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 RR RUEHBT  
 DE RUHQSGG #6646 2420014  
 ZNR UUUUU  
 R 300052Z AUG 93 ZYB  
 FM CDR JTF-FA HONOLULU HI//J2//  
 TO RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC//USDP:RSA//  
 INFO RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASH DC  
 RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC//CA/EAP/VLC/CCS/OCS//  
 RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC//OCJCS/J5/PW-MIA/J3-JOD//  
 RUHQHQB/USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//J3/J30-M//  
 RUEKJCS/USCINCPAC LO WASHINGTON DC  
 RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC//DEA/SEA/IB/DDO/EA/ICOG//  
 BUHVAAA/CDRUSACILHI HICKAM AFB HI//TAPC-PED-H//  
 RUEHBT/USDAO BANGKOK TH//PW-MIA//  
 RUEHBT/CJTFFA DET ONE BANGKOK TH  
 BT  
 UNCLAS //N03460//  
 SECTION 01 OF 02  
 MSGID/GENADMIN/CDR JTF-FA/J223//  
 SUBJ/INTERVIEW OF REQUESTED SOURCE, NGUYEN DINH THAO//  
 REF/A/FAX/CJTFFA DET 2/16MAY93//  
 AMPN/SUBJ: LIST OF PERSONS FOR INTERVIEW, ENTRY NUMBER 34 OF 83//  
 RMKS/1. BACKGROUND. ON 21 AUGUST 1993, A JOINT U.S./VIETNAM

PAGE 02 RUHQSGG6646 UNCLAS  
 ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM INTERVIEW TEAM INTERVIEWED NGUYEN DINH THAO,  
 A 54 YEAR OLD HANOI RESIDENT. MR. THAO IS A FORMER WRITER OF  
 "THE PEOPLE'S ARMED FORCES OF THE WESTERN HIGHLANDS DURING THE  
 WAR OF NATIONAL SALVATION AGAINST THE AMERICANS" (LWCWJ LWONGJ  
 VUX TRANG NHAAN DAAN TAAY NGUYEEN TRONG CHIEENS CHOONGS MYX CWUS  
 NWOCS). THE TEAM MET AT THE ANTE-BUILDING MEETING ROOM OF THE  
 GOVERNMENT GUEST HOUSE, 2 LE THACH STREET, HOAN KIEM DISTRICT,  
 HANOI, TO INTERVIEW MR. THAO, LISTED IN REFERENCE A AS A POTENTIAL  
 SOURCE OF INFORMATION CONCERNING U.S. PERSONNEL MISSING IN ACTION  
 IN VIETNAM. THE U.S. CONTINGENT CONSISTED OF MR. KEITH GARY  
 FLANAGAN, DET 2, JOINT TASK FORCE-FULL ACCOUNTING (JTF-FA)  
 CASUALTY RESOLUTION SPECIALIST; AND PO2 JOHN HARVEY, JTF-FA  
 ANALYST/LINGUIST. THE VIETNAMESE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT CONTINGENT  
 CONSISTED OF LTC LE KY, MINISTRY OF DEFENSE; AND MR. NGUYEN THANH  
 LOI, MINISTRY OF INTERIOR. MR. THAO HAD NOT BEEN INTERVIEWED BY  
 A JOINT TEAM BEFORE.

2. SUMMARY. THE SOURCE, NGUYEN DINH THAO, PROVIDED A SUMMARY OF  
 THE SOURCES USED TO GATHER MATERIAL FOR THE BOOK "THE PEOPLE'S  
 ARMED FORCES OF THE WESTERN HIGHLANDS DURING THE WAR OF NATIONAL  
 SALVATION AGAINST THE AMERICANS" AND SUMMARIZED HIS CONTRIBUTIONS

PAGE 03 RUHQSGG6646 UNCLAS  
 TO THE BOOK. MR. THAO CLAIMED NO KNOWLEDGE OF U.S. PERSONNEL,  
 LIVING FREELY OR AGAINST THEIR WILL, IN VIETNAM SINCE 1973.  
 3. DETAILS.

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Oral History, Nguyen Dinh Thao,  
 Records of B-3 in Nha Trang

A. AFTER FORMAL INTRODUCTIONS, LTC LE KY EXPLAINED THE JOINT  
 TEAM'S MISSION AND MR. FLANAGAN BEGAN THE INTERVIEW, ASKING  
 MR. THAO TO PROVIDE INFORMATION CONCERNING SPECIFIC PASSAGES FROM  
 THE BOOK, "THE PEOPLE'S ARMED FORCES OF THE WESTERN HIGHLANDS  
 DURING THE WAR OF NATIONAL SALVATION AGAINST THE AMERICANS",  
 RELATING TO U.S. SERVICEMEN TAKEN PRISONER AND THE SOURCES OF  
 THIS INFORMATION. MR. THAO SAID THAT HE BECAME INVOLVED WITH THE  
 BOOK AS A WRITER FOLLOWING THE LIBERATION OF THE SOUTH. HE SAID  
 THAT THERE WERE TWO GENERALS AND THREE OTHER AUTHORS ASSIGNED TO  
 WRITE THE BOOK. THE BOOK, PUBLISHED IN 1980, H SID, WAS  
 WRITTEN FROM BOTH POLITICAL AND MILITARY ASPECTS. HE SAID THAT  
 HE WROTE THE PREFACE, CHAPTERS FOUR AND FIVE, AND THE CONCLUSION.

B. MR. THAO SAID THAT THERE WERE SEVERAL SOURCES WHICH THE  
 AUTHORS USED TO GATHER INFORMATION FOR THE BOOK. THE AUTHORS, HE  
 SAID, USED WESTERN NEWS SOURCES, INTERVIEWED BATTLE PARTICIPANTS  
 AND MEDICAL WORKERS, READ THE PEOPLE'S ARMY (QUAN DOOIJ NHAAN  
 DAN) AND PEOPLE'S (NHAAN DAAN) NEWSPAPERS, AS WELL AS READ

PAGE 04 RUHQSGG6646 UNCLAS  
 MILITARY OPERATIONS REPORTS AS SOURCES. HE SAID THAT THE  
 MILITARY OPERATIONAL REPORTS WERE CLASSIFIED AND KEPT AT A B3  
 SECRET DOCUMENT FACILITY IN NHA TRANG DURING 1977 AND 1978.  
 THESE REPORTS CONTAINED ONLY B3 FRONT BATTLE STATISTICS, SUCH AS  
 THE NUMBER OF TROOPS KILLED, CAPTURED, AND WOUNDED. THEY DID NOT  
 CONTAIN THE NAMES OR ANY SPECIFIC PW INFORMATION, HE SAID. WHEN  
 AT THE DOCUMENT FACILITY, HE SAID, HE WAS ALLOWED TO TAKE NOTES  
 ABOUT THE REPORTS HE WAS READING, BUT HAD TO DESTROY THE NOTES  
 BEFORE LEAVING. MR. THAO OPINED THAT SOME OF THE DOCUMENTS MAY  
 HAVE BEEN SENT TO HANOI, WHILE MOST HAVE PROBABLY BEEN DESTROYED  
 SINCE 1978. HE SAID THAT BY 1968 MOST AMERICAN FORCES HAD  
 WITHDRAWN FROM THE WESTERN HIGHLANDS AND MANY OF THE RECORDS HAD  
 BEEN DESTROYED BY THE TIME HE WANTS TO FIND THEM IN 1977. HE  
 ADDED, THE WESTERN NEWS SOURCES WERE PARTICULARLY VALUABLE DURING  
 THE WAR BECAUSE OF THEIR TIMELY REPORTING OF U.S. UNIT LOCATIONS.  
 MR. THAO SAID HE WOULD HAVE LIKED TO, BUT NEVER DID MEET ANY  
 AMERICAN PW'S. HE SAID THAT MOST BATTLE PARTICIPANTS AND MEDICAL  
 PERSONNEL DID NOT SPEAK ENGLISH AND THEREFORE COULD NOT HAVE  
 KNOWN ANY SPECIFICS ABOUT CAPTURED U.S. TROOPS. EVEN THE ESCORT  
 PERSONNEL WHO TOOK THE PRISONERS FROM THE FRONT TO PW HOLDINGS

PAGE 05 RUHQSGG6646 UNCLAS  
 FACILITIES WOULD NOT KNOW ANYTHING SPECIFIC ABOUT THE PRISONERS,  
 HE SAID. THE ENEMY PROSELYTING PERSONNEL AT THE PW CAMPS, HE  
 SAID, WERE VERY SPECIALIZED AND TRAINED TO DEAL FIRST HAND WITH  
 CAPTURED AMERICANS. HE SAID THAT THEY WERE THE ONLY ONES WHO  
 KNEW SPECIFICS ABOUT THE AMERICAN PW'S. HE SAID THAT HE DOES NOT  
 KNOW IF THE ENEMY PROSELYTING CADRE KEPT RECORDS, BUT IF ANYONE  
 DID KEEP PW RECORDS IT WOULD HAVE BEEN THEM.

D. ALTHOUGH HE HAS NO FIRST HAND KNOWLEDGE OF U.S. PW'S IN  
 THE B3 FRONT, MR. THAO SAID THAT HE KNOWS TAKING PRISONERS  
 CREATED MANY DIFFICULTIES FOR VIETNAMESE TROOPS. THE AMERICAN

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PRISONERS DID NOT MOVE WELL IN THE JUNGLE, HE SAID, CREATING UNSAFE SITUATIONS FOR THE VIETNAMESE, ESPECIALLY DURING B-52 STRIKES. HE ALSO SAID FEEDING AND CLOTHING THE PRISONER WAS TOO DIFFICULT AND COSTLY FOR MANY PEOPLE'S ARMY OF VIETNAM (PAVN) UNITS.

E. HE RECALLED SEEING A MOVIE ABOUT AMERICAN PW'S AT CHRISTMAS TIME, IN WHICH PRISONERS SANG CHRISTMAS SONS AND MADE PRESENTS FOR EACH OTHER. HE SAID THAT KHUONG XUAN QUE, A CADRE OF THE ENEMY PROSELYTING OFFICE; A MAN NAMED THU (NFI), AND SEVERAL OTHERS ORGANIZED THE PARTY FOR THE PW'S.

PAGE 06 RUHQSGG6646 UNCLAS

F. MR. FLANAGAN ASKED MR. THAO IF HE KNOWS OF ANY "CROSS-OVERS" STAYING IN VIETNAM DURING OR AFTER THE WAR. MR. THAO SAID THAT TO HIS KNOWLEDGE THERE WERE NONE.

G. IN RESPONSE TO DIRECT QUESTIONING, MR. THAO SAID THAT HE IS UNAWARE OF ANY U.S. PW'S IN VIETNAM SINCE 1973.

H. MR. THAO SAID THAT THE U.S. WAS VERY GOOD AT RECOVERING THE BODIES OF LOST SOLDIERS DURING THE WAR, BUT THERE IS PROBABLY VERY LITTLE CHANCE OF FINDING REMAINS OF SERVICEMEN NOW. HE CITED THE CHANGES IN THE WESTERN HIGHLANDS BECAUSE OF SEVERE WEATHER, HEAVY U.S. BOMBING DURING THE WAR, AND LACK OF RECORDS AND WITNESSES AFTER 25 YEARS AS REASONS FOR THIS.

I. WITH NO FURTHER QUESTIONS FOR MR. THAO, THE JOINT TEAM AGREED TO CONCLUDE THE INTERVIEW.

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

5. POTENTIAL LEADS.

A. MR. THAO REFERENCED A FILM ABOUT A GROUP OF PRISONERS CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS. KHUONG XUAN QUE, NUMBER 7 OF THE LIST OF 83, WAS INTERVIEWED BY THE JOINT TEAM ON 17 MAY 93, AND WAS, ACCORDING TO MR. THAO, ORGANIZER OF THE PARTY. A MAN NAMED THU

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