SOURCE HAS NOT ABLE TO PROVIDE ANY DETAILS CONCERNING SR CPT CUONG'S 1975 PROSELYTING MISSION TO PHU LOC).

10. COMMENT:

- A. SOURCE CLAIMED TO HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE OF ANY US PERSONNEL REMAINING IN INDOCHINA. SOURCE CLAIMED TO HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE OF ANY US CRASH SITES, GRAVE SITES, OR REMAINS. SOURCE CLAIMED TO HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE OF ANY US PERSONNEL WHO WERE MOVED TO THIRD COUNTRIES.

- B. SOURCE APPEARED TO BE IN POOR HEALTH AND EXHIBITED POOR RECALL. SOURCE'S APPARENT POOR RECALL MAY RESULT FROM HIS PREVIOUS LACK OF ASSOCIATION WITH FOREIGN OFFICIALS. SOURCE CONSTANTLY LOOKED TO ACCOMPANYING SRV GOVERNMENT CADRE FOR GUIDANCE PRIOR TO ANSWERING QUESTIONS. MAJ REP, MR PHAN TEC, ADVISED SOURCE TO ANSWER FREELY BUT SOURCE STILL SEEMED TO HAVE SOME RESERVATIONS. SA BELIEVES THAT SINCE SOURCE IS NOW AWARE OF USG INTEREST IN OBTAINING INFORMATION CONCERNING US POW/MIA IN SOURCE'S FORMER AREA OF OPERATIONS, SOURCE SHOULD BE RECONTACTED AFTER HE HAS HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONSIDER THE SUBJECT CAREFULLY.

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