



DIA EVALUATION OF U.S. PW/MIA INFORMATION PROVIDED
BY VIETNAMESE REFUGEE [REDACTED]

Vietnamese refugee [REDACTED] provided firsthand information concerning the remains of an American advisor which were buried south of Dak To in southern Vietnam. [REDACTED] reported that in April 1971 he was a member of the [REDACTED] which was part of a larger force trying to break the siege at Firebase 5 in the tri-border area. While his unit was attempting to fight their way into the firebase, [REDACTED] saw the corpse of an American advisor. Because the American remains were located with the remains of 30-40 Vietnamese members of the 1st Battalion, 42nd Regiment, 23rd Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) Division, [REDACTED] assumed the deceased American was an advisor to the unit. The American remains were buried with the Vietnamese remains in a shallow, unmarked common grave about 800 meters (direction unknown) from Firebase 5. The American advisor was described as Caucasian, with a very thin face and wearing a mustache. [REDACTED] believed that the individual was a non-commissioned officer. Although this battle took place near the Cambodian border and in the vicinity of Ben Het, [REDACTED] was unable to locate the precise position of Firebase 5.

Assuming that [REDACTED] recollection of the date of the incident is correct there was only one loss in 1971 within a 55 kilometer radius of the area described, which involved an unaccounted for U.S. serviceman, and whose incident of loss bears any similarity to the information provided. On 1 March 1971, NAME was attached to an ARVN unit about 22 kilometers from the location specified by [REDACTED] when the unit came under heavy enemy attack. The three other Americans serving with this unit evaded capture. They reported last seeing NAME inside the ARVN's defensive perimeter. While the surviving Americans were escaping, they called in air strikes on their former position.

The information provided by [REDACTED] does not give sufficient descriptive or background information on the American to make a positive correlation with NAME incident of loss. Further, as [REDACTED] was not altogether certain of the exact location of the firefight, the possibility that it may have taken place across the border in Cambodia or Laos cannot be discounted. Additional U.S. losses were sustained in Laos in 1970 and 1971 in the general area of the fighting described by [REDACTED]. Further correlation to any known incidents is not possible, however, due to the lack of substantive information provided by [REDACTED].

A copy of this report and evaluation will be maintained in the DIA data base for future reference.