

Gia Lai
HCMC

3. Information: Source became affiliated with a "remains recovery group" composed of former ARVN officers in early 1984. Despite his lack of a military background, Source was allowed to join the group because his brother, Nguyen Nho Phong, of 322/16 Nguyen Dinh Chieu, Q. 3, HCMC, was an active member. Source helped to gather funds for the group, and to receive remains that were recovered. Between January and July 1984, this group recovered the remains of eight Americans from Sa Thay district of Gia Lai-Cong Tum Province. (NOTE: Sa Thay District Seat appears to be the village formerly known as Polei Kleng, located in the vicinity of ZA 027936). Source himself has seen all eight remains. Although he was not present during the actual recovery of any of the remains, he asserted that all eight were recovered in situ; none of them were obtained by purchase. Nevertheless, he was unable to provide the specific circumstances surrounding the recovery of any of these eight remains.

Early in 1986, Source's group turned three remains over to the SRV Ministry of Interior. These three were part of a total of sixteen remains, accumulated by various remains recovery groups, turned over at the same time. This transaction took place at the home of one Bui Quang Nhuan, an "adopted younger brother" (em nuoi) of Source. Nhuan resides at 60/1 Le Thi Rieng, Q. 1, HCMC. Source's group received a receipt from the MOI containing the names and dog tag information associated with these remains. He claims to have given a copy of this receipt to a female interviewer on 1 April 1987 at the Klong Yai Refugee Shelter. (JCRC has not yet received any such document to date but is taking action to obtain same.) Source was unable to remember any of the dog tag information on the receipt.

Four of the above mentioned eight remains are still in Vietnam. They are being kept by Mrs. Nguyen Thi Thu Cuc of 351/30 Cu Xa Le Dai Hanh, Ph. 10, Q. 10, HCMC, who has one set of remains, and a Mr. Vuong My, aka "Hoa," of 120 Lau "E," Chung Cu Ngo Gia Tu, Q. 10, HCMC, who has the other three sets. Rubbings of the four dog tags associated with these remains were also given to the female interviewer.

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The last of the eight remains was given to Source by Phong in February 1987. These nearly complete remains were carried out by Source and a companion, Nguyen Van Cung (Source of a forthcoming JCRC report by CW2 McKay), and also given to the female interviewer. These remains were accompanied by a metal dog tag, that of:

✓
ZIBURA
MICHAEL JR.
US 51 982 729
A NEG
ROMAN CATHOLIC

Source gave the female interviewer the dog tag, but kept a piece of paper with the above dog tag information.

None of the people who actually participated in the recovery of these eight remains has left Vietnam. Some of them (NFI) have been imprisoned, according to Source.

4. Comments: The names brought out by Source may be among those included in Reference B. Appropriate action is being taken to obtain these items and remains handed over to the female who earlier interviewed Source. Meanwhile, a photocopy of a data collection form (attached) was obtained from the UNHCR listing the materials which Source claims to have handed over. Source was eager to present his remains-related information, and appeared unusually well-informed about the addresses of certain participants. Nevertheless, his information about the actual recovery of these remains was less than precise.

The comments appended to Reference A (paragraphs 8 and 9) are pertinent here as well. Source's personal background may be found in paragraph 7 of Reference A.