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HEADQUARTERS

STATES MILITARY ASSISTANCE COMMAND, VIETNAM

APO SAN FRANCISCO 96222

STUDIES AND OBSERVATIONS GROUP



COMMAND HISTORY 1969

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15. (~~TSLD~~) PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDIES GROUP. (Appendix XI) The mission of the MACSOG Psychological Studies Group is to conduct black psychological operations against North Vietnam (NVN). Black psychological operations directed against NVN are identified by the code word "HUMIDOR (Ø)". The primary target of HUMIDOR (Ø) operations is the civilian population of NVN. These operations are conducted to: establish attitudes with NVN contrary to present policies of the Lao Dong Party (LDP), create a feeling of distrust for the leadership of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV), promote war-weariness and engender an attitude which indicates that continuation of the war is contrary to DRV national welfare.

16. (~~TSLD~~) RADIO STUDIES GROUP (Appendix XII)

- a. Operates Voice of Freedom (VOF).
- b. The Voice of Freedom (VOF) radio is a "gray" radio operation in the sense that the source of origin is not specifically identified. However, unwavering support for GVN/USG policies leaves little doubt in the minds of the audience that VOF is sponsored and supported by the RVN/US.

17. (~~TSLD~~) RECOVERY STUDIES GROUP (Appendix XIII)

- a. The Joint Personnel Recovery Center (JPRC) mission is to provide a capability within USMACV for personnel recovery operations. In accomplishment of this mission JPRC was involved in 29 attempted recovery operations during 1969. These operations included conventional and unconventional warfare raids against Prisoner-of-War camps, as well as those operations mounted subsequent to termination of search and rescue (SAR) efforts.
- b. In addition JPRC engaged in pertinent Evasion and Escape Program activities to include: testing, modifying and prepositioning of survival kits capable of being air-dropped; rating selected Areas for Evasion (SAFE Areas); and periodic briefings for Army, Air Force and Navy aircrews on the mission and capabilities of JPRC.
- c. JPRC continued the reward program for return of missing/captured US personnel or information concerning them, and supported this program with Psychological Operations as appropriate.

18. (~~TSLD~~) TRAINING STUDIES GROUP (Appendix XIV) Throughout 1969 the Training Studies Group continued to administer MACSOG training programs to support TIMBERWORK (Ø), PRAIRIE FIRE and SALEM HOUSE requirements.

19. (~~TSLD~~) AIR STUDIES GROUP. (Appendix XV). On 28 October 1967, a Memorandum of Agreement was signed by Chief, MACSOG, and the Chief of Staff, 7th Air Force which created the position of Deputy Commander for Special Air Operations (DSCO). Three Air Force special air operations

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APPENDIX XIII

RECOVERY STUDIES DIVISION

1. GENERAL.

- a. In the summer of 1964, the Prisoner and Detainee Committee of the U.S. Embassy in Saigon recommended to the then Ambassador Maxwell Taylor, that an organization be formed to coordinate personnel recovery operations. As a result, COMUSMACV appointed his J-2 to be head of what was then known as the Personnel Recovery Center. During the next 18 months several studies concerning the organization and functions of the center were conducted but nothing concrete was accomplished toward the formal establishment of the center. In December 1965, at an Escape and Evasion Planning Conference at CINCPAC, the subject of formally organizing a personnel recovery center was again brought under discussion. As a result of the conference, in April 1966, CINCPAC proposed the formation of a center under COMUSMACV. In May 1966, an Air Force Colonel was assigned to MACV where, working with the J-5, he finalized the structure and functions of MACV SOG-80. On 17 September 1966, MACSOG-80 was activated under the cover designation of the Joint Personnel Recovery Center (JPRC).
- b. The Joint Personnel Recovery Center continued throughout 1969 to function as the focal point for all information and activities related to missing and captured personnel in Southeast Asia. An automated files system that will enable rapid retrieval of information is expected to be full operational by the end of February 1970. During 1969, civilian response has increased due to the greater emphasis placed on the JPRC Rewards and Briefing Programs. It is anticipated that reaction time for recovery operations will greatly decrease in 1970 and a greater number of successful PW recovery operations will be planned and executed.

2. MISSION.

- a. The mission of the JPRC is to establish a capability within MACV for the recovery of Free World Forces personnel in missing or detained status throughout Southeast Asia subsequent to the termination of search and rescue efforts (SAR). In carrying out this mission the JPRC acts as the staff agency and joint coordinating authority within MACV for post-SAR personnel recovery operations. As such, it develops requirements for collection of intelligence and other data concerning detained and missing personnel, coordinates and maintains liaison with US and Allied entities to insure maximum utilization of available resources and to achieve minimum reaction time for launch of rescue/recovery operations; maintains extensive files on missing and detained personnel, monitors and coordinates operations with participating agencies during planning and execution; assists in debriefing of recov-

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ered personnel; provides E&E briefing; monitors training and recommends employment of MACSOG BRIGHT LIGHT assets.

3. ORGANIZATION. The JPRC is organized into three branches, (Administrative, Intelligence, and Operations) with an authorized strength of ten personnel and an end-of-year assigned strength of nine personnel. The 21 October 1969 JTD did not change the organization of the JPRC from the 1968 JTD. See TAB A.

4. COVER. The relationship between the Joint Personnel Recovery Center and the Studies and Observations Group is classified Secret. The reason for the classification is the fact that the JPRC as an action organization is directly subordinate to a special staff section of USMACV. Within MACSOG, the JPRC is known as the Recovery Studies Division or MACSOG-80 and as such utilized the basic MACSOG cover for status outside of MACSOG, the JPRC is thought to be a separate staff section under MACV responsible for the recovery of missing or detained personnel.

5. AUTOMATED FILES. The JPRC is in the process of coding for automatic data processing (ADP), all files dealing with missing and captured personnel in Southeast Asia. Primary file categories of the automated system are PW/MIA biographical data, PW and PW camp sighting data, and a temporary general file containing information reports not correlated to the other two categories. Eventually it should be possible to delete the general file as it will be within the capabilities of the system to correlate all information reports directly to biographic and/or sighting data. This system will greatly increase the intelligence value of the numerous reports by its capability to correlate, thus reducing operational planning and recovery force reaction time. More definitive intelligence on PW camp locations should also be available.

6. PRISONER OF WAR RECOVERY OPERATIONS.

- a. During 1969, the JPRC assisted in the planning phase of 11 PW recovery operations. (See TAB B) Five of the operations were cancelled due to lack of detailed intelligence. Of the six operations conducted, five proved negative results and one resulted in the recovery of five ARVN PWs. JPRC recovery operations are those operations in which the JPRC either initiated or was directly involved in planning and coordinating the operations. Throughout 1969, emphasis was placed on subordinate commands to initiate immediate PW recovery operations when information of perishable nature was involved. The only requirement placed on subordinate commands was that the JPRC be kept informed of significant developments and that a complete after-action report be forwarded to the JPRC upon completion of the operations.
- b. In 1969, subordinate U.S. and ARVN commands conducted 18 initiatio

and spontaneous PW recovery operations based on perishable information. (See TAB C) Ten of the operations were conducted with negative results. Eight of the operations were successful in freeing 112 ARVN/RVN PWs and one critically wounded U.S. PW who later died.

c. In-country PW recovery operations are the responsibility of the respective Corps Tactical Zone commander. MACSOG Exploitation Companies are available for use when conventional forces are not available.

d. Out-of-Country Recovery Operations:

(1) Cambodia: Recovery operations into Cambodia require coordination with the JCS, American Embassy Saigon, CINCPAC, and MACV. MACSOG Bright Light PW recovery teams are utilized within the MACSOG AO. No recovery attempts are conducted outside the MACSOG AO without direct approval from higher headquarters. Operation Santa Claus (TAB B) was the only recovery operation run in Cambodia in 1969.

(2) Laos: Recovery operations into Laos require coordination with American Embassy Vientiane, CINCPAC and MACSOG. Recovery forces utilized are MACSOG Bright Light teams, within the MACSOG AO, and CAS teams outside the MACSOG AO.

(3) North Vietnam: No recovery operations have been attempted or anticipated into NVN since the bombing halt of 1968.

PW RECOVERY OPERATIONS - PROBLEM AREAS/LESSONS LEARNED.

a. Problems continued in several areas including rapid receipt, reaction to, and analysis of PW information reports and determination of source validity. Receipt of PW information became somewhat more timely, following the increased emphasis placed on the JPRC briefing program. Periodic JPRC briefings are conducted throughout Southeast Asia to insure that all commands are cognizant of the mission, organization, function, and requirements of the JPRC. Intelligence collectors and all major commands have been made aware of the JPRC SICR (D-7CX-20000) which outlines specific Essential Elements of Information required by the Center. Furthermore, all major commands have been required to furnish, and have furnished, the JPRC with appointed JPRC contact officers down to division level (or its equivalent). The JPRC contact officer is the man responsible for forwarding to the JPRC any and all PW information that originates at his echelon. In August 69, COMUSMACV sent a re-emphasis message to all components reiterating the importance of the JPRC, and the need for keeping the JPRC informed of all PW information and matters.

- b. Reaction time, as far as planning and conducting a PW recovery operation, continues to present a problem. Planning can begin with the evaluation of a single PW information report or with the comparison of two or more recent PW information reports. The problem encountered is that of obtaining current up-to-date information on the camp structure, guard force, PW location within the camp, and the exact camp location. The exact location of the PW camp is mandatory due to the dense terrain in much of Southeast Asia. From debriefings of returnees and escapees, it has been determined that recovery forces have missed locating PW camps by as little as 100 meters. Precise locations of enemy PW camps are difficult to obtain as the enemy constantly moves his camps to prevent compromise.
- c. Source validity presents an ever increasing problem to the JPRC. In recent months, numerous sources have offered information on U.S. PWs. However, very little of the information gained proved useful in the planning of PW recovery operations. Some of the information provided was valid, but was as old as three to five years. Much of the information furnished by sources was complete fabrication in hopes of obtaining a monetary reward from the rewards program.
- d. In 1969, the primary source of recent and accurate information on U.S. PWs came from the debriefing of personnel released by the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong. A total of 13 U.S. PWs were released during 1969; 3 from North Vietnam and 10 from the Viet Cong forces. From the debriefings of the returned individuals, the JPRC was able to determine treatment of U.S. PWs as compared to ARVN PWs; basic enemy policy toward U.S. PWs; and also update the files concerning location and physical status of missing and detained personnel.

8. PW CAMPS - LAOS. On 14 October 1969, at the Laos PW Camps Conference in Udorn, Thailand, agreement was reached as to new categorization and deletion criteria to be used in conjunction with PW camp listings in Laos. The JPRC accepted the responsibility of providing a periodic printout of Laos PW camps (utilizing 7th AF IDHS), and coordinating with the US Embassy Vientiane, Laos, for deletions and additions to the listing. Prior to the agreement no reasonable criteria existed and the Laos PW camp files increased out of proportion. This greatly hampered the Air Force tactical effort in Laos as no-bomb-lines were established around each reported PW camp facility. Under the new addition/deletion criteria, a close check can be made on each reported camp site, thus greatly reducing the total number of valid PW camps and required no-bomb-lines. The confusion that existed in the past is eliminated under the new system. The JPRC presently utilizes MACSOG assets to ground check reported PW camps within the MACSOG AO in Laos and Cambodia.

CAS team assets are utilized to confirm or deny the existence of PW camps outside of the MACSOG AO in Laos.

9. REWARD PROGRAM. The program for immediate monetary rewards to indigenous civilians who help U.S. captured or missing personnel to return to friendly control, provide information, return equipment or other evidence which reveals status of U.S. personnel, or return remains of U.S. personnel, was continued. A total of \$6,203.00 was paid for returning remains or supplying information leading to the return of 25 deceased U.S. personnel, and \$777.00 was paid for aiding evadees or accompanying recovery forces on PW recovery operations. JPRC briefings, leaflets, and other PSYOPS media continued to be used to apprise the target audience of the reward program. Source response to the program increased during 1969; however, under close investigation little of the total information furnished provided tangible results.

10. RETURN NEGOTIATIONS. During 1969, the JPRC became involved in numerous PW return negotiations which had the purpose of recovering US PWs by ransoming them from the enemy. All negotiations proved negative due to fabrication of information provided by low level contacts. The JPRC will continue attempts to negotiate for the return of U.S. PWs as this method provides a much greater factor of personal safety to any detained personnel.

11. PRISONER OF WAR REPATRIATION PLAN. In September 1969, a JPRC representative attended a meeting at the 12th USAF Hospital at Cam Ranh Bay. The purpose of the meeting was to develop plans, procedures, and logistical requirements for processing large numbers of U.S. PW returnees from North Vietnam. The 12th USAF Hospital is to be utilized as the collection point for the processing of these personnel. Medical and administrative processing, as well as initial debriefings, will be conducted at the hospital prior to movement to CONUS. The JPRC will monitor debriefings to insure the dissemination of information pertaining to the status of PWs who remain in enemy custody, and the updating of PW/MIA dossiers maintained by the JPRC.

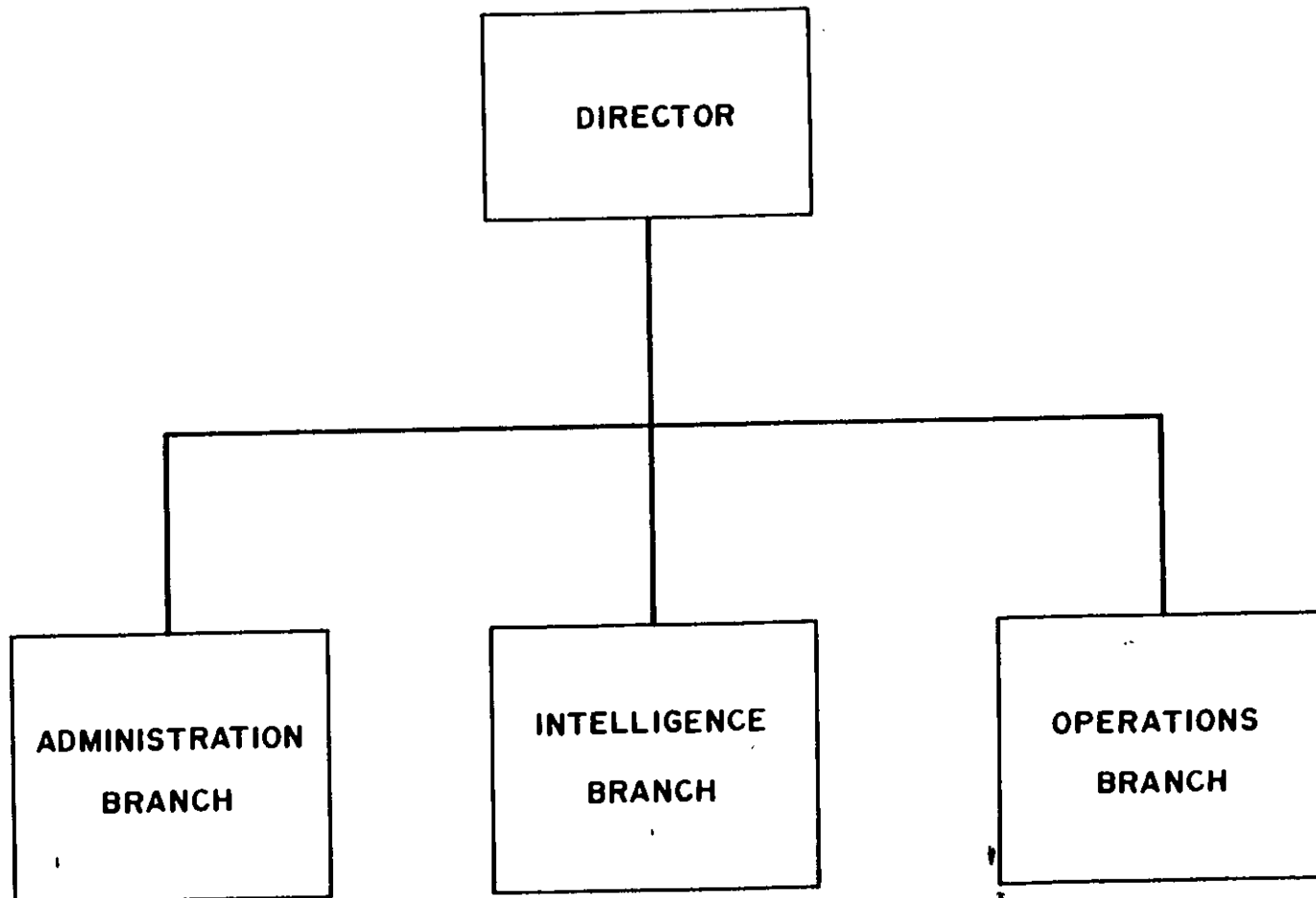
12. ESCAPE AND EVASION PROGRAM.

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- b. Escape and Evasion/Survival Kits (TAB D): The JPRC maintains low and high speed kits at Nakhon Phanom and Da Nang respectively. During 1969, six high speed delivery kits were dropped. Two of the kits were destroyed by napalm due to negative activity and four disappeared from the target area. On 10 December, after coordination with 7th AF Life Support, a revision of the component parts list was agreed upon and published. The new parts list offers complete E&E aids such as food and water, weapon and ammunition, clothing, signal devices, and medical supplies. The JPRC will continue to monitor E&E code letter sightings and determine the feasibility of kit deployment on a case-by-case basis.
- c. Aircrew Briefings: JPRC representatives presented briefings on the JPRC mission, organization, and personnel recovery capabilities to aircrew members and E&E personnel both within and without the Republic of Vietnam. Two demonstrations of the Fulton Recovery System (Skyhook) were made in Thailand; one in South Vietnam, and one in the Philippines.

TAB A

JOINT PERSONNEL RECOVERY CENTER, ORGANIZATION



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TAB B

JPRC INITIATED PW RECOVERY OPERATIONS 1969

<u>OPERATION</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>RESULTS</u>
ELM STREET	4 Jan 69	Operation cancelled due to lack of detailed intelligence.
NUI BA DEN	8 Feb 69	Operation cancelled due to lack of detailed intelligence.
MONROE BAY	17 Apr 69	Operation run with negative results.
TROJAN	13 May 69	Operation run with negative results. Van Putten escaped during period of operation.
SEAWAVE	4 Jul 69	Camp raided; documents captured; negative PWs recovered.
MAGNOLIA CHAIR	10-13 Jul 69	5 ARVN freed, 17 VC captured, 5 VC KIA, 23 VC KBA, 102 sampans destroyed, 39 bunkers destroyed, 4 kilos of documents captured, 1000 grenades and an ammunition factory destroyed, 18 weapons captured, two 82mm mortar rounds destroyed.
IV CORPS	10 Sep 69	Operation run; no camp found.
CHERRY BARK	13 Oct 69	Operation cancelled due to lack of detailed intelligence; MACSOG Exploitation Company had been deployed to IV CTZ FOB.
U-MINH	29 Oct 69	Operation cancelled due to lack of detailed intelligence.
WALNUT HARP	9 Dec 69	Operation cancelled due to lack of detailed intelligence.
SANTA CLAUS	9-11 Dec 69	Operation run by MACSOG RT with negative results. During the operation, SGT Shepard and WO Peterson were released by the VC.

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TAB C

SUBORDINATE US AND ARVN PW RECOVERY OPERATIONS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>RESULTS</u>
2 Mar 69	5th SFGA, PRU	13 VC, KIA, 3 VC captured.
6-8 Mar 69	1st Inf Div	Operation run with negative results.
19 Mar 69	IV Corps, PBR's, LCVP's, PRU	Camp located but abandoned.
23 Mar 69	A/3/60th 9th Inf Div	Camp located; 10 ARVN freed.
3 Apr 69	21st ARVN <u>Div</u>	33 VN civilians and 2 ARVN recovered.
9 Apr 69	9th Inf Div	Operation run with negative results.
8 Apr 69	41st ARVN Ranger Bn.	15 VN PWs recovered.
26 Apr 69	PRU	Operation run; camp found abandoned with cook fires still warm.
5-8 May 69	US Navy, MSF	Operation run with negative results.
23 May 69	III Corps MSF	Operation run with negative results.
27 May 69	IV Corps Elements	Operation run with negative results.
2 Jun 69	PRU	Operation run with negative results
5 Jul 69	ARVN	9 ARVN, 27 civilians recovered.
10 Jul 69	RF, PRU, Recon Co 5th ARVN Regt.	Operation run resulting in one US PW being recovered. The PW later died as a result of injuries inflicted by the Viet Cong.
8-9 Aug 69	199th LIB	Operation run with negative results.
7 Sep 69	US Navy with GVN	16 PWs (ARVN) recovered.
27 Sep 69	5th RAR, 1st ATF	Operation run with negative results.

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<u>POSITION</u>	<u>DATES</u>	<u>INCUMBENT</u>
5. Chief, Logistics	1 Jan 69 - 24 Nov 69 25 Nov 69 - 31 Dec 69	LTC D.F. Friend LTC T.C. Perkins
Chief, Medical Br	1 Jan 69 - 31 Dec 69	LT R.A. Gross
6. Chief, Plans Div	1 Jan 69 - 25 Jun 69 26 Jun 69 - 31 Dec 69	LTC R.M. Johnson LTC H.A. MacDonald
7. Chief, Commo Div	1 Jan 69 - 1 Mar 69 2 Mar 69 - 31 Dec 69	CDR S.C. Montgomery CDR W.T. Hollenbach
8. Chief, Compt Div	1 Jan 69 - 8 Jul 69 9 Jul 69 - 31 Dec 69	LCDR D.J. Brunner LCDR L.H. Klosky
9. Commander, Maritime Studies Group	1 Jan 69 - 30 Sep 69 1 Oct 69 - 31 Dec 69	LCDR C.T. Edson CDR H.W. Bergbauer
Chief, Psyops Gp	1 Jan 69 - 15 Jul 69 16 Jul 69 - 31 Dec 69	Mr. H.F. Robbins Mr. R. Draper
Ground Studies Gp	1 Jan 69 - 30 Jun 69 1 Jul 69 - 31 Dec 69	COL W.F. Johnson COL J.J. Isler
12. Airborne Studies Gp	1 Jan 69 - 6 Sep 69 7 Sep 69 - 31 Dec 69	LTC J.R. Jarvis LTC R.E. Scofield
13. Radio Studies Gp	1 Jan 69 - 14 Jun 69 15 Jun 69 - 31 Dec 69	Mr. M.D. Brown Mr. L.M. Steed
14. Chief, JPRC	1 Jan 69 - 28 Feb 69 1 Mar 69 - 11 Jul 69 12 Jul 69 - Present	LTC R. D. Bradshaw LTC J. G. Firth LTC G. R. Reinker

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TAB D

EVASION AND ESCAPE/SURVIVAL KITS DEPLOYED IN 1969

<u>DATE</u>	<u>CIRCUMSTANCES AND RESULTS</u>
20 Mar 69	Two CTU-1/A survival kits dropped into Laos where a code letter "N" was constructed. The kits remained unopened until 8 Apr 69, at which time they were destroyed by napalm to prevent enemy use.
9 Apr 69	One E&E kit with survival radio was dropped into NVN above the DMZ for use by possible friendly evader. Results proved negative.
13 Nov 69	Two E&E kits dropped into Laos in vicinity of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] constructed in a creek bed. Photo coverage of area revealed that the kits disappeared. Negative results from possible evaders in the area. Suspect enemy recovered and removed kits. (b)(1)
15 Nov 69	One E&E kit dropped in vicinity of Misty 31 crash site and possible code letter in Laos. One week later the kit disappeared. Negative results from possible evader. Suspect enemy recovered and removed kit.

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Recovery Operations

The Joint Personnel Recovery Center (JPRC) was the focal point for action and information concerning enemy-held and missing FWMAF personnel. The mission of the center was to return all individuals who had been captured to friendly control. The JPRC was also the agency charged with the responsibility for paying rewards to indigenous personnel who returned or assisted in the return of US personnel to friendly control. ⁹³

1969 Operations. On 10 Jul 69 a Hoi Chanh [REDACTED] led a PW recovery operation into a VC hospital in Quang Tin Province. He led the forces into the area where he had seen a PW on or about 1 Jul. SEC 522 (b)(6)
TITLE 5, USC
Privacy Act

(U) A reconnaissance element of the 5th Regt, 2nd ARVN Inf Div, an RF Co, and other units were air assaulted by Army helicopters into the area. During the operation, six NVA soldiers were killed, two detained, and three weapons captured. Because of the difficult nature of the terrain, an ARVN soldier was lowered by rope into the jungle from a hovering helicopter to reach the PW, SP4 Larry D. Aiken, and a US trooper, PFC Robert Bohler, rappelled down another rope to assist. SP4 Aiken was found lying face down outside the hut where Chau had reported seeing him. He was found unconscious and suffering from a fresh head wound (not a gunshot wound). They then carried him 300 yds down a stream bed to a waiting helicopter.

(U) Aiken was admitted to the 91st Evacuation Hospital in Chu Lai where he remained in a coma until his death on 25 Jul. Hospital officials concluded that he died of an open skull fracture and brain damage inflicted by his captors prior to his rescue. ⁹⁴

DECLASSIFIED BY: USCINCPAC J301M

DATE DECLASSIFIED 27 July 1992

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