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AMERICAN EMBASSY
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96846

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Hai Phong
1828FROM: JCRC-LNB
TO: Commander, JCRCRef: RPT #HK85-010
24 April 1985SUBJ: Shootdown of Aircraft and Death of One U.S. Pilot
In Hai PhongREF: HK85-011 (Report by same source)
HK85-012 (Report by same source)

Source:

- a. Name: Tran Thanh Binh
- b. DOB: 15 April 1948
- c. POB: My Thua (V), My Loc (D), Ha Nam Ninh (P)
- d. Former position: Electrician
- e. Present location: Hei Ling Chau, Hong Kong
- f. Identification data: I.D. 2820
- g. DOI: 1971
- h. Map used: Sheet 6350-1; Series L7014
- i. Date of interview: 11 March 1985
- j. Name of interviewer: Mr. G. E. Bell
- k. Other: Arrived Hong Kong 9 Jan 84; Boat LM 1992

Source, a 36 YOA male VN refugee and former electrician at the Vang Danh coal mines, provided information concerning his observation of the shootdown of a U.S. jet aircraft and death of one U.S. pilot near Hai Phong during late 1971.

Information:

Source stated that while visiting a friend on the outskirts of Hai Phong City during late 1971 (not sure of month) he observed the shootdown of a U.S. jet aircraft (type unknown) and death of one U.S. pilot.

Source stated that at approximately 1600 hours he saw the aircraft be hit by anti aircraft fire while flying along the Bach Dang River (XJ 8412) in the direction of Hai Phong (generally northeast to southwest). Source speculated that the aircraft was flying to attack Hai Phong at the time it was hit.

Shortly after the aircraft was hit Source saw one pilot bail out and descend, under a fully deployed red and white parachute, near Pha Le Village (XJ 8213). Source saw several members of the Pha Le militia forces firing at the pilot as he descended approximately 200 meters from the Pha Le Village cemetery.

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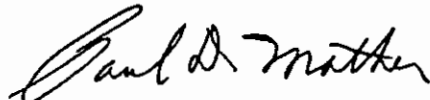
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Source went to where the pilot touched down and saw that he had been killed during descent. Source observed two gun shot wounds on the left upper chest of the pilot. Source described the pilot as male caucasian, approximately 25-30 YOA, light brown or blond hair, and wearing a military uniform. Source stated that the village militia removed the pilot's boots and helmet but did not remove his clothing. Source did not observe any identification card, dogtags, or other identification media. Source saw the village militia members carrying the body of the pilot in the direction of the Pha Le Cemetery and although he did not observe the burial of the body or any grave, speculated that the body of the pilot was buried in that cemetery.

Source and other villagers in the area picked up small pieces of wreckage to use in making cooking utensils. Source recalled that villagers were prohibited from going near the main aircraft wreckage due to unexploded bombs which the militia members said were present.

Source was not able to provide further information concerning the incident.



PAUL D. MATHER
Lt Col, USAF
JCRC Liaison Officer

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REFUGEE REPORT & PRELIMINARY EVALUATION

SOURCE DATA: TRAN THANH BINH, 37
 REFUGEE REPORT INTERVIEW NR & DATE: HK85-010, 24 April 1985
 ANALYST: SFC R. R. HILL
 CROSS REFERENCE(S): HK85-011, HK85-012, FIR-317/09251-84

CATEGORY DATA: Shootdown of Aircraft and Casualty Data/First Hand Account.

FINDINGS: Information in this report is insufficient to establish a definite correlation; however, it will be placed in the following file(s) for ~~XXXXXX~~/potential future reference: REFNO 1828.

CORRELATE DATA: REFNO 1828: On 16 April 1972 Captains Alan P. Mateja and Orvin C. Jones were flying an F105G, call sign Suntan 02, as number two in a flight of two on a surface-to-air missile (SAM) suppression mission over North Vietnam. Due to technical problems, the flight was late arriving at the in-flight refueling point, and as both planes were low on fuel, the leader directed Suntan 02 to fill his tanks and to attempt to reach the target area to assist egressing bombers as soon as possible. This was the last time the flight leader saw or heard from the Mateja-Jones aircraft. A pilot in the target area later reported that he had seen two SAMs launched south of Haiphong (the target area) and that he had seen one of them explode. He reported that a wing-tip light and other aircraft debris had fallen in the vicinity of XJ 854 137. It was believed that the downed aircraft was Suntan 02. Because this location was in well-defended enemy territory, no formal search and rescue efforts were initiated. Electronic search was unsuccessful. Capt Mateja and Capt Jones are carried in the status of Dead Body Not Recovered.

BACKGROUND/COMMENTS: JCRC files indicate no aircraft losses in the area of Pha Le Village (XJ 8213) in 1971. The only incident which occurred within five kilometers of the village was REFNO 1828. While there are a number of correlated reports which suggest that Capt Mateja's aircraft eventually crashed in the Do Son region (XH 8691), it is conceivable that the source may be relaying a hearsay account of this incident. This would explain the discrepancies of date, year and time of his alleged observation. For this reason, only a potential correlation can be made.

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 ON: 6 APR 1993

R. B. Harvey
 OE B. HARVEY
 TC, USA
 Commander

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 JCRC A&S FILES
 OASD/ISA, PW-MIA AFFAIRS
 JCRC REFNO FILE: 1828

DIA/VO-PW
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