

19 May 1994

From: Garnett E. Bell
National Veterans Research Center

To: Col William Jordan
CDR, CILHI
Fax

Dear Col Jordan,

I recently received a telephone call from the Dallas, TX area from an American citizen who just returned from a personal visit to Vietnam. The individual who contacted does not wish to be identified, and will hereinafter be referred to as Source. Source claims to have received human remains and information associated with two separate incidents which occurred in Dac Lac (Darlac) province during the war. Source claims to be former U.S. Army assigned to an aviation unit which flew missions in support of the "Truong Son" Group (e.g. U.S./Australian cross-border operations to interdict the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Cambodia and Laos during the late 60's and early 70's).

According to Source, while in the Ban Me Thuat Area, he was contacted by members of the E-de (Rhade) ethnic minority. Source heard from the minority members that they have discovered a number of remote crash sites involving U.S. aircraft. The minorities provided Source two small packets containing bone fragments and pieces of metal. Source requested that I take possession of the material, and I subsequently travelled to Dallas to pick them up. The items are now here in my home in Arkansas.

The minorities told Source that one packet, containing two sections of lower arm bone shaft, were found in the wreckage of a UH1A helicopter which flew into a crevice on Chu Knia Mountain (BP 4779). According to the minorities, the aircraft did not burn after the crash. Attached to the sections of bone is a stainless steel connecting bracket four inches long. The bracket is inscribed "Collison" and "W6". The packet also contains an empty cigarette package indicating "Globe" brand cigarettes produced by the "Vinataba" (e.g. Vietnamese tobacco company), circa 1992. There are no handwritten notes on the cigarette pack. Source was not able to provide any further information concerning this incident.

The second packet contains several small bone fragments and small pieces of metal, all of which have apparently been burned. According to the minorities, these items were found in the burned wreckage of a U.S. aircraft (type and model unknown), which crashed in the area of Chu Yang Krinh Mountain (BP 1677). Source was not able to provide further information concerning this incident.

The minority members who contacted Source expressed fear of being compromised, due to concerns regarding safety of family members residing under communist control in Dac Lac province. They indicated to Source that they are willing to guide him to the crash site locations, if he returns to visit Vietnam in the future. Source has requested the views of the U.S. Government concerning what possible action to be taken. I informed Source that I will pass this information on to you, and will recontact him after I have received your assessment.

I have been to the area mentioned by the minorities, both during and after the war. I recall that the first location mentioned by Source (Chu Knia Mountain) was carried during wartime as a possible detention site for cases 1017 and 1018. I also recall receiving information from a refugee concerning the postwar discovery of a helicopter crash site on Chu Knia Mountain. According to the refugee, some human skeletal remains at the crash site of a helicopter were found by ethnic Vietnamese from Nha Trang. The remains were hidden near the crash site. At the time of the interview, I tentatively correlated the information to case 1515, which involves a UH1H helicopter with four men on board (Alford, Cavender, Klimo, and Ware). Case 1515 has a last known location of BP 7089. All four individuals were carried as "Dead 8".

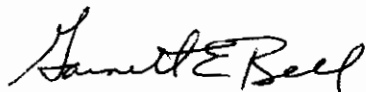
Concerning the second location (Chu Yang Krinh Mountain), I investigated Case 1723 in that same general area, but the individual in this case (Jeffs, Clive) was known to be out of the aircraft at the time of the incident. However, due to the indirect nature in which the information was received, I believe 1LT Jeff's records should be compared against the stainless steel bracket. Experience indicates that multiple sites often become confused in the reporting.

After talking with Source I have no doubt concerning his claimed previous assignment to the Dac Lac area and association with the Truong Son Group. Source is apparently sincere in his desire to assist the USG resolve the two reported sites. While in the Dallas area, I spoke with members of the E-de minority who have been resettled in the U.S. and are acquainted with Source. Although these individuals have knowledge of the reported areas where the two incidents occurred, they do not have any specific knowledge of the remains or crash sites reported to Source in Vietnam. Source indicated he is planning another trip to Vietnam in the near future, and he expects to receive additional details at that time. Source is currently employed by a major U.S. corporation in the Dallas and enjoys the support of a highly patriotic employer.

Please advise concerning the desired disposition of the remains and stainless steel bracket. I can mail them to the CILHI, or if you prefer, I can hand carry the items when I am in Washington, D.C. for the annual Memorial Day ceremony on 30 May. In the event you prefer to receive the items by mail, please provide the current mailing address for the CILHI, as well as the desired method of transmittal.

If I can be of further assistance please contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Garnett E. Bell".

Garnett E. Bell
President
NVR

Copies:
Source
File