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

TO RUEHBT/CJTFFA DET ONE BANGKOK TH

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UNCLAS //N03460//

SECTION 01 OF 02

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

AMPN/SUBJ: INTERVIEW OR REQUESTED SOURCE, MR. CHU HOANG BICH//

REF/A/DET 2/16MAY93//

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

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RMKS/1. BACKGROUND. ON 12 MAY 1993, A JOINT US/VIETNAM INTERVIEW TEAM INTERVIEWED MR. CHU HOANG BICH, A NATIVE OF NORTH VIETNAM CURRENTLY RESIDING IN HANOI (APPROXIMATELY 55-60 YEARS OF AGE) WHO IS A RETIRED SENIOR COLONEL AND WAS A FORMER DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE ENEMY PROSELYTING OFFICE DURING THE WAR. 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 ME. 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, LTC KY ESCORTED MR. CHU HOANG BICH TO THE GOVERNMENT GUEST HOUSE. MR. BICH SAID HE HAD NOT BEEN INTERVIEWED BY JOINT TEAMS PREVIOUSLY. LTC KY INTRODUCED THE TEAM MEMBERS AND THEIR MISSION.

2. SUMMARY. THE SOURCE PROVIDED LIMITED GENERAL INFORMATION CONCERNING U.S. SERVICEMEN WHO BECAME UNACCOUNTED FOR IN VIETNAM.

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THE SOURCE PROVIDED LIMITED DETAILS OF HIS MILITARY DUTIES AND EXPERIENCE IN SUPPORT OF A CONCLUSION THAT HE HAD NO SIGNIFICANT INFORMATION TO CONTRIBUTE.

3. DETAILS.

A. CONCERNING THE FATES OF U.S. PERSONNEL WHO REMAINED UNACCOUNTED FOR AND WARTIME REPORTING ON U.S. PRISONERS, MR. BICH SAID THAT HE DID NOT KNOW ABOUT ANY MIAs IN PARTICULAR. HE SAID THAT HIS WORK DURING THE WAR WAS TO GET U.S. AND REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM FORCES TO PUT DOWN THEIR ARMS. MR. BICH SAID THAT HE HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF ANY SPECIFIC PERSONNEL WHO DIED ON THE BATTLEFIELD. MR. BICH SAID THAT HE WAS ONLY PERSONALLY AWARE OF THOSE POWS WHO WERE SUCCESSFULLY EVACUATED TO THE NORTH AND THOSE PILOTS WHO WERE CAPTURED IN THE NORTH. MR. BICH SAID THAT HE ONLY KNEW OF U.S. KIAS BY THE ARTIFACTS, DOCUMENTS, AND IDENTIFICATION MEDIA WHICH WERE SENT NORTH. OTHER THAN KNOWING THAT THE DOCUMENTATION EXISTED, MR. BICH SAID THAT HE KNEW NOTHING SPECIFIC ABOUT ANY REPORTS OF DEATH, SKETCHES, OR OTHER REPORTING WHICH MIGHT ASSIST THE JOINT TEAM IN THEIR MISSION.

B. MR. BICH STEERED AWAY FROM ALL QUESTIONS OF A PERSONAL NATURE. HE INTRODUCED HIMSELF AS AN INDIVIDUAL WHO UNDERSTOOD

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THE TEAM MISSION BUT EMPHASIZED THAT HE WOULD BE OF LITTLE OF NO VALUE AS A WITNESS. WHEN MR. FLANAGAN SHOWED MR. BICH EXAMPLES OF THE KINDS OF DOCUMENTS ALREADY RECEIVED AS THE RESULT OF JOINT EFFORTS, MR. BICH RESPONDED THAT DURING THE WAR HIS AGENCY WAS ONLY CONCERNED WITH DOCUMENTS IN ORDER TO LEARN ABOUT THE U.S. WAY OF THINKING OR WAY OF LIFE. HE SAID HIS AGENCY'S PURPOSE WAS TO CHANGE THE U.S. SERVICEMAN'S WAY OF THINKING. MR. BICH RECALLED THAT SOME DIARIES WERE RECEIVED AFTER U.S. SERVICEMEN WERE KILLED BUT THAT HE PERSONALLY WOULD HAVE NO WAY OF LOCATING THE DIARIES OR ASSOCIATING THEM WITH ANY SPECIFIC INDIVIDUALS. MR. BICH SAID THAT HIS DEALINGS WITH POWS WERE TO TURN THEM FROM ADVERSARIES INTO UNDERSTANDING INDIVIDUALS USING WHATEVER INFORMATION AND DISINFORMATION MATERIALS WERE AVAILABLE.

C. MR. BICH SAID THAT IN HIS OPINION, FINDING ANY RELEVANT ARCHIVES TODAY WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT. HE SAID THAT MEMORABILIA, WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN THE IMMEDIATE RESPONSIBILITIES OF INDIVIDUALS IN EACH AREA WHERE RECORDS WOULD HAVE BEEN KEPT, INCLUDING DIARIES, WERE VERY IMPORTANT, AS THEY LET HIS OFFICE KNOW OF THE U.S. PEACE MOVEMENT IN THE STATES. MR. BICH RECALLED ONE U.S. SERVICEMAN WHO HAD KEPT SUCH A DIARY AND WAS KILLED IN

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BATTLE. MR. BICH SAID THE INDIVIDUAL WAS ASSIGNED TO VIETNAM IN OCTOBER 1967, AND DIED ON 31 MAY 1968. ACCORDING TO MR. BICH, IN THE FINAL PAGES OF HIS DIARY, THE SERVICEMAN WROTE OF HAVING SPENT "...SIX MONTHS IN VIETNAM, AND I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY WE ARE FIGHTING." MR. BICH SAID THAT HE RECALLED NO OTHER DETAILS ABOUT THE SERVICEMAN OR THE DIARY.

D. MR. BICH SAID THAT HE UNDERSTOOD WHAT THE JOINT TEAM WAS TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH. MR. BICH SAID THAT AS HE UNDERSTOOD THE PROBLEM, WITHOUT A DETAILED LIST OF MIAS FOR COMPARISON, HE COULD BE OF NO HELP TO THE JOINT TEAM. MR. BICH SAID THAT HE HAD NO WAY OF RESPONDING TO A BLANKET REQUEST FOR INFORMATION, AND THAT IF HE DID HAVE A DETAILED LIST HE MIGHT BE OF SOME LIMITED ASSISTANCE.

E. MR. FLANAGAN ASKED THE QUESTION: "SINCE THE RELEASE OF U.S. PRISONERS IN 1973, HAVE YOU EVER SEEN ANY LIVE AMERICANS?" MR. BICH RESPONDED THAT HE REALLY DID NOT KNOW HOW TO ANSWER THE QUESTION. MR. BICH SAID THAT ON 29 MARCH 1973 THE LAST U.S. POW WAS RETURNED TO THE U.S. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PARIS PEACE ACCORDS. ON THAT SAME DAY, MR. BICH SAID THAT THE LAST U.S. SERVICEMEN DEPARTED TAN SON NHUT AIRFIELD IN RESPONSE TO THE

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RELEASE OF THE LAST POW. MR. BICH SAID THAT HE RECALLED THAT THE NAME OF THE LAST POW WAS AGNEW. HE SAID HE REMEMBERED IT BECAUSE IT WAS THE SAME AS THE VICE PRESIDENT'S NAME. MR. BICH SAID HE RECALLED THAT THE LAST POW CAPTURED WAS A MAJOR NAMED KIENTZLER (MR. BICH PRONOUNCED THE NAME, CRS PROVIDED THE SPELLING). MR. BICH SAID THAT AS HE UNDERSTOOD THE SITUATION, ALL THE POWS WENT HOME.

F. MR. FLANAGAN ASKED THE QUESTION: "SINCE THE RELEASE OF U.S. PRISONERS IN 1973, HAVE YOU EVER SEEN ANY 'STAY-BEHINDS'?" MR. BICH RESPONDED THAT TO HIS KNOWLEDGE, ONLY ONE DID NOT RETURN AND HE WAS NOT A POW - BOBBY GARWOOD. MR. BICH SAID THAT THERE HAD BEEN SOME HEARSAY INFORMATION OF DESERTERS IN THE SAIGON REGION AND SOME RURAL AREAS, BUT IF THERE WERE ANY STAY-BEHINDS, HE HAD NO EVIDENCE OR DIRECT KNOWLEDGE.

G. ON 12 MAY 93, WITH NO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AT HAND FOR MR. BICH, THE MEMBERS OF THE JOINT TEAM AGREED TO DISCONTINUE THIS INTERVIEW. BOTH THE US AND SRV MEMBERS CONFERRED ON ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BEFORE CONCLUDING THIS INTERVIEW.

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