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JOINT CASUALTY RESOLUTION CENTER

LIAISON OFFICE
AMERICAN EMBASSY
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96346

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*Son Tay
Border Security*

REFERENCE: HK84-088
20 September 1984

[REDACTED]

FROM: JCRC-LNB

TO: COMMANDER, JCRC

SUBJ: Foreigners Observed at Son Tay, Hanoi, [REDACTED] during May 1982.

Source:

- a. Name: Pham Quang Dao
- b. DOB: 23 AUG 62
- c. POB: Nhat Tan (V) Tu Loc (D) Hai Hung (P)
- d. Former position: U2 Border Security Police
- e. Present location: Hei Ling Chau
- f. Identification data: ID#3867, Boat LM 2010
- g. DOI: May 1982
- h. Map used: None
- i. Date of interview: 12 Sep 84
- j. Name of interviewer: Mr. Garnett E. Bell
- k. Other: Arrived Hong Kong 11 May 84.

Source, a 22 year old male Vietnamese refugee and former PSS officer, claimed to have observed three or four light skinned foreigners whom he heard were Americans at Bat Bat Prison, Son Tay Vietnam during May 1982.

Information:

Source stated that while attending the Border Security Police (BSP) School (Trwongf Coong An Bieen Phongf) from August 1979 until March 1984 he occasionally visited a childhood friend of his known to him as Nguyen Van Hung (DPOB 1962 Nhat Tan (V) Tu Loc (D) Hai Hung (P)), who worked as a cook at the Bat Bat Prison. Source stated that the BSP School was located southwest of Son Tay Town (WJ5337) approx one to two kilometers west of the Ai Mo Bridge (WJ523354) (BSP School located vic WJ5134 according to Source). Source was not able to locate the Bat Bat Prison but did provide a memory sketch (see attached sketch). Source recalled that Bat Bat Prison was located at the foot of a mountain which was located approx five kilometers from a large lake called Suoi Hai in an area called Suoi Hai (Suoi Hai Lake not shown on available maps. The only similar place name in the general area referred to by Source was Man Xuoi Hai (WJ3528)). Source also recalled that the two villages nearest the prison were Tan Linh and Tan Hong Villages located approx seven km from Bat Bat Prison. Source described the prison as a small prison situated on the

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slope of a hill with pine and willow trees surrounding it. Source stated that the prison had a brick wall on the outer perimeter which was approx four to five meters high with an approx 2.5 meter inner perimeter fence constructed of wire (similar to chain link fencing). Source stated that "Bei Gie" dogs (large fierce gray colored dogs which are similar to German dogs and derive their name from the picture that is on bottles of beverages called Bei Gie according to Source) were present in the area between the fences. Source stated that he was able to gain entry to the prison by using a pass issued by the BSP school and with help from his friend who worked inside the prison and who came to the gate to meet Source and escort him inside. Source stated that he began visiting Hung at the prison sometime during early 1981 when he learned of Hung's assignment there after he went home to visit his (Source's) family at Nhat Tan, Hai Hung during the "Tet" holidays. Source recalled that friend Hung had moved from Nhat Tan (V) to Thanh Hai (V) Thanh Ha (D) when he and Source were in their fifth year of school. Source learned from his family in early 1981 that Hung was also a member of the BSP and was assigned to the Bat Bat prison. Source heard from Hung during his visits to Bat Bat that Hung had attended a mid level BSP course for nine months and had then been assigned as a cook at the prison. Source visited Hung at Bat Bat Prison during monthly visits which always occurred on Sunday when Source was off duty. Source recalled that occasionally he visited the prison twice during the same months. Source continued to visit Hung at the prison until "Tet" 1984 when Source graduated from the BSP School and was reassigned to BSP Station B.F. 50 at Hue, Binh-Tri-Thien. Source stated that during one visit to Bat Bat Prison in May 1982 he observed four men walking inside the camp who looked like foreigners. Source stated that he observed the men in the center of the compound and that they were walking casually with no guards accompanying although guards were present at the perimeter. Source observed the men for approx three minutes from a distance of approx 250 meters. Source stated that one of the four men walked behind a building when he first observed the group and that he did not see the fourth man clearly but assumed that he was also a foreigner like the other three. Source stated that the other three men were all light skinned (just like the interviewer who is a caucasian with tan complexion) and were not Vietnamese. Source observed that all of the four men were wearing white prison uniforms with one half inch light green vertical stripes. Source did not notice the hair or eye color and stated that he did not look at the men closely because he was concerned that he would appear to be too curious to the prison staff. Source stated that the men looked to be approx 30 to 45 YOA and that none of them were injured or wounded. Source was not able to provide any further description of the men. Source recalled that he observed the men during the morning sometime between 0900 and 1200 hours. Source stated that at the time he observed the men his friend Hung told him that the men he saw at Bat Bat Prison were Americans. Hung did not provide any details concerning the men, their identity, circumstances of capture, or how long they had been in captivity. Source was not able to provide any further information concerning the foreigners that he observed at Bat Bat Prison.

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Source Background: Source stated that he had resided since birth until Aug 1979 at Nhat Tan (V), Tu Loc (D), Hai Hung (P) Vietnam. Source listed his relatives as: father, Pham Van Cao, DPOB 1934 Nhan Tan (V), ricefarmer, currently residing at POB; mother, Nguyen Thi Mong, DPOB 1937 Nhat Tan (V), housewife (same address); siblings, Pham Quang Lam (20 YOA), Pham Thanh Nu (15 YOA), Pham Thanh Hue (12 YOA), Pham Quang Tiep (8 YOA), Pham Quang Khac (3 YOA) (all students residing at same address as parents). Source stated that he began attending the Nhat Tan Elementary School at 7 YOA and studied there for seven years while the school principal was Mr. Pham Van Phiet. Source studied for three years at Tu Loc (D) School where the principal was Mr. Le Huy Thanh. Source began attendance at the Border Security Police School at Son Tay, Hanoi in August 1979 and remained there until March 1984. Source stated that the BSP School was headed by Sr Col Phan Ngoc. Source recalled that SrCpt Cat (LNU) was a doctor assigned to the school as a medical expert. Source stated that his training course consisted of three phases with a final examination. Phase I consisted of the following: Vietnamese Communist Party History, Marx-Lenin Theory, Culture, Math, Chinese Mandarin, Introduction to Military Services, Lesson 1 on Firing the AK Rifle, Physical ED (swimming and boxing), Infantry Squad Tactics, Mission of the Border Security Police, Psychology, Education, and the Chain of Command/Military Ranks. Phase II consisted of Reconnaissance/Intelligence, Law, Criminology, Military Terrain, Economics/Politics, Mass Destruction Weapons, Infantry Platoon Tactics Offense-Defense, Mission of Border Security Police, Ranks and Regulations, Boxing, Lesson 2 AK Rifle/Automatic Rifle/Machine Gun, Engineer, and Signal. Phase III consisted of the following: Reconnaissance, Border Security, Infantry Company Tactics/Border Security Tactics, Firing of the AK Rifle (Day and Night Firing), B-40 and B-41, 60 and 82 mm mortar, DKZ Firing, K54 and K59 Pistol, Science of Communism, Party and Political Tasks, Boxing, and Ranks. The national examination consisted of the following: Military subjects (Ranks and Weapons firing), Political Subjects (Party and Political Tasks) and Mission subjects (Border Security Police and Reconnaissance). Source stated that the armed Security Police (Public Security Police) had been reorganized as the Border Security Police and reassigned from the Ministry of the Interior to the Ministry of Defense as a result of Resolution 21 and Directive 1148 of the Political Bureau. Hand drawn memory sketches provided by Source are attached.

Comment:

Source claimed during his initial interview with Hong Kong Immigration that he had observed five Americans at Bat Bat Prison. Source later told the JCRC interviewer that he had seen three or four light skinned foreigners whom his friend Hung said were Americans. Source acted as if he wanted to say that the men were Americans but was non committal and admitted that he was not sure of the

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nationality. Source claimed that he was sure that the men were not Vietnamese. Source at first claimed to have observed the foreigners while visiting Hung at the staff quarters of the camp but after the interviewer pointed out to him that the latrine building would have blocked his view (according to Source's sketch) Source claimed that the latrine was not as large as he had indicated on the sketch and that he had walked down by the garage while visiting Hung. Source was well composed throughout most of the interview but became obviously frightened and nervous when the interview was directed toward the three or four foreigners whom Source claimed to have observed. Source did not know how to read a map and although he claimed to have studied military terrain could not provide a detailed description of the location of Bat Bat Prison. Source did not seem very familiar with the area where he said the camp was located. Source acted strangely when questioned concerning his friend Hung and gave the interviewer the impression that he was not disclosing all of his knowledge concerning Hung or his job at Bat Bat Camp. Source may have been shown a sketch of Bat Bat camp by Hung or someone else and also told about the foreigners alleged to be held there. Source did seem familiar with the area from Hanoi to where his school was located and fairly familiar with that portion of Highway 88 (built by Cubans according to Source) which served as the main route to various schools and plants of the government. Source has no possibility of resettlement in the U.S. and due to his recent arrival at Hong Kong has little chance of being accepted by any other country. Source will be available for reinterview during tentative December 1984 interview trip.

Paul D. Mather

PAUL D. MATHER
Lt Col, USAF
JCRC Liaison Officer

Enclosures:

Sketch map of Bat Bat Prison
Sketch Map of Son Tay/Bat Bat Prison Area
Immigration Form

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