

VZCZCBT0804

RR RUEHBT

DE RUHQSGG #6004 1741812

ZNR UUUUU

R 231812Z JUN 93 ZYB

FM CDR JTF-FA HONOLULU HI//J2//

TO RUEHBT/CJTFFA DET ONE BANGKOK TH

INFO RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASH DC

RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC//CA/OCS/CCS/EAP/VLC//

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC//OASD-ISA/PW-MIA//

RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC//OCJCS/J5/PW-MIA/J3-JOD//

RUEKJCS/USCINCPAC LO WASHINGTON DC

RUHQHQB/USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//J3/J30-M//

RUEKJCS/DIA WASHINGTON DC//PW-MIA//

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC//DEA/SEA/IB/DDO/EA/ICOG//

RUHVAAA/CDRUSACILHI HICKAM AFB HI//TAPC-PED-H//

RUEHBT/USDAO BANGKOK TH//PW-MIA//

BT

UNCLAS //N03460//

SECTION 01 OF 02

MSGIS.SYS.RRM/CDR JTF-FA/J2//

AMPN/SUBJ: INTERVIEW OF REQUESTED SOURCE, MR. NGO DAT TAI//

REF/A/FAX/DET 2/16MAY93//

AMPN/SUBJ: LIST OF PERSONS FOR INTERVIEW-SENATOR KERRY, ENTRY

PAGE 02 RUHQSGG6004 UNCLAS

NUMBER 3 OF 83//

RMKS/1. BACKGROUND. ON 12 MAY 1993, A JOINT US/VIETNAM TEAM INTERVIEWED MR. NGO DAT TAI, A RETIRED COLONEL, NATIVE OF NAM HA PROVINCE, BORN IN 1918, AND A FORMER CHIEF OF AN ENEMY PROSELYTING SECTION IN SOUTHERN VIETNAM UNTIL 1972 WHEN HE TRANSFERRED TO THE ENEMY PROSELYTING DEPARTMENT, GENERAL POLITICAL DIRECTORATE IN HANOI. HE CURRENTLY RESIDES ON ICH KHIEM STREET IN HANOI. THE TEAM MET AT THE ANTE-BUILDING MEETING ROOM OF THE GOVERNMENT GUEST HOUSE, 2 LE THACH STREET, HOAN KIEM DISTRICT, HANOI, TO INTERVIEW SELECTED PERSONNEL, LISTED IN REFERENCE, WHO ARE BELIEVED TO BE POTENTIAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION CONCERNING U.S. PERSONNEL MISSING IN ACTION IN VIETNAM. THE U.S. CONTINGENT CONSISTED OF MR. KEITH GARY FLANAGAN, DET 2 CASUALTY RESOLUTION SPECIALIST. THE VIETNAMESE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT CONTINGENT CONSISTED OF LTC LE KY, MINISTRY OF DEFENSE; AND MR. NGUYEN THANG LOI, MINISTRY OF INTERIOR. ON 12 MAY 1993, LT KY ESCORTED MR. NGO DAT TAI TO THE GOVERNMENT GUEST HOUSE. MR. TAI SAID HE HAD NOT BEEN INTERVIEWED BY JOINT TEAMS PREVIOUSLY MR. TAI HAD ORIGINALLY BEEN SCHEDULED FOR INTERVIEW ON 17 MAY, BUT HIS INTERVIEW WAS MOVED UP DUE TO THE INABILITY TO

PAGE 03 RUHQSGG6004 UNCLAS

CONTACT OTHER PERSONNEL WHO COULD NOT BE PRESENT FOR INTERVIEW ON 12 MAY.

2. SUMMARY. THE SOURCE PROVIDED LIMITED INFORMATION CONCERNING U.S. PERSONNEL WHO WERE RELEASED TO U.S. CONTROL AFTER DIFFERENT PERIODS OF CAPTIVITY. THE SOURCE PROVIDED LIMITED DETAILS OF HIS MILITARY ASSIGNMENT, DUTIES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND EXPERIENCE DURING THE WAR. THE SOURCE PROVIDED NO INFORMATION CONCERNING U.S. PERSONNEL WHO BECAME UNACCOUNTED FOR.

3. DETAILS.

A. MR. TAI DID NOT RELATE MUCH OF HIS HISTORY PRIOR TO 1970, BUT SAID THAT BY SEPTEMBER 1970 HE WAS ASSIGNED TO THE POST IN THE SOUTH. HE ALSO RECALLED THAT THE PROVISIONAL REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT RELEASED A "DIED IN CAPTIVITY" LIST. MR. TAI SAID THAT E MR. TAM HUY (TAMS HUY) AKA LE HUY (LEE HUY) WAS THE CAMP COMMANDER AND, AS SUCH, WAS IN CHARGE OF THE POWS. MR. TAI SAID THAT HE DID NOT KNOW ANY SPECIFICS HIMSELF.

B. IN HIS OWN WORDS, MR. TAI DESCRIBED THE FOLLOWING: DURING THE PERIOD FROM 1962 UNTIL 1965, HE WAS A MEMBER OF THE ENEMY PROSELYTING SECTION, SERVING IN THE SOUTHERN REGION WITH THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT. IN 1965, WITH THE ESCALATION OF

PAGE 04 RUHQSGG6004 UNCLAS

THE WAR AND THE INCREASING U.S. PRESENCE, THE SECTION TO WHICH HE WAS ASSIGNED MAINTAINED ONE VERY MOBILE DETENTION FACILITY, NOT A CAMP, IN THE GENERAL TAY NINH REGION. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE CAMP WAS ALWAYS MOVING AROUND. THE PRIMARY CONCERN WAS TO HAVE AN EXIT ROUTE AVAILABLE IF NEEDED, OR IF THE CAMP WAS IN DANGER OF DISCOVERY BY HOSTILE FORCES. FROM THE VERY BEGINNING, HE SAID, HIS SECTION HAD RECEIVED AND FOLLOWED THE HUMANITARIAN POLICY OF BURYING THE DEAD AND MAINTAINING THE GRAVES OF POWS AND THEIR OWN PERSONNEL IN THE BEST POSSIBLE MANNER. THEY RECORDED THE DEATHS: NAME, DATE, LOCATION, ETC. IN THE BEST POSSIBLE MANNER FOR EACH CASE, BUT EACH CASE WAS UNIQUE AND ANY DETAILS OF THE RECORDED DATA DEPENDED ON THE IMMEDIATE CIRCUMSTANCES OF EACH CASE. HE SAID THAT REGIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY WERE SPLIT INTO THREE GENERAL AREAS: WEST REGION, WEST OF THE MEKONG RIVER, CENTRAL REGION, MR7 AND MRB; AND THE NORTHEASTERN REGION, MR5. FOR HIS SECTION, MR. TAI SAID THAT, GENERALLY SPEAKING, THE LARGEST NUMBER OF POWS EVER HELD AT ONE TIME WAS AROUND TEN, BUT AT THE LEAST, USUALLY FIVE OR SIX. MR. TAI SAID THAT FROM THE VERY BEGINNING, HIS SECTION'S PRIMARY FOCUS WAS JUST HOW TO KEEP U.S. POWS ALIVE. HE SAID THAT VIETNAMESE IN DETENTION WERE NOT

PAGE 05 RUHQSGG6004 UNCLAS

AS MUCH OF A PROBLEM. THE VIETNAMESE DETAINEES COULD LIVE ON THE FOOD AND WATER THAT WAS READILY AVAILABLE. HE SAID THAT FOOD AND WATER, EVEN THE AMOUNTS NEEDED, FOR U.S. POWS WAS A SERIOUS PROBLEM. HE SAID THAT ONE POW HE REMEMBERED WELL WAS "SMITH." HE SAID THAT THEIR POLICY TOWARDS ????? WAS ALWAYS TO TAKE EVERY POSSIBLE MEASURE TO KEEP THE U.S. POWS ALIVE AND HEALTHY. MR. TAI SAID THAT WHENEVER POSSIBLE, IF THEY HAD THE MEANS, THEY PROVIDED MEDICAL TREATMENT FOR ALL THE POWS WHEN THEY WERE ILL.

C. MR. TAI SAID THAT THE CONCEPT OF FAMILY WAS VERY IMPORTANT TO THE VIETNAMESE AND HIS SECTION ALWAYS PAID A GREAT DEAL OF ATTENTION TO FAMILY MATTERS FOR THE POWS. HE SAID WHEN THEY RELEASED SMITH AND "CLURE" (AS SPELLED BY SOURCE), HE REMEMBERED THAT "RITA" WAS CLURE'S WIFE'S NAME, AND HIS SECTION GAVE ONE SCARF TO SMITH TO GIVE TO MRS. SMITH AND ONE SCARF TO CLURE TO GIVE TO "RITA." MR. TAI RECALLED THAT HIS SECTION ALSO RELEASED SOME AUSTRALIANS IN CAMBODIAN TERRITORY. HE SAID THAT HIS SECTION ASKED SMITH AND CLURE TO TELL THE U.S. PEOPLE ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES OF B-52 RAIDS OVER VIETNAM. HE SAID THAT THEIR RELEASE WAS SIMPLY A GESTURE OF PROMOTING PEACE.

D. WHEN ASKED ABOUT CAPTIVE AMERICANS WHO MAY HAVE DIED OF

PAGE 06 RUHQSGG6004 UNCLAS

THEIR WOUNDS PRIOR TO ARRIVING AT THEIR DETENTION POINT, MR. TAI SAID THAT HE REMEMBERED ONE BLACK SERVICEMAN WHO WAS SERIOUSLY WOUNDED. MR. TAI SAID THAT THE DOCTOR WHO TREATED THE BLACK MAN TOLD HIM THAT THE WOUNDS WERE SERIOUS ENOUGH THAT THE PRISONER WOULD PROBABLY DIE IF HE WAS NOT RELEASED. MR. TAI SAID THAT HE DID NOT REMEMBER THE BLACK MAN'S NAME, HE VAGUELY RECALLED THAT IT WAS SOMETHING LIKE "BRY-HAM". MR. TAI SAID THAT HE ONLY HEARD THE NAME SPOKEN AND NEVER SAW IT WRITTEN ANYWHERE PRIOR TO THE BLACK MAN'S RELEASE.

F. CONCERNING WARTIME REPORTING ON U.S. PRISONERS, AND WHEN ASKED ABOUT DOCUMENTS, RECORDS, ARCHIVES, AND DIARIES, MR. TAI SAID THAT DETAILS ON THE POWS WERE, IN FACT, REPORTED VERBALLY UP THE CHAIN OF COMMAND. MR. TAI SAID HIS SECTION KEPT NO RECORDS IN THE JUNGLE. MR. TAI SAID THAT HE BELIEVED THAT ONLY THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AT THE HIGHER LEVELS WOULD STILL HAVE ANY RECORDS. MR. TAI ALSO SAID THAT ONLY THOSE CADRE OF THE ENEMY PROSELYTING SECTION WHO WERE DIRECTLY INVOLVED WITH THE PRISONERS WOULD HAVE ANY KNOWLEDGE OF WHERE THOSE RECORDS WOULD BE NOW. MR. TAI RECALLED THAT IN HIS ELEMENT, THERE WAS ONE CAPTAIN, NGUYEN TAN LUC (NGUYEENX TAANS LWCJ) WHO ROUTINELY FOLLOWED ALL

BT

#6004

VZCZCBT0805  
 RR RUEHBT  
 DE RUHQSGG #6005 1741B12  
 ZNR UUUUU  
 R 231812Z JUN 93 ZYB  
 FM CDR JTF-FA HONOLULU HI//J2//  
 TO RUEHBT/CJTFFA DET ONE BANGKOK TH  
 INFO RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASH DC  
 RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC//CA/OCS/CCS/EAP/VLC//  
 RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC//OASD-ISA/PW-MIA//  
 RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC//OCJCS/J5/PW-MIA/J3-JOD//  
 RUEKJCS/USCINCPAC LO WASHINGTON DC  
 RUHQHQB/USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//J3/J30-M//  
 RUEKJCS/DIA WASHINGTON DC//PW-MIA//  
 RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC//DEA/SEA/IB/DDO/EA/ICOG//  
 RUHVAAA/CDRUSACILHI HICKAM AFB HI//TAPC-PED-H//  
 RUEHBT/USDAO BANGKOK TH//PW-MIA//  
 BT  
 UNCLAS //N03460//  
 FINAL SECTION OF 02  
 MSGIS.SYS.RRM/CDR JTF-FA/J2//  
 AMPN/SUBJ: INTERVIEW OF REQUESTED SOURCE, MR. NGO DAT TAI//  
 OF THE EVENTS OF THE WAR AND KEPT A DIARY. MR. TAI SAID THAT  
 SINCE THAT TIME HE DID NOT KNOW OF OR RECALL ANYONE ELSE WHO

PAGE 02 RUHQSGG6005 UNCLAS

MIGHT HAVE KEPT A DIARY OR ANY DOCUMENTS RELATING TO POWS.

G. MR. TAI SAID THAT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES CONSISTED OF ALWAYS MAINTAINING THE LEAST AMOUNT OF INFORMATION WRITTEN ON PAPER. MR. TAI SAID THAT IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY UNUSUAL FOR ANYONE TO LEAVE AN AREA WHERE PRISONERS WERE KEPT WITH ANY WRITTEN INFORMATION OF ANY KIND. MR. TAI REITERATED THAT IN ORDER TO FIND RELEVANT DOCUMENTS WE SHOULD LOOK AT THE MINISTRY OR DIRECTORATE LEVEL.

H. MR. FLANAGAN ASKED THE QUESTION: "SINCE THE RELEASE OF U.S. PRISONERS IN 1973, HAVE YOU EVER SEEN ANY LIVE AMERICANS?" MR. TAI RESPONDED THAT TO THIS KNOWLEDGE, THERE HAVE BEEN NO POWS IN VIETNAM SINCE 1973.

I. MR. FLANAGAN ASKED THE QUESTION: "SINCE THE RELEASE OF U.S. PRISONERS IN 1973, HAVE YOU EVER SEEN ANY 'STAY-BEHINDS?'" MR. TAI RESPONDED THAT TO HIS KNOWLEDGE, THERE WERE NO STAY-BEHINDS. MR. TAI SAID THIS INTERVIEW WAS THE FIRST TIME HE HAD MET ANY AMERICANS SINCE 1973.

J. ON 12 MAY 93, WITH NO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AT HAND FOR MR. TAI, THE MEMBERS OF THE JOINT TEAM AGREED TO DISCONTINUE THIS INTERVIEW. BOTH THE US AND SRV MEMBERS CONFERRED ON ADDITIONAL

PAGE 03 RUHQSGG6005 UNCLAS

QUESTIONS WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BEFORE CONCLUDING THIS INTERVIEW.

4. POTENTIAL LEADS OBTAINED DURING THE INTERVIEW.

A. MR. TAM HUY (TAMS HUY) AKA LE HUY (LEE HUY) WHO WAS THE CAMP COMMANDER IN THE TAY NINH REGION, AND, AS SUCH, WAS IN CHARGE OF THE POWS. MR. TAI SAID THAT PARTICULARLY TAM HUY SHOULD BE OUR BEST SOURCE OF INFORMATION.

B. FORMER CAPTAIN NGUYEN TAN LUC (NGUYEENX TANS LWCJ) WHO ROUTINELY FOLLOWED ALL OF THE EVENTS OF THE WAR AND KEPT A DIARY. MR. TAI BELIEVES THAT LUC WAS FROM SAIGON.

C. NGUYEN HUU TRI (NGUYEENX HWUX TRIS), AN INTERPRETER FROM HIGHER LEVEL WHO FREQUENTLY VISITED THE PRISONERS.

D. LE DO NGOC (LEE DOOR NGOCJ) ANOTHER INTERPRETER WHO OCCASIONALLY VISITED THE CAMPS. HE NOW LIVES IN HANOI.

E. NGUYEN VA HA (NGHUYEENX VAWN HAF) WHO WORKED IN THE CAMP.

F. MR. TAI SAID THAT HE DID NOT REMEMBER THE NAMES OF ANY DOCTORS, NURSES, OR MEDICAL PERSONNEL WHO TREATED U.S. PRISONERS.

5. MATERIAL EVIDENCE: NONE. THIS SOURCE BROUGHT NO RECORDS, NOTEBOOKS, DIARIES, OR ANY MATERIAL EVIDENCE CONTEMPORARY TO THE WARTIME ERA WHICH COULD BE ASSOCIATED WITH ANY UNACCOUNTED FOR

PAGE 04 RUHQSGG6005 UNCLAS

U.S. PERSONNEL.

6. RECOMMENDED FUTURE ACTIONS.

A. RECOMMEND NO FURTHER JOINT INTERVIEW OF THIS SOURCE UNLESS THE VIETNAMESE OR U.S. SIDES CAN PRODUCE SPECIFIC INFORMATION OR FURNISH MORE SPECIFIC QUESTIONS OR LEADS.

B. REQUEST THE VNOSMP ALLOW THE U.S. ACCESS TO THIS SOURCE FOR POTENTIAL FUTURE INTERVIEW IN THE EVENT THAT SIGNIFICANT SPECIFIC QUESTIONS ARE DEEMED NECESSARY.

7. PERTINENT LOCATION OR DATA CHANGES: NONE.

B. COMMENTS. AFTER THIS INTERVIEW, THE MEMBERS OF THE JOINT TEAM ASSESSED ALL POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL LEADS PROVIDED BY THE SOURCE. THE CONSENSUS OF TEAM MEMBERS WAS THAT CONTINUATION OF THIS INTERVIEW OR AN ATTEMPT TO REINTERVIEW THIS SOURCE WOULD DEPEND ON SIGNIFICANT QUESTION WHICH SHOULD BE ASKED PERTAINING TO SPECIFIC INCIDENTS OR SPECIFIC QUESTIONS WHICH MIGHT LEAD TO FINDING NEW WITNESSES OR DISCOVERING CONTEMPORARY DOCUMENTATION WITH DETAILS ON SPECIFIC CASES. TAKING INTO THE CONSIDERATION THE PERSONNEL AND EVENTS THAT THIS SOURCE DID RECALL, IT SEEMS REALISTIC TO EXPECT THAT THIS SOURCE SHOULD HAVE HAD SOME INFORMATION ON U.S. PERSONNEL WHO REMAIN IN AN UNACCOUNTED FOR

PAGE 05 RUHQSGG6005 UNCLAS

STATUS.//

BT

#6005

NNNN