



Song Be

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FROM: JCRC-LNB  
TO: Commander, JCRC

RPT #M87-076  
08 January 1988

SUBJ: Unsuccessful Attempt to Recover Remains of Two U.S.  
Advisors Allegedly Killed by the Viet Cong

1. Source/administrative data:
  - a. Name: Truong Ngoc Hanh (M)
  - b. DPOB: 13 November 1939; Dinh Thanh (V), Tri Tam (D), Binh Duong (P)
  - c. Occupation:
    - Pre -1975: Policeman (National Police), 1964-75
    - Post-1975: "Re-education" camp inmate, 1975-81;Itinerant vendor and tailor, 1981-87
  - d. Final address/POC in Vietnam: 42/12 Nguyen Hong St., Ph. 1, Q. Go Vap, HCMC
  - e. Date of arrival in 1st asylum: 25 September 1987
  - f. Present location: 6/27, Zone AB, Sungei Besi Holding Centre, Malaysia
  - g. Identification data: MB 816010, ID # 141405
  - h. Education: 11/12
  - i. Languages: Vietnamese (native); English, French (limited)
  - j. Religion: Buddhist
  - k. Status: Refugee
  - l. Date of information: 1985
  - m. Interview data: Source was interviewed at Sungei Besi Holding Centre, Malaysia on 4 December 1987 by James M. Coyle, GS-12, DOD.
  - n. Maps used: Scale: 1:100,000; Series: L607; Sheet: 6321

2. Summary: A former schoolmate of Source, who later became a Viet Cong platoon leader, told Source in 1985 that after a battle near the Michelin Plantation in Binh Duong Province in 1967 he had personally killed two captured American advisors. Source went to look for the remains, but was unable to find them. End Summary.

3. Information: In 1985 Source returned to his home town in Tri Tam (D) of Song Be (P). There he met a former schoolmate named "Dinh," (LNU) who is now the Husbandry Group Leader (Doi Truong Doi Chan Nuoi) in Group 6 of Lang Dinh Tho (V) which was formerly Lang 14 of the Michelin Rubber Plantation in Dau Tieng (Vic XT 5554). In the course of conversation Dinh boasted to Source that he had once been a platoon leader of local guerrillas. Dinh

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claimed that in 1967 his unit had fought a five-day-long battle with the ARVN 5th Infantry Division at Camp Suoi Dua, about 4 KM from Tri Tam District town (i.e. Dau Tieng). (Notes Sheet 6231 shows two bridges over the Suoi Dua, one at XT 546483 and one at XT 547492. These bridges are respectively 4.6 and 5.2 KM from the eastern edge of Dau Tieng. The 1971 edition of the sheet shows both bridges as destroyed.)

Dinh told Source that during the battle his platoon captured two American advisors. One was Caucasian, the other black; one a Major and the other a Captain. (Source is not sure which of the men held which rank.) When the two Americans would not cooperate with the Viet Cong by providing information, Dinh beheaded them; first the Black, then the Caucasian. After the battle Dinh had the heads shown in all the villages in the area, in order to strike fear into the local people. He had the bodies carried nine or 10 KM from the place where the men had been killed, then buried at the side of a dirt road in the plantation. (Source does not know what purpose was served by Dinh's burdening his men with the bodies for such a distance before burying them.)

Source claims that it was during his conversation with Dinh that he conceived the idea of recovering the remains of the two Americans. He therefore encouraged Dinh's boasting in order to elicit details of the burial site. He was unable, however, to get more than a general idea of the location. He therefore solicited help from some of the local people (who might once have been guerrillas themselves, and thus might have knowledge of the burial site), telling them that he wanted to recover and sell the remains. The locals, however, were not much more help than Dinh had been, and Source was not able to learn the specific location of the burial. He went to the place that Dinh had mentioned, only to find that the area had recently been graded and replanted with young rubber trees. After that he gave up his search.

Source was unable to provide a description of this location, save to note that the soil was red, the terrain was flat, and the area was planted with rubber trees. Nor was he able to locate this area on a map.

4. Comment: Source came to the attention of interviewer because his name had been written across the top of a deposition made by another potential source presently on Pulau Bidong (not yet interviewed by JCRC). This deposition was provided to interviewer by JVA representatives in Kuala Lumpur. When interviewer was unable to travel to Pulau Bidong he went to Sungei Besi to see if any potential sources of information might have been transferred to the latter camp, and discovered that Source had been so transferred. Source claims to have prepared a written statement of the information reported above for "Records Branch." Interviewer will attempt to obtain a copy of this statement on his next visit to the island.

  
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