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JOINT CASUALTY RESOLUTION CENTER
LIAISON OFFICE
AMERICAN EMBASSY
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96346

Dong Nai

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FROM: JCRC-LNB
TO: Commander, JCRC

REF: RPT #I86-006
11 April 1986

SUBJ: Discovery of U.S. Remains in Dong Nai (P) SRV (U)

REF: JCRC MSG Rpt I86-005

Source:

a. Name: Nguyen Duy Trung
b. DOB: 19 June 1955
c. POB: Hoa An, Bien Hoa
d. Former position: Airman, Second Class, VNAF SVC #75/608377. After April 1975, electrical repair on private boat when not in re-education camp. (See para 1, ref A)
e. Present location: Barracks 10/Site 1/Palau Galang Refugee Camp, Indonesia
f. Identification data: PG211035
g. DOI: Aug 85
h. Map used: Vietnam 1:100,000, Series L607, Sheet 6431
i. Date of interview: 18 March 1986
j. Name of interviewer: David W. Atherton, MSG, USA
k. Other: Source's wife's uncle, Ngo Dinh Chuong, resides at 1335 Shoreview Ct, San Jose, CA 95122, USA. Source's school, military and post-April 75 chronology are detailed in para 1, ref A above. Source resided with his sister, Nguyen Thi Ngoc Ty, at 120/45/1 Ward Tan Tien, Bien Hoa until his departure from Vietnam on 19 Oct 85.

Summary:

Source, a 30 year old former VNAF Airman 2nd Class, provided minimal information concerning the discovery of remains, a flight suit and dog tags of a person alleged to have been a U.S. serviceman who was buried in the Ma Da New Economic Zone near Tri An, vic (YT 1926), Bien Hoa (P).

Information:

Source related the following information as fact. In August 1985, Source was approached by members of a family, seeking assistance in escaping from Vietnam, and who were friends of his sister (name and address in para k above). They offered

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to pay for this assistance by bartering the remains, a flight suit with unit patch still attached and associated dog tags, of an individual alleged to be a U.S. serviceman killed in Vietnam. Source was told that the family had unearthed the remains while plowing fields in the Ma Da New Economic Zone which is located in the general vicinity of the hydro-electric power plant now under construction near Tri An (YT 1926), Dong Nai (P). Source did not assist the family nor was he able to remember the name of the family or the persons who talked to him. He did not see the remains or the uniform. He saw the dog tag, but could remember no information contained on it. The remains are allegedly retained by the family, who can be contacted via Source's sister at the address in para k above. Source knew no further details concerning this matter.

Source escaped Vietnam in a 12 meter long boat with 128 persons aboard. Cost was 3 to 3½ taels of gold per person depending on whether they went through a middle man. The extra ½ tael of gold was the middleman's profit. As Source worked as both pilot and mechanic, he was not required to pay for his passage. The boat leader/captain, Huyen Duy Thuong, was a former O-3 in the Vietnamese Navy and is presently at Palau Galang Refugee Camp, Indonesia. The escape was organized by Truong Tan Sung who lived in Tra Vinh (NFI) but whom Source met for the first time about April 1985 in the Phung Hung Hotel in HCMC. Sung did not attempt escape on this boat as it was a money-making venture. Source opined that when Sung attempts escape, he will outfit a special boat, and that he will take only his close relatives instead of going on an over-crowded boat such as that on which Source escaped. Source stated that he had no relatives or previous acquaintances on the boat. Prisoner of war information was not discussed with him by any of the persons on the boat nor did he discuss the PW information which he knew with anyone.

Sung had three boats registered with the SRV which were legally engaged in trading ventures. He covered the loss of Source's boat by requesting official permission to "fix" Source's boat, which in fact required no fixing. He then purchased from SRV officials a boat of the same type and size with a similar engine which had been captured and confiscated by the SRV during an escape attempt. This purchase was apparently an "illegal" purchase, but one which was accomplished without difficulty and with Sung obtaining an unregistered boat. The engine number of the boat intended for use in the escape was then transferred

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to the engine in the new boat by one of the small industries engaged in providing this service. This boat was then fixed, reported to the SRV, and replaced the boat used in the escape. The owner is registered as having three boats and in fact has only three as one has sailed off.

Comment: Source was extremely open during the interviews conducted over a two day period. He answered questions readily and his answers were consistent when questions were rephrased. He was emphatic that there was no real difficulty in either purchasing a boat which had been used in previous escape attempts or getting the numbers changed from one engine to another. The manner by which their boat was prepared for escape was explained by Source to be routine. Although Source did not clearly say that this was being done with SRV connivance, it appears that this must be the case as the persons selling the boats captured by the SRV Navy are SRV officials.

Paul D. Mather

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