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FM JCRC LIAISON BANGKOK TH

TO RUHQBPA / CDR JCRC BARBERS PT HI PRIORITY

INFO RUHQHQA / USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//J2/J3/J36// PRIORITY

RUEKJCS / DIA WASHINGTON DC//DC-2// PRIORITY

RUEKJCS / SECDEF WASHDC//OASD-ISA/PW-MIA// PRIORITY

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LIAISON BANGKOK TH 47422

CITE: 3493 AUGUST 85

SUBJ: JCRC REPORT M85-057, SIGHTING OF GROUP OF AMERICANS  
NEAR BAN ME THUOT IN 1975 (U)

1. SOURCE NAME: BUI VAN LONG; DPOB: 1 MAY 1944, HUNG YEN (P) (N/N); FORMER ARVN CAPTAIN, SERVICE NUMBER 60/156074, CMDR OF 203D PSYWAR COMPANY; PRESENT LOCATION: 1H 6A/1, SUNGEI BESI REFUGEE CAMP, MALAYSIA; ID DATA: MB 303; DOI: MARCH 1975; MAFS USED: 1:50,000, SERIES L7014, SHEET 6536-1; DATE OF INTERVIEW: 14 JUNE 1985; NAME OF INTERVIEWER: THOMAS R. MCKAY, CW2, USA; OTHER: SOURCE DEPARTED VIETNAM ON 9 MARCH 1985. HIS FINAL ADDRESS IN VIETNAM WAS AP NGOC HA (H), XA PHU MY (V), CHAU THANH (D), DONG NAI (P).

2. SUMMARY. SOURCE PROVIDES FIRSTHAND INFORMATION OF A GROUP OF CAPTIVE AMERICANS HE SAW AT DUC CO AND FA SUP IN MARCH AND APRIL OF 1975. END OF SUMMARY.

3. INFORMATION. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS RELATED BY SOURCE TO INTERVIEWER AS FACT. ON 19 MARCH 1975, SOURCE WAS THE COMMANDER OF THE 203 PSYWAR COMPANY/20TH PSYWAR BN AND WAS CAPTURED BY TROOPS OF THE COMMUNIST FINAL ASSAULT. SOURCE WAS CAPTURED WITH APPROXIMATELY 1,500 FELLOW ARVN SOLDIERS WHICH INCLUDED APPROXIMATELY 750 OFFICERS AND NCO'S. THESE 1,500 PRISONERS, INCLUDING SOURCE, WERE INCARCERATED IN A FIELD-EXPEDIENT PRISON CAMP NORTHWEST OF BAN ME THUOT. UPON SOURCE'S ARRIVAL AT THE CAMP ON 21 MARCH 1975, SOURCE PERSONALLY OBSERVED A GROUP OF FOREIGNERS WHO WERE ALREADY IN THE CAMP. THE GROUP OF FOREIGNERS INCLUDED A TOTAL OF NINE PEOPLE, WHO SOURCE LATER HEARD INCLUDED TWO HUSBAND AND WIFE TEAMS (MISSIONARIES), A WIDOW WHO WAS A MISSIONARY, A SMALL GIRL WHO WAS POSSIBLY A CHILD OF ONE OF THE MISSIONARY COUPLES, AN AMERICAN CIVILIAN PROFESSOR, ONE FILIPINO, AND ONE US ARMY CAPTAIN WHO WAS AN ADVISOR TO THE DARLAC SUBSECTOR. ALL FOREIGNERS WERE HELD IN A SEPARATE HOUSE WHICH WAS LOCATED OUTSIDE THE VIETNAMESE CONFINEMENT AREA WHICH WAS FENCED OFF WITH A BAMBOO FENCE. SOURCE WAS HELD AT THIS LOCATION FOR APPROXIMATELY ONE MONTH. WHEN SOURCE WAS TRANSFERRED, THE FOREIGNERS WERE ALSO TRANSFERRED. THE US CAPTAIN AND THE CIVILIAN PROFESSOR WALKED WITH THE VIETNAMESE INMATE GROUP WHILE ALL OTHER FOREIGNERS RODE IN A SMALL CIVILIAN TRUCK WHICH HAD BEEN CON-

SEIZED BY THE COMMUNISTS FROM THE LOCAL PEOPLE AFTER THE ATTACK. ALL INMATES WERE TRANSFERRED TO DUC CO.

UPON ARRIVAL AT DUC CO, ALL FOREIGNERS WERE AGAIN SEGREGATED FROM VIETNAMESE INMATES. VIETNAMESE INMATES WERE AGAIN HELD TOGETHER, BUT SEPARATE FROM THE FOREIGNERS. AFTER APPROXIMATELY ONE MONTH DETENTION AT DUC CO, ALL INMATES WERE MOVED TO THANH BINH, SOUTH OF QL 19 AT VICINITY ZA 0530. THANH BINH IS IN THANH AN (D), PLEIKU (P). SOURCE EXPLAINED THE CAMP WAS CALLED THANH BINH DUE TO THE CLOSE PROXIMITY OF THE THANH BINH VILLAGE. DURING THE TRIP TO THANH BINH, ALL VIETNAMESE INMATES WALKED WITH THE US CAPTAIN AND THE PROFESSOR, BUT HOW THE OTHER FOREIGNERS MOVED TO THANH BINH FROM DUC CO IS UNKNOWN TO SOURCE. AT THANH BINH, ALL VIETNAMESE WERE HELD IN THE MORE THAN 10 BUILDINGS, EACH OF WHICH CONTAINED OVER 60 INMATES. ALL INMATES AT THANH BINH WERE OFFICERS, AS THE ENLISTED WERE SEGREGATED AND TAKEN TO BE HELD AT THE BAU CAN TEA PLANTATION OF THANH AN (D), PLEIKU (P). THE FOREIGNERS WERE AGAIN HELD TOGETHER BUT SEPARATE FROM THE VIETNAMESE. AFTER APPROXIMATELY ONE MONTH INCARCERATION AT THANH BINH, THE FOREIGNERS WERE MOVED TO HANOI, WHILE ALL VIETNAMESE INMATES CONTINUED TO STAY AT THANH BINH FOR A TOTAL OF APPROXIMATELY ONE YEAR.

SOMETIME IN JUNE 1976, ALL VIETNAMESE INMATES AT THANH BINH WERE RELEASED, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A GROUP OF 60, WHICH INCLUDED SOURCE. SOURCE WAS TRANSFERRED TO THE CUNG SON CAMP, NEAR AP HOA QUYEN (H), XA CUNG SON (V), TUY HOA, WHICH WAS LOCATED IN A MOUNTAINOUS REGION NEAR A STREAM (NAME UNKNOWN). SOURCE WAS HELD THERE UNTIL SEPTEMBER 1979, WHEN HE WAS TRANSFERRED TO THE A30 TUY HOA CAMP, WHERE HE WAS HELD UNTIL HIS RELEASE IN NOVEMBER 1981. UPON SOURCE'S RELEASE, HE RETURNED TO THE NGOC HA HAMLET OF THE PHU MY (V), CHAU THANH (D), DONG NAI (P) WHERE HE PROCEEDED TO THE NGOC HA NEW ECONOMIC ZONE, LOCATED NEAR QL 15 APPROXIMATELY 40 KM FROM PHUOC TUY.

6. (S/NF) UPON MORE DETAILED QUESTIONING CONCERNING THE PRESENCE OF A MILITARY CAPTAIN ADVISOR BEING CAPTURED

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WITH HIM, SOURCE EXPLAINED THAT EACH PARTNER WAS AN AMERICAN ADVISOR AND THE ONE WHOM HE SAW WAS HIS ADVISOR WHO WORKED IN BAN ME THUOT AT THE "PROVINCIAL HEADQUARTERS". SOURCE RECALLED THE CAPTAIN WAS APPROXIMATELY 35-36 YOA, WORE NO GLASSES, WAS APPROXIMATELY 1.70 METERS TALL, AND WAS HEAVY AND MUSCULAR, WEIGHING APPROXIMATELY 65-67 KG. FURTHER QUESTIONING RESULTED IN SOURCE ADMITTING THAT HE HAD NOT ACTUALLY SEEN THE MAN WEAR A MILITARY UNIFORM (NOTE: WHEN QUESTIONED AS TO HOW HE KNEW THE MAN WAS A CAPTAIN, SOURCE EARLIER STATED HE HAD SEEN THE RANK ON THE MAN'S UNIFORM). SOURCE ALSO ADMITTED HE HAD NEVER SPOKEN TO THE "CAPTAIN" BUT HAD ONLY HEARD HE WAS A CAPTAIN AND ADVISOR FROM FELLOW INMATE ARVN CAPTAIN NGO VAN DIEP, FORMER OPERATIONS OFFICER OF THE DAR LAC SUB-SECTOR AT BAN ME THUOT, WHO HAD TOLD SOURCE THAT THE MAN WAS HIS FORMER ADVISOR, WITH WHOM HE HAD WORKED. SOURCE HEARD NOTHING ELSE ABOUT THE MAN, ONLY RECALLING THAT HE DID NOT SPEAK VIETNAMESE. SOURCE ADDED THAT THE ONLY ONE OF THE FOREIGNER GROUP WHO SPOKE VIETNAMESE WAS THE PROFESSOR, WHO SPOKE VIETNAMESE VERY WELL AND WAS NAMED "JAY". SINCE THE DEPARTURE OF THE FOREIGNERS AT THANH BINH, SOURCE HEARD NOTHING OF THEM, EXCEPT THAT THEY WERE BEING MOVED TO HANOI. SOURCE ALSO RECALLED THE GROUP, UPON THEIR DEPARTURE FROM THANH BINH, CONSISTED OF THE SAME INDIVIDUALS AS WHEN HE FIRST SAW THEM AT EA SUP. THEY WERE JOINED BY NO OTHER FOREIGNER AND WERE ALL IN GOOD HEALTH. SOURCE FAILED TO IDENTIFY ANYONE FROM INTERVIEWER'S PHOTO COLLECTION, WHICH INCLUDED A PHOTO OF MR. STRUHARIK. SOURCE'S MEMORY SKETCHES OF THE PRISON CAMPS AT EA SUP, DUC CO AND THANH BINH WILL BE FORWARDED SEPARATELY.

DECL: OADR

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