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DETAILED CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO LOSS OF CASE: 1820

- ON 7 APRIL 1972, AT ABOUT 1030 HOURS, FIRST LIEUTENANT BRUCE C. WALKER AND FIRST LIEUTENANT LAWRENCE F. POTTS WERE CREW MEMBERS ABOARD AN OV-10 OBSERVATION AIRCRAFT, SERIAL NUMBER 68-3820, CALL SIGN COVEY 282. THEIR MISSION WAS TO DIRECT NAVAL GUNFIRE ON THE C-1 COMBAT BASE, WHICH WAS LOCATED IN THE VICINITY OF GRID COORDINATES YD 218679, TWO KILOMETERS SOUTH OF HA THANH VILLAGE, BEN HAI DISTRICT, QUANG TRI PROVINCE. SHORTLY AFTER 1100 HOURS THE AIRCRAFT WAS APPARENTLY HIT BY A SURFACE TO AIR MISSILE. A MAYDAY CALL WAS HEARD THREE TIMES ON THE NAVAL GUNFIRE COMMUNICATIONS NET. A SHORT TIME AFTER THE MAYDAY CALL LIEUTENANT WALKER ESTABLISHED RADIO CONTACT WITH A FORWARD AIR CONTROLLER IN THE AREA AND REPORTED THAT HE WAS ON THE GROUND. THE FORWARD AIR CONTROLLER DETERMINED LIEUTENANT WALKER'S POSITION TO BE IN THE VICINITY OF GRID COORDINATES YD 192655. THE EJECTION SEQUENCE IN THE OV-10 AIRCRAFT IS SUCH THAT FOR LIEUTENANT WALKER TO HAVE EJECTED, LIEUTENANT POTTS MUST HAVE EJECTED FIRST. ALTHOUGH NO VOICE CONTACT WAS EVER ESTABLISHED WITH LIEUTENANT POTTS, AN ELECTRONIC BEACON SIGNAL WAS HEARD COMING FROM THE VICINITY OF GRID COORDINATES YD 195657. THIS IS BELIEVED TO BE THE LAST KNOWN LOCATION OF LIEUTENANT POTTS'. THIS ELECTRONIC BEACON SIGNAL CEASED TRANSMISSION LATER THAT DAY AND NO FURTHER CONTACT WAS MADE WITH LIEUTENANT POTTS.

- LATER, SEARCH AND RESCUE FORCES ENTERED THE AREA AND SIGHTED TWO PARACHUTES. AN ATTEMPT BY TWO A-1 AIRCRAFT AND TWO HH-53 (JOLLY GREEN GIANT) HELICOPTERS TO RESCUE LIEUTENANTS POTTS AND WALKER WAS TURNED BACK BY NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES. LATER ON 7

APRIL, ONE OF THE HH-53 HELICOPTERS WAS SHOT DOWN BY A SURFACE TO AIR MISSILE. THERE ARE NO UNACCOUNTED FOR INDIVIDUALS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS HELICOPTER LOSS. DUE TO A HEAVY CONCENTRATION OF NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES FURTHER HELICOPTER RESCUE ATTEMPTS WERE NOT POSSIBLE, HOWEVER, THREE O-1 AND TWO OV-10 AIRCRAFT MAINTAINED CONSTANT RADIO CONTACT WITH LIEUTENANT WALKER.

- ON 15 APRIL A SURVIVAL KIT WAS DROPPED TO LIEUTENANT WALKER ALONG WITH INSTRUCTIONS FOR MOVEMENT TO AN AREA FOR A RESCUE ATTEMPT. THE PLAN WAS TO HAVE LIEUTENANT WALKER MOVE FROM HIS ORIGINAL POSITION NORTHEAST TO A POINT SHORT OF A RAILROAD TRACK JUST WEST OF ROUTE ONE. FROM THE 16TH TO THE 18TH OF APRIL LIEUTENANT WALKER MAINTAINED RADIO CONTACT WITH THE RESCUE AIRCRAFT AND SAID THAT HE WAS WELL AND HEALTHY. LIEUTENANT WALKER WAS INSTRUCTED NOT TO CROSS THE RAILROAD AND ROUTE ONE UNTIL THE EVENING OF 18 APRIL. HOWEVER; LIEUTENANT WALKER DID CROSS THE ROAD AND RAILROAD ON THE NIGHT OF 17 APRIL AND MOVED ABOUT FIVE KILOMETERS MORE THAN HAD BEEN EXPECTED. AT 0705 HOURS ON 18 APRIL LIEUTENANT WALKER REPORTED THAT HE HAD ENCOUNTERED NORTH VIETNAMESE SOLDIERS 150 METERS SOUTHWEST OF HIS POSITION, IN THE VICINITY OF GRID COORDINATES YD 272697. THE FORWARD AIR CONTROLLER USED MARKING ROCKETS TO PUT A SMOKE SCREEN BETWEEN LIEUTENANT WALKER AND THE NORTH VIETNAMESE SOLDIERS. ADDITIONAL AIRCRAFT HAD BEEN REQUESTED TO DEFEND LIEUTENANT WALKER'S POSITION BUT HAD YET TO ARRIVE IN THE AREA.

- AT 0718 HOURS LIEUTENANT WALKER REPORTED THAT HE WAS RECEIVING FIRE FROM NEARBY NORTH VIETNAMESE SOLDIERS. THE FORWARD AIR CONTROLLER MADE REPEATED LOW LEVEL PASSES OVER LIEUTENANT

WALKER'S POSITION AND DIRECTED AIR STRIKES AROUND LIEUTENANT WALKER. HE SAW A SMALL CONCENTRATION OF NORTH VIETNAMESE SOLDIERS IN THE AREA OF LIEUTENANT WALKER'S LAST KNOWN LOCATION AT GRID COORDINATES YD 272697, LAM XUAN VILLAGE, BEN HAI DISTRICT, QUANG TRI PROVINCE.

- LIEUTENANT WALKER'S 0718 RADIO TRANSMISSION ON 18 APRIL 1972, WAS THE LAST CONTACT WITH HIM. TWO AMERICAN OFFICERS WHO MAINTAINED A COMMUNICATIONS WATCH IN THE AREA OF LIEUTENANT WALKER'S LAST RADIO CONTACT HEARD VIETNAMESE SOLDIERS TALKING ON THE GUARD NET SHORTLY AFTER LIEUTENANT WALKER'S LAST TRANSMISSION. ALTHOUGH CONTINUOUS RADIO SEARCH WAS CONDUCTED UNTIL 1000 HRS ON 19 APRIL 1972, THERE WAS NO FURTHER VOICE OR BEEPER CONTACT WITH LIEUTENANT WALKER OR LIEUTENANT POTTS.

SUBSEQUENT INFORMATION FOR CASE 1820:

- A SOURCE REPORTED THAT IN APRIL OF 1972 HE SPOKE WITH A BLACK AMERICAN PILOT WITH AN INJURED LEG AT THE K-4 DETENTION CAMP AT VINH LINH. THE PILOT DIED SHORTLY THEREAFTER AND WAS BURIED NEARBY.

- IN APRIL 1972, A NORTH VIETNAMESE ARMY CAPTIVE REPORTED THAT HE TALKED TO ONE OF THREE GUARDS IN AN MY VILLAGE, BEN HAI DISTRICT, QUANG TRI PROVINCE, IN THE VICINITY OF GRID COORDINATES YD 257748, CONCERNING THE CAUCASIAN U.S. POW THEY WERE TRANSPORTING TO NORTH VIETNAM. THE SOURCE WAS TOLD THAT THE U.S. POW WAS ONE OF TWO MEN WHO HAD PARACHUTED FROM AN OV10 AFTER IT WAS HIT BY A HEAT-SEEKING MISSILE ON THE AFTERNOON OF 1 APRIL

1972. THE SOURCE STATED THAT THE OTHER PERSON, A NEGRO, HAD BEEN SHOT TO DEATH BECAUSE HE HAD TRIED TO ESCAPE. THE SOURCE DID NOT KNOW THE DESIGNATION OF THE CAPTURING UNIT OF THE LOCATION WHERE THE U.S. POW WAS CAPTURED.

- A FORMER ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM SOLDIER SAID THAT IN MAY OF 1972 AT VINH LINH, HE WITNESSED THE DEATH OF A BLACK AMERICAN WITH A HEAD AND LEG INJURY. THE BLACK AMERICAN WAS BURIED IN AN UNMARKED GRAVE 300 METERS EAST OF THE CAMP. THE AMERICAN MATCHED THE DESCRIPTION OF LIEUTENANT POTTS (SEE ATTACHED SKETCH).

- A FORMER ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM SOLDIER REPORTED THAT IN MAY OF 1972 HE HELPED CARRY A WOUNDED BLACK AMERICAN PILOT WHO WAS SHOT DOWN IN THE VICINITY OF YD 3269. THE AMERICAN DIED WHILE THEY WERE AT C-L STATION B-4 OR B-5. THE CAMP WAS A THREE DAYS WALK SOUTH OF NGHE AN.

- A FORMER ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM SOLDIER REPORTED THAT ON 5 JUNE 1972 HE OBSERVED THREE AMERICANS AT THE VINH LINH, QUANG BINH, MAI SON/SEN TRUNG INDOCTRINATION CENTER. HE HEARD THAT A BLACK AMERICAN CAPTAIN WITH A BROKEN LEG WAS REMOVED FROM THE INDOCTRINATION CENTER PRIOR TO HIS OWN ARRIVAL. THE BLACK AMERICAN WAS TAKEN TO A HOSPITAL NORTH OF THE CAMP IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FURTHER TREATMENT. HE ALSO HEARD THAT THE BLACK AMERICAN HAD DIED ENROUTE AND WAS BURIED AT AN UNKNOWN LOCATION.

- A FORMER ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM SOLDIER SAID THAT IN JUNE OF 1972 AT THE V-5 (OR K-5) CAMP IN VINH LINH HE SAW A BLACK AMERICAN PRISONER WITH A FRACTURED LEFT FEMUR. THE AMERICAN WAS TAKEN TO A HOSPITAL IN QUANG BINH PROVINCE BUT LATER

RETURNED. HE SUBSEQUENTLY DIED AND WAS BURIED IN A WOODEN COFFIN NEAR A STREAM LEADING TO THE GIAY GIAY RIVER IN THE VICINITY OF GRID COORDINATES XE 523829.

- WHILE BEING HELD AT THE K-5 DETENTION CAMP (XE 505818) A FORMER ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM SOLDIER HEARD THAT WHEN THE K-5 CAMP WAS PREVIOUSLY LOCATED AT XE 523830, A BLACK AMERICAN DIED THERE AND WAS BURIED NEAR THE GIAY GIAY RIVER.

- IN EARLY AUGUST OF 1972 A FORMER ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM SOLDIER SAW A BLACK AMERICAN POW BEING CARRIED INTO THE T-3 STATION ON THE BORDER OF NGHE TINH AND QUANG BINH PROVINCES. THE AMERICAN DIED THE NEXT DAY AND WAS BURIED 300 METERS FROM THE STATION.

AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH:

- WHAT UNIT(S) WAS ENGAGED IN COMBAT IN THIS AREA DURING THE PERIOD FROM 7 APRIL TO 18 APRIL 1972? FORMER MEMBERS OF THIS UNIT SHOULD BE INTERVIEWED REGARDING THE LOSS OF LIEUTENANTS WALKER AND POTTS. THIS MAY LEAD TO WITNESSES WHO HAVE INFORMATION CONCERNING THIS CASE.

- INHABITANTS OF LAM XUAN VILLAGE SHOULD BE QUERIED REGARDING LIEUTENANT WALKER. REALIZING THAT AT THE TIME OF LIEUTENANT WALKER'S LOSS THERE WAS HEAVY FIGHTING, IT IS STILL POSSIBLE THAT SINCE THE TIME OF LOSS LOCAL INHABITANTS MAY HAVE FOUND EVIDENCE (I.E. GRAVE SITE, DOG TAGS, REMAINS) THAT MAY SHED LIGHT ON THE FATE OF LIEUTENANT WALKER.

- NUMEROUS REPORTS INDICATE THAT LIEUTENANT POTTS MAY HAVE BEEN

CAPTURED ALIVE AND HELD IN SEVERAL CAMPS IN QUANG BINH PROVINCE FROM APRIL THROUGH AUGUST 1972. SUGGEST THAT FORMER CADRE FROM THESE CAMPS BE INTERVIEWED. THIS MAY LEAD TO WITNESSES WHO HAVE INFORMATION CONCERNING THE FATE OF LIEUTENANT POTTS. HE MAY HAVE BEEN HELD IN ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING CAMPS: DONG HOI PRISON CAMP, C-L STATION B-4 OR B-5, MAI SON/SEN TRUNG INDOCTRINATION CENTER, V-5, K-5, AND T-3 STATION.

- ATTEMPTS SHOULD BE MADE TO LOCATE THE GRAVE SITE OF LIEUTENANT POTTS. FORMER MEMBERS OF THE K-5 DETENTION CAMP SHOULD BE INTERVIEWED CONCERNING THE REPORTED GRAVE SITE OF A BLACK AMERICAN IN THE VICINITY OF GRID COORDINATES XE 523830 NEAR THE GIAY GIAY RIVER APPROXIMATELY SIX KILOMETERS NORTH BY NORTH WEST OF RON, QUANG TRACH DISTRICT, QUANG BINH PROVINCE.

- LOCATE AND INTERVIEW ANY FORMER STAFF MEMBERS OF HOSPITALS IN QUANG BINH PROVINCE THAT MAY HAVE TREATED A BLACK AMERICAN WITH A FRACTURED FEMUR IN THE APRIL THROUGH JUNE 1972 TIME PERIOD.

- DETERMINE WHAT UNIT(S) WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TRANSPORTATION OF AMERICAN PRISONERS THROUGH THE AN MY VILLAGE, BEN HAI DISTRICT AREA OF QUANG BINH PROVINCE DURING THE SPRING OF 1972. THEY MAY BE ABLE TO SHED LIGHT ON THE FATE OF LIEUTENANT WALKER.