

ROUTINE

~~SECRET~~

TO JCRC LIAISON BANGKOK TH

CDR JCRC BARBERS PT HI

INFO USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//J3//

SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC//EAP-VLC//

JCS WASHINGTON DC//OCJCS-PW-MIA/J5//

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BT

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SUBJ: BACKGROUND INFO FOR JOINT SEARCH EFFORTS

REFS: A. JCRC LIAISON 301231Z APR 89

B. JCRC LIAISON 120809Z MAY 89

C. JCRC LIAISON 121136Z MAY 89

D. JCRC LIAISON 231021Z MAY 89

1. JCRC LNO BANGKOK PROVIDED THIS MESSAGE TO CHIEF US-SRV JOINT SEARCH TEAM. REF A IS THE SUMMARY REPORT OF THE FIFTH JOINT SEARCH EFFORT, 12-30 APR 89. REFS B AND C ARE DETAILED REPORTS OF CASES 0076 (REHE AND SYKES) AND 1456 (SPARKS), RESPECTIVELY. HO XUAN DICH, OF THE VNOSMP, SUGGESTED REHE AND SYKES MIGHT HAVE BEEN BURIED AT A FORMER PW CAMP LOCATED IN QUANG NAM - DA NANG PROVINCE. REF D REPORTED ATTEMPT TO VISIT THE SITE OF THIS FORMER PW CAMP, AND NOTED THE VIETNAMESE REFERRED TO IT AS THE "ZONE 5 PRISON CAMP." YOU MAY WISH TO DRAW ON THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION IN FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSIONS WITH THE VIETNAMESE.

2. EVOLUTION OF MR 5.

A. ORIGINALLY, MR 5 CONTROLLED THE AREA OF SOUTH VIETNAM FROM COMMUNIST QUANG DA (RVN QUANG NAM) TO QUANG DUC, LAM DONG, AND BINH THUY. IN APRIL 1966, THE MR-5 PARTY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED TO HANOI THAT THE MR BE DIVIDED INTO THREE SUB-DIVISIONS. IN JUNE OF THAT YEAR A FORMAL SUB-DIVISION WAS MADE CREATING THE TRI-THIEN-HUE MILITARY REGION (TTHMR) AND THE B-3 FRONT, LEAVING AS MR-5 THE REMAINING PROVINCES ALONG THE COAST (I.E., QUANG NAM, QUANG TIN, QUANG NGAI, BINH DINH, PHU YEN, KHANH HOA, MINH THUAN, TUYEN DUC, LAM DONG, BINH THUAN, AND BINH TUY).

B. FROM THE OUTSET, HANOI MAINTAINED DIRECT CONTROL OF ACTIVITIES

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RELATED TO AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR. WITHIN PAVN, THE SENIOR AUTHORITY FOR PRISONER OF WAR MATTERS WAS THE ENEMY PROSELYTING DEPARTMENT (CUC DICH VAN/CDV), OF THE GENERAL POLITICAL DIRECTORATE (TONG CUC CHINH TRI), OF THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE. IN THE EARLY YEARS, AUTHORITY PASSED THROUGH COSVN AND ITS SVNLA TO THE ENEMY PROSELYTING ELEMENT OF MR-5. IN RESPONSE TO THE LARGE BUILDUP OF US FORCES IN SOUTH VIETNAM, HANOI ORDERED THE RESTRUCTURE OF THE CDV FORWARD COMMANDS IN SOUTH VIETNAM IN EARLY 1967. COSVN AND ITS SVNLA RELINQUISHED DIRECT CONTROL OVER THE REGION 5 PARTY COMMITTEE IN CENTRAL VIETNAM, WHICH NOW FELL UNDER THE DIRECT CONTROL OF HANOI. ALTHOUGH COSVN AND ITS SVNLA BECAME RESPONSIBLE FOR PARTY AND MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE SOUTHERN HALF OF SOUTH VIETNAM (GENERALLY SOUTH OF THE 12TH PARALLEL) IT COORDINATED ITS OPERATIONS WITH REGION 5 IN CENTRAL VIETNAM. THE NORTHERN PROVINCES OF QUANG TRI AND THUA THIEN AND HUE CITY WERE REORGANIZED INTO THE TRI-THIEN-HUE MILITARY REGION (TTHMR) UNDER THE OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF PAVN MILITARY REGION 4 HEADQUARTERED IN VINH, NGHE AN PROVINCE. CONSEQUENTLY, THE CDV ESTABLISHED DIRECT CONTROL OVER ITS OPERATIONS IN REGION 5 AND IN THE TTHMR. THE REGION 5 EMPS COORDINATED ITS OPERATIONS WITH THE COSVN MPS AND THE SVNLA PDV.

3. ^{SC} ^{SC} WERE CORRECT WHEN THEY DESCRIBED THIS AS THE ONLY LONG-TERM HOLDING FACILITY FOR AMERICAN PRISONERS IN COMMUNIST MILITARY REGION 5 (MR 5). FURTHERMORE, THEY WERE CORRECT IN CLAIMS THAT AFTER MID-1969 ALL AMERICANS CAPTURED IN MR-5 WERE TRANSFERRED TO CENTRAL AUTHORITIES IN HANOI. FOR EXAMPLE, RETURNED PW PFC ISAAC F. MALO ^{HOWEVER,} WAS DISSEMBLING, AT BEST, WHEN HE ASSERTED NO WRITTEN RECORDS WERE KEPT. FOR EXAMPLE, THERE IS ONE UNCONFIRMED REPORT FROM A HIGHLY RELIABLE SOURCE SUGGESTING THE PAVN TROOPS ESCORTING MALO THRU LAOS TO NVN ALSO WERE CARRYING THE RUCKSACK BELONGING TO A DEAD AMERICAN--PROBABLY PFC JAMES A. CHAMPION WHO WAS LOST IN THE SAME ACTION AS MALO, BUT REMAINS UNACCOUNTED FOR.

4. ^{SC} ^{SC} WOULD HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED TO THE ENEMY MILITARY PROSELYTING SECTION (SAN BINH DICH VAN) FOR MR-5 HEADQUARTERS, WHICH WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR MATTERS RELATED TO AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR. BOTH MEN, ESPECIALLY ^{SC} WOULD HAVE HAD ACCESS TO WRITTEN REPORTS AND POLICY REGARDING AMERICAN PW/MIA MATTERS IN GENERAL AS WELL AS AMERICANS CAPTURED IN MR-5.

5. WHILE WE DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH INFORMATION TO MAKE A DEFINITIVE JUDGEMENT, WE BELIEVE THE ^{SC} INTRODUCED TO THE U.S. TEAM DURING THE 5TH INVESTIGATION IS AN ENGLISH-SPEAKING INTERROGATION SPECIALIST WHO WORKED WITH U.S. PWs IN MR-5 FROM

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65 THRU THE END OF THE WAR. IN JULY 1965, THE CUC DICH VAN
ADV/ENEMY PROBELYTING DEPT, GENERAL POLITICAL DIRECTORATE, HQ
D) DISPATCHED ITS FIRST GROUPS OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING PSYCHOLOGICAL
WARFARE AND INTERROGATION SPECIALISTS. ALL WERE GRADUATES OF THE
HOI FOREIGN LANGUAGE INSTITUTE. ABOUT 50 WERE ASSIGNED TO THE
SOUTH VIETNAM LIBERATION ARMY (SVNLA) PHONG DICH VAN (ENEMY
PROBELYTING OFFICE); I.E., GENERALLY THOSE AREAS OF THE RVN SOUTH
THE 18TH PARALLEL, UNDER THE CONTROL OF CENTRAL OFFICE FOR
SOUTH VIETNAM (COSVN, AKA ONG CU, AKA 8-2 FRONT). ABOUT 20 WERE
ASSIGNED TO COMMUNIST MILITARY REGION 5 (QUAN KHU 5) ENEMY
MILITARY PROBELYTING SECTION (BAN BINH DICH VAN/EMPS) IN CENTRAL
VIETNAM. ONE OF THE 20 ASSIGNED TO MR-5 WAS SC
HAD PARTICIPATED IN THE EXPLOITATION OF U.S. PILOTS IN NORTH
VIETNAM BEFORE HIS ASSIGNMENT TO THE REGION 5 EMPS. HE WOULD
WELCOME ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING SC. WE
WILL FORWARD ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WE MIGHT DISCOVER.

DIA POC IS MR. AN

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