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INFO RUMTFS / AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE//CJTF-FA DET THREE//  
RUEHPF / USMISSION PHNOM PENH//CJTFFA DET FOUR//  
RUEKJCS / JOINT STAFF WASHDC//OCJCS-PW-MIA/J5//  
RUEKJCS / SECDEF WASHDC//OASD-ISA/PW-MIA//  
RUHQHQE / USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//J3//  
RUEKJCS / USCINCPAC LO WASHDC//  
RUEKJCS / DIA WASHDC//POW-MIA//  
RUEAIIA / CIA WASHDC//DEA/SEA/IB/DDO/ICOG//  
RUHVAAA / CDRUSACILHI HICKAM AFB HI//  
RUEADWW / NSC WASHDC  
RUEHC / SECSTATE WASHDC//CA/OCS/CCS/RAP//  
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 BANGKOK TH 11585

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DIA PASS TO DOD POW-MIA CENTRAL DOCUMENTATION OFFICE

SUBJ: JTFFA SPECIAL ASSISTANT TRIP TO VIETNAM

1. JTFFA SPECIAL ASSISTANT, MR G.E. BELL VISITED THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM (SRV) DURING THE PERIOD 3 TO 19 MARCH 1993. ASSIGNED COUNTERPART FOR THE TRIP WAS MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE (MND) REP AND VIETNAMESE OFFICE FOR SEEKING MISSING PERSONNEL (VNSMP) DEPUTY DIRECTOR, LTC PHAM TEO. ALSO ACCOMPANYING WAS MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR REP, MR NGUYEN THE CONG. THE FOLLOWING REPORT PROVIDES A SUMMARY OF THE ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED.

2. ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS:

- A. FORMER MILITARY REGION NINE POW CAMP (TG36) COMMANDER, SR CPT NGUYEN CHI CONG: SOURCE PROVIDED FIRSTHAND INFORMATION CONCERNING NINE US POWS, INCLUDING ONE ESCAPEE (REFNO 0022 ROWE), THREE RELEASEES (0022 PITZER, 0033 JOHNSON, 0384 JACKSON), AND FIVE DIED-IN-CAPTIVITY (0021 VERSACE, 0048 PARKS, 0047 TADIOS, 0086 WALKER, AND ONE BLACK AMERICAN POW TRANSFERRED FROM TO THE MR9 CAMP FROM TRA VINH WHO SOURCE COULD ONLY IDENTIFY AS "ROBAT"). SOURCE ALSO PROVIDED GENERAL LOCATION INFORMATION CONCERNING FOUR DIC BURIAL SITES, AND THE IDENTITIES/CURRENT WHEREABOUTS OF CADRE WHO WERE DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE BURIAL OF THESE FOUR DIC'S. SOURCE WAS NOT ABLE TO PROVIDE INFORMATION CONCERNING THE BURIAL OF THE FIFTH DIC (0021 VERSACE), BECAUSE HE WAS TRANSFERRED BY SOURCE TO THE MR9 PARTY COMMITTEE (KHU UY), IN THE CUSTODY OF THE MILITARY PROSELYTING SECTION (TG35), PRIOR TO HIS REPORTED DEATH. (NOTE:

TECHNICAL MEETING TALKING POINTS REGARDING THE REPORTED ADDITIONAL WITNESSES AND DIC BURIAL SITES WILL BE FORWARDED SEPARATELY).

-B. FORMER ENEMY PROSELYTING OFFICE (EPO) POLICY SECTION CHIEF, MR BUI THANH-NGON: SOURCE PROVIDED LIMITED INFORMATION CONCERNING THE WARTIME ORGANIZATION OF THE EPO, SVNLA. SOURCE CLAIMED NO FIRSTHAND CONTACT WITH US POWS PRIOR TO "OPERATION HOMECOMING", DUE TO HIS HIGH POSITION. SOURCE ALSO PROVIDED IDENTITIES/CURRENT LOCATIONS OF ADDITIONAL CANDIDATES FOR INTERVIEW. (NOTE: SA RECOGNIZED SOURCE AS "SR COL BUI VAN THANH", THE DEPUTY HEAD OF THE PROVISIONAL REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT (PRG) DELEGATION FOR OPERATION HOMECOMING, WHO WORKED WITH SA IN HANOI DURING FEBRUARY AND MARCH 1973)

-C. FORMER EPO POLICY OFFICE DEPUTY CHIEF, LTC HUYNH KHAC CHIEU, AKA YE-SA, AKA BAY (7) CA: SOURCE CLAIMED KNOWLEDGE OF THREE POLITBURO DIRECTED WARTIME POW SWAPS WHICH OCCURRED PRIOR TO OPERATION HOMECOMING. SOURCE ALSO CLAIMED KNOWLEDGE OF ONE US DESERTER (NOLAN) AND TWO RELEASEES (0234 RAMSEY AND 1169 SCHRUMP). SOURCE PROVIDED THE IDENTITIES/CURRENT LOCATIONS OF OTHER POTENTIAL CANDIDATES FOR INTERVIEW.

-D. FORMER EPO CHIEF, MR VO VAN THOI: SOURCE PROVIDED LIMITED INFORMATION CONCERNING THE WARTIME EPO ORGANIZATION AND THE IDENTITIES/CURRENT LOCATIONS OF ADDITIONAL CANDIDATES FOR INTERVIEW. SOURCE VOLUNTEERED TO ARRANGE A MEETING WITH FORMER POW CAMP CADRE IN ORDER TO LOCATE THE GRAVES OF US PERSONNEL WHO DIED IN CAPTIVITY. SOURCE REPORTED WARTIME SERVICE IN LAOS IN CONJUNCTION WITH HIS DUTIES AS THE CHIEF OF THE MILITARY PROSELYTING SECTION OF THE NATIONAL REUNIFICATION COMMITTEE, OF WHICH VO DONG GIANG (NOTE: REAL NAME PHAM BA) HAS THE GENERAL SECRETARY. (NOTE: TECHNICAL MEETING TALKING POINTS ADDRESSING MR THOI'S OFFER TO ARRANGE A MEETING WITH PERTINENT WARTIME CADRE WILL BE FORWARDED SEPARATELY).

-E. FORMER EPO DEPUTY POLICY SECTION CHIEF PHAM PHI LONG, AKA SAU (6) PHI LONG: SOURCE PROVIDED INFORMATION CONCERNING THE WARTIME ORGANIZATION OF THE SOUTHERN EPO AND CAMP SYSTEM. SOURCE ALSO PROVIDED THE IDENTITIES AND CURRENT LOCATIONS OF ADDITIONAL CANDIDATES FOR

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## INTERVIEW.

-F. FORMER COMMANDER OF INTER-CAMP "A", MR TRUONG HUYNH MAO, AKA TU (4) TRUONG, AKA TU (4) MAO: SOURCE SAID HE HAS INTERVIEWED PREVIOUSLY BY A US ELEMENT IN HO CHI MINH CITY DURING 1992 AND HAD NOTHING FURTHER CONCERNING US POWS TO ADD. SOURCE SAID INTER-CAMP "A" HAS LOCATED IN TRY NINH PROVINCE SOUTH OF LATUM AND ABOUT ONE KM FROM THE BO TUG BRIDGE DURING THE WAR. SOURCE DID PROVIDE THE IDENTITIES OF ADDITIONAL CANDIDATES FOR INTERVIEW. SOURCE HAS EVASIVE CONCERNING HIS POST-75 DUTIES, AND WHEN SA INDICATED THAT INFORMATION AVAILABLE SUGGESTED MR MAO'S EMPLOYMENT WITH THE INFORMATION AND CULTURE OFFICE COLLOCATED WITH THE MOI OFFICE ON DONG KHOI STREET IN HO CHI MINH CITY, HE WOULD ONLY SAY THAT HE HAS PREVIOUSLY ASSIGNED TO THE MILITARY PROSELYTING OFFICE.

-G. FORMER EPO POLICY SECTION CADRE NGUYEN DAU, AKA BAT (7) DAU: SOURCE REPORTED THE PRESENCE OF FOUR US POWS IN A CAMP DESIGNATED INTER-TEAM (LIEN DOI) "B" FROM 1967 TO 1969. SOURCE SAID HE HAS TRANSFERRED TO THE CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION SECTION IN MID-1969, AND THE FOUR US POWS WERE LEFT IN THE CUSTODY OF THE DEPUTY POLITICAL OFFICER. SOURCE ALSO PROVIDED THE IDENTITIES/CURRENT LOCATIONS OF POTENTIAL CANDIDATES FOR INTERVIEW.

-H. FORMER EPO CADRE SR COL NGUYEN GONG TRUNG: SOURCE REPORTED THE BURIAL OF ONE AMERICAN KIA (NOTE: POSS REFNO 0032 TALLEY) DURING A FIREFIGHT WHICH OCCURRED IN THE AREA WEST OF LOC NINH BRIDGE (XT 3963) DURING LATE 1963. SOURCE ALSO REPORTED THE CAPTURE OF THREE

AMERICANS DURING THE BATTLE OF BINH GIA IN DECEMBER 1964 (NOTE: REFNO 0049 BENNETT AND CRAFTS AND 0250 COOK). SOURCE SAID AN ARTIST, MR HUYNH PHUONG DONG, MAY HAVE PAINTED PORTRAITS OF THE CAPTURED AMERICANS. ACCORDING TO SOURCE, MR DONG WILL BE DEPARTING VIETNAM FOR THE US SHORTLY ON A CULTURAL TOUR. SOURCE ALSO REPORTED THE CAPTURE OF A US SOLDIER NORTH OF LOC NINH IN BINH LONG PROVINCE DURING 1967. THE WOUNDED AMERICAN HAS TRANSFERRED TO THE K42 HOSPITAL OF THE HQ, SVNIAF, AKA "MIEN". SOURCE DESCRIBED THE MAN AS A TALL CAUCASIAN FROM THE 101ST AIRBORNE DIV. SOURCE ALSO REPORTED THE CAPTURE OF A CAUCASIAN AMERICAN MEMBER OF THE US 11TH ACR WEST OF QUAN LOI, BINH LONG DURING 1969. SOURCE SAID THE WOUNDED SOLDIER HAS TRANSFERRED BY THE VC 2TH DIV TO THE K71 HOSPITAL WHERE HE WAS TREATED AND LATER SWAPPED AT THE VIETNAM-CAMBODIA BORDER FOR COMMUNIST PRISONER "NGUYEN QUANG VUNG" DURING 1972. SOURCE ALSO PROVIDED THE IDENTITIES/CURRENT LOCATIONS OF ADDITIONAL INTERVIEW CANDIDATES.

-I. FORMER LONG KHANH PROVINCE MILITARY PROSELYTING CADRE NGUYEN HONG CHAU, AKA THAN CHAU: SOURCE PROVIDED FIRSTHAND INFORMATION CONCERNING THE CAPTURE OF TWO AMERICANS DURING THE BATTLE OF BINH GIET IN 1964. BOTH

AMERICANS WERE MOVED ALONG A COMMO-LIAISON ROUTE ACROSS QL20 AND TURNED OVER TO HIGHER AUTHORITIES. SOURCE ALSO REPORTED THE CAPTURE OF ONE AMERICAN WHO BECAME LOST WHILE WALKING ON QLL IN THE AREA OF THE FORMER ARVN 13TH DIV BASECAMP 4 NEAR XUAN LOC SOMETIME DURING THE MID-1960'S. THE MAN HAS EVACUATED ACROSS QL20, BUT SOURCE BEARD THE MAN ESCAPED BEFORE HE COULD BE TURNED OVER TO HIGHER AUTHORITIES. SOURCE REPORTED THAT ONE OTHER US POW CAPTURED IN THE SA RIFT AREA HAS ALSO EVACUATED ACROSS QL20, ALSO DURING THE MID-1960'S, BUT SOURCE DID NOT HEAR ABOUT THE DISPOSITION OF THE MAN. SOURCE ALSO PROVIDED INFORMATION CONCERNING EVACUATION ROUTES FOR US POWS AND THE IDENTITIES/CURRENT LOCATIONS OF ADDITIONAL INTERVIEW CANDIDATES.

-J. THE FORMER DAC LAC PROVINCE PARTY COMMITTEE SECRETARY, MR NGUYEN KHAC TINH: SOURCE PROVIDED LIMITED INFORMATION CONCERNING THE CAPTURE OF ONE AMERICAN FEMALE AND TWO MALE PERSONNEL FROM THE BUON EA ANA LEPROSARIUM DURING 1962; (NOTE: REFNO 0011 VILTTI, GERBER, AND MITCHELL). SOURCE PROVIDED THE NAMES AND

CURRENT LOCATIONS OF FORMER CADRE WHO WERE ASSIGNED TO DAC LAC PROVINCE AND MILITARY REGIONS SIX AND SEVEN DURING THE WAR. SOURCE ALSO PROVIDED THE NAME AND ADDRESS OF A WARTIME CADRE WHO HE BELIEVES CAN PROVIDE ASSISTANCE IN LOCATING COMMO-LIAISON STATION T-8 OF MR6 IN CAMBODIA, WRETE REFNO 1018 (OLSEN, BETTY ANN) WAS REPORTEDLY BURIED. (NOTE: A TRI-LATERAL TECHNICAL MEETING TALKING POINT REGARDING CASE 1018 WILL BE FORWARDED SEPARATELY).

3. INTERVIEWS REGARDING PRIVATE CITIZENS REPORTEDLY IN POSSESSION OF US REMAINS:

- A. IN CONJUNCTION WITH DET 2 REP, SSGT NEWELL, SA INTERVIEWED SIX PRIVATE CITIZENS REPORTEDLY IN POSSESSION OF US REMAINS. ALL PERSONNEL INTERVIEWED EITHER CLAIMED NO KNOWLEDGE OF US REMAINS, OR THAT THEY WERE MERELY ACTING AS INTERMEDIARIES FOR OTHERS WHO ACTUALLY HAVE POSSESSION OF THE REMAINS. AT LEAST ONE OF THE WITNESSES DID PROVIDE THE NAME AND ADDRESS OF A HUE RESIDENT WHO IS REPORTEDLY KEEPING REMAINS ASSOCIATED WITH AN UNRESOLVED CASE IN THEIR HOME. (NOTE: A TECHNICAL MEETING TALKING POINT REGARDING THIS CASE (REFNO 1146) WILL BE FORWARDED SEPARATELY).

- B. THE HO CHI MINH CITY TASK TEAM INTRODUCED TWO YOUNG MEN, INCLUDING ONE WHO CLAIMED TO HAVE SERVED AS A PAVN SOLDIER IN CAMBODIA, WHO PROVIDED HEARSAY INFORMATION CONCERNING A GROUND INCIDENT, WHICH OCCURRED IN THE AN LAO VALLEY (NOTE: FORMER PAVN 3RD DIV AKA YELLOW STAR OPERATIONAL AREA) IN NORTHERN BINH DINH PROVINCE DURING 1967. THIS INFORMATION WAS OBTAINED FROM A RETIRED PAVN SOLDIER NOW RESIDING IN NINH BINH. THE INFORMATION PROVIDED POSSIBLY CORRELATES TO CASE 0242, WHICH IS AN UNRESOLVED CASE INVOLVING THREE AMERICANS LOST DURING A GROUND INCIDENT. THE TWO MEN INTERVIEWED STATED THEY DECIDED TO COME FORWARD WITH THEIR INFORMATION AFTER READING AN ARTICLE IN A LOCAL NEWSPAPER INDICATING THAT A LOCAL RESIDENT WAS REWARDED BY THE SRV GOVERNMENT WHEN HE TURNED IN US REMAINS TO THE AUTHORITIES. (NOTE: A TECHNICAL MEETING TALKING POINT REGARDING THIS CASE WILL BE FORWARDED SEPARATELY).

4. COMMENTS:

- A. THE COOPERATION OF VIETNAMESE OFFICIALS WAS EXCELLENT. BOTH ASSIGNED COUNTERPARTS MADE A SINCERE EFFORT TO LOCATE INTERVIEW SUBJECTS AND MAKE THEM AVAILABLE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PREVIOUSLY AGREED UPON WORK SCHEDULE. THE PROVINCE/CITY TASK TEAMS ALSO MADE SERIOUS EFFORTS TO PROVIDE CLEAN, QUIET FACILITIES CONDUCIVE TO THE INTERVIEW PROCESS.

- B. PROBLEM AREAS ENCOUNTERED DURING THE INTERVIEW SESSIONS WERE TYPICAL CONSIDERING THE AGES AND PHYSICAL CONDITION OF THE SUBJECTS, (I.E. IMPAIRED HEARING, POOR VISION, MEMORY LOSS, AND GENERAL FEEBLENESS). THE ACCOMPANYING CADRE MADE FREQUENT BUT SUBTLE COMMENTS ADDRESSING THEIR CONCERN THAT THEIR RETIRED SENIOR CADRE

BE TREATED WITH SENSITIVITY AND RESPECT, COMMENSURATE WITH THEIR POSITION AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE WAR EFFORT. SA BELIEVES BOTH CENTRAL AND LOCAL CADRE WERE SATISFIED WITH THE CONDUCT OF THE INTERVIEWS IN THIS REGARD.

- C. THE PROVINCE VICE-CHAIRMAN IN KIEN GIANG ASKED SA TO PASS ON TO THE USG THE APPRECIATION OF THE PEOPLE OF THE PROVINCE FOR THE US GOVERNMENT SPONSORED HEALTH CARE PROJECT RECENTLY INITIATED THERE. THE OFFICIALS IN KIEN GIANG, BEN TRE, AND CAN THO ALL EXPRESSED HOPE FOR A RAPID LIFTING OF THE ECONOMIC EMBARGO AND EARLY NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND VIETNAM. THE DEPUTY CONSULAR AFFAIRS OFFICER AND SENIOR POW/MIA POINT OF CONTACT IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE COUNTRY, MR BUI DAC TAM, SAID HE BELIEVES IT IS TIME FOR THE US TO MAKE A DECISION AS TO HOW TO PROCEED WITH RESOLVING THE MIA ISSUE. MR TAM SAID THAT IN HIS OPINION, THE US WILL NEED TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE VERY QUICKLY WITH THE LARGE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL NOW INVOLVED, OR BE RESOLVED TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE GRADUALLY OVER A PROLONGED PERIOD OF TIME WITH ONLY A SMALL NUMBER OF EXPERTS. MR TAM SAID.

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THE RECENT LARGE INFLUX OF US MILITARY PERSONNEL CREATED A DOMESTIC POLITICAL PROBLEM WHICH CANNOT BE TOLERATED INDEFINITELY. ASSIGNED COUNTERPART LTC PHAM TEO OFFERED THE OPINION THAT THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WILL BE WILLING TO ACCEPT A LARGE SCALE MILITARY PRESENCE FOR THE NEAR FUTURE, BUT HE BELIEVES IT UNWISE FOR THE US TO SEND LARGE NUMBERS OF TROOPS TO ANY PARTICULAR PROVINCE AT THE SAME TIME. HE SAID HE AND HIS VNOSMP COLLEAGUES HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DEFLECT CRITICISM THUS FAR, BUT INCREASING CONCERN EXPRESSED BY THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND THE PEOPLE IN THE PROVINCES, DUE TO THE LARGE INCREASE IN ACTIVITIES, IS MAKING THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT POSITION OF SUPPORT FOR US EFFORTS INCREASINGLY TENUOUS.

- D. ANOTHER POINT RAISED BY THE CENTRAL CADRE WAS THE ISSUE OF THE RECENTLY PUBLICIZED POSSIBILITY OF UNITED NATIONS SECURITY CONCIL MEMBERSHIP FOR JAPAN AND GERMANY. THE CADRE EXPRESSED THEIR VIEW THAT THE MOVE IS ONLY BEING CONSIDERED BECAUSE JAPAN AND GERMANY CURRENTLY CONTROL THE WORLD'S WEALTH. THEY ALSO SEEMED TO BELIEVE THAT SUCH MEMBERSHIP BY JAPAN AND GERMANY WOULD BE BENEFICIAL FOR VIETNAM, DUE TO THE CURRENT GOOD RELATIONS OF VIETNAM WITH BOTH COUNTRIES, THUS IN THEIR OPINION ENHANCING THEIR POTENTIAL FOR ACCESS TO INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS. LTC PHAM TEO, HOWEVER, SAID THAT AS A REALIST, HE PERSONALLY COULD NOT SEE THE USG AGREEING TO A DECISION OBVIOUSLY NOT IN IT'S OWN BEST INTEREST, ESPECIALLY WHEN SUCH A DECISION IS IRREVERSIBLE.

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