

PAGE 001
TOT: 041943Z SEP 91~~SECRET~~

042100Z

TO: DIA WASHINGTON DC//PW-MIA/ATTN MR BOB SHEETZ/.

~~SECRET~~

SUBJECT: FOLLOW-UP ON THE POW PHOTO INCIDENT

1. THE FOLLOWING REPORT WAS OBTAINED IN EARLY AUGUST 1991 FROM

THIS REPORT IS BEING PASSED FOR YOUR INFORMATION.

2. ACCORDING TO

HE HAS KNOWN ((THACH)) HON AKA ((THACH)) HONG, SINCE 1985 WHEN THACH, A KMER KROM, WORKED AS A TRANSLATOR FOR ((LIU)) NE AKA ((SANH)) NE, MILITARY COMMANDER OF THE KPMLF NONG SAMET CAMP.

WERE
UNABLE TO IDENTIFY A SUITABLE VIETNAMESE CANDIDATE WHO COULD READ, WRITE AND SPEAK ENGLISH. THEN DECIDED TO SEARCH WITHIN THE KMER KROM COMMUNITY AT SITE 2. MENTIONED TO TRAKOUN THAT HE HAD PREVIOUSLY DEALT WITH THACH WHO COULD SPEAK, READ AND WRITE KMER, THAI, VIETNAMESE AND SOME ENGLISH. AT THE TIME OF CONTACT BY THACH WAS NOT EMPLOYED. THACH HAS GIVEN THE STANDARD KNOWLEDGEABILITY BRIEF TO COMPLETE. UNDER PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT THACH LISTED WORKING WITH THE VIETNAMESE CIVILIAN IRREGULAR DEFENSE GROUP (LIDG), A LOCAL MILITIA TYPE UNIT. THACH ALSO INDICATED HE WAS CLOSE TO KMER KROM RESISTANCE LEADER ((SON)) NGOC THANH. THACH WAS BROUGHT FROM SITE 2, WAS INTERVIEWED AND GIVEN A TECHNICAL EXAMINATION SINCE DECEPTION WAS INDICATED. HE WAS RETURNED TO SITE 2.

4. UPON RETURN TO SITE 2, THACH BEGAN WORKING FOR KPMLF PRESIDENT SON AS AN INFORMANT ON KPMLF MILITARY MATTERS. THACH WORKED CLOSELY WITH SITE 2 CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION CHIEF ((LAY)) KHEK, WHO WAS ALSO A SON SUPPORTER, AND WHO WOULD COMPILE INFORMATION ON KPMLF MILITARY ACTIVITIES AND FORWARD IT TO PRESIDENT SON IN BANGKOK. CIRCA 1988-1989, THACH BEGAN WORKING FOR AN AMERICAN (NFI) BASED IN BANGKOK WHO WAS INVOLVED IN MIA/POW ISSUES.

~~SECRET~~

CIA-910904-634H

NND 982018

SECRET

PAGE 002
TOT: 041943Z SEP 91

THIS BEGAN THACH'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE SITE 2 MIA RESEARCH OFFICE.

5. WITH REGARDS TO RELATIONSHIP OF [] WITH THACH, THE FORMER STATED THAT HE FIRST MET THACH BRIEFLY IN 1989 AT [] WHEN THACH WAS TO TAKE A TECHNICAL EXAMINATION. THE EXAMINATION WAS TRANSLATED BY ((TRUC)) (LNU), AN ETHNIC VIETNAMESE [] OFFICE EMPLOYEE. THE SECOND MEETING BETWEEN [] AND THACH WAS ON 29 JULY 1991 AT THE BEHEST OF STONY BEACH.

6. FORMER [] SPOTTER/SCREENER KPNLF BRIGADIER GENERAL ((SOPHEAK)) RACHANA, WHO WAS THE FORMER COMMANDER OF KPNLF OPERATIONAL ZONE-7 AND O-BOK CAMP, LEARNED OF ((KEO)) SOTHEA'S ARRIVAL AT SITE 2 AND SENT A NOTE TO [] RECOMMENDING THAT KEO BE DEBRIEFED. THE RECOMMENDATION WAS BASED ON KEO'S STORY THAT HE WAS A PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KAMPUCHEA (PRK) COMMANDER WHO DEFFECTED. THERE WAS NO SPECIFIC BONA FIDES TO SUPPORT KEO'S STORY, WHICH IS NOT UNCOMMON WITH DEFFECTORS, REFUGEES, ETC. WHO ARRIVE AT SITE 2. [] DID NOT KNOW KEO SO HE ASKED THE CURRENT [] SPOTTER/SCREENER SPOTTER/SCREENER AT SITE 2, IF HE KNEW KEO. SINCE THIS SPOTTER/SCREENER ALSO WAS UNAWARE OF KEO, BOTH THEN SOUGHT BRIGADIER GENERAL SOPHEAK'S ASSISTANCE IN LOCATING KEO. KEO WAS LOCATED AND THE INITIAL KNOWLEDGEABILITY BRIEF WAS FILLED OUT ON 24 NOVEMBER 1990. AFTER AN [] REVIEW OF THE BRIEF, KEO WAS BROUGHT IN FOR DEBRIEFING ON 15 DECEMBER 1990. THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT KEO HAD ANY FORMER CONNECTION WITH ANY [] OFFICE ASSET.

7. KEO'S DEBRIEFING LASTED ONE DAY AFTER WHICH HE WAS RETURNED TO SITE 2 ON 17 DECEMBER. [] STATED THAT KEO FAILED MISERABLY TO CONVINCE [] THAT HE WAS "A PRK LIEUTENANT COLONEL SERVING AS CHIEF, BRIDGE-ROAD CONSTRUCTION, ENGINEER DEPARTMENT, PRK DEFENSE MINISTRY." EXAMPLES OF KEO'S SHORTCOMINGS DURING THE DEBRIEFING, THE FOLLOWING POINTS ARE CITED:

A. KEO CLAIMED TO BE A PRK LIEUTENANT COLONEL, BUT WAS UNABLE TO NAME THE DIRECTOR OF THE GENERAL DEPARTMENT FOR LOGISTICS, PRK DEFENSE MINISTRY.

B. KEO WAS ONLY ABLE TO NAME LOW-LEVEL MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL DEPARTMENT FOR LOGISTICS. HOWEVER, WHEN THESE NAMES WERE REVIEWED WITH KEO, HE PROVIDED DIFFERENT NAMES.

C. THERE WAS INSUFFICIENT MOTIVATION FOR DEFFECTING IF KEO WAS IN FACT A PRK LIEUTENANT COLONEL AS HE CLAIMED TO HAVE THREE CARS IN PHNOM PENH AND ALLEGEDLY PURCHASED TWO MOTORCYCLES FOR THE USE OF HIS TROOPS. HE WOULD HAVE LED A PRIVILEGED LIFE.

D. KEO CLAIMED TO HAVE COME FROM THE SAME PROVINCE AS SENIOR PRK OFFICIAL ((HENG)) SAMRIN, AND MADE REFERENCE TO MANY OF THE SENIOR OFFICIALS. THIS AGAIN WOULD ARGUE AGAINST DEFECTION.

8. THE SKEPTICISM EXPRESSED BY [] WAS INITIALLY DUE TO KEO'S VERY UNCONVINCING DEBRIEFING OF HIS ALLEGED MILITARY BACKGROUND. IT WAS ONLY AFTER THE DEBRIEFING WAS CONCLUDED THAT KEO SHOWED THE PHOTOGRAPH TO [] DURING THE 15 DECEMBER 1990 DEBRIEFING, KEO CLAIMED THAT HE OBTAINED IT FROM A WOMAN (NFI) AT SITE 2. WHEN ASKED, KEO STATED HE DID NOT KNOW HER NAME BUT THAT SHE CAME FROM PHNOM PENH, NOT SITE 2. THE UNIDENTIFIED WOMAN REPORTEDLY OBTAINED THE PHOTO FROM A KHMER KROM IN PHNOM PENH (NFI). [] BROUGHT THE PHOTO TO THE [] OFFICE, MADE A XEROX COPY AND RETURNED THE ORIGINAL TO KEO. THROUGHOUT THE DISCUSSION CONCERNING THE PHOTO, KEO WAS VERY UNSURE ON THE ACQUISITION CHAIN AND FREQUENTLY ANSWERED "MAYBE" TO QUESTIONS. IN RECENT JULY 1991 DISCUSSIONS WITH [], KEO ADMITTED OBTAINING THE PHOTO FROM ((UN)) SAM OL AKA ((UNG)) SAM OL, WHO LIKE KEO, WORKED AT THE "FORMER PRISONER ASSOCIATION" IN O-BOK CAMP AT SITE 2. JM LEARNED THAT KEO WAS COMING TO ARANYAPRATHET AND WOULD BE MEETING WITH AMERICANS. UN HAD BROUGHT THE PHOTO FROM CAMBODIA AND GAVE IT TO

NND 982018

~~SECRET~~

PAGE 003
TOT: 041943Z SEP 91

KEO WHEN THE INTENDED RECIPIENTS, ((YANG)) PHIRUM AKA ((MOEUN)) AND HIS WIFE, ((LIM)) PEDU AKA ((LIM)) DA REFUSED TO PAY UM FIVE CHI OF GOLD (ONE CHI EQUALS 3.75 GRAMS), THE EQUIVALENT OF BAHT 6,000.

9. ACCORDING TO [REDACTED] THERE IS LITTLE BASIS FOR KEO TO CALL HIMSELF A "SELF-STYLED INTELLIGENCE OPERATIVE" AS HIS ONLY KNOWN CONNECTION TO ANY ORGANIZED GROUP, OTHER THAN WHERE HE WORKED, WAS HIS CLAIMED CONNECTION WITH THE KPNLF RESISTANCE GROUP LED BY MR. ((REAKSAMBOK)), CHIEF OF THE O-BOK CAMP, SITE 2, AND AFTER WHOM THE CAMP IS NAMED. REAKSAMBOK IS A SUPPORTER OF KPNLF PRESIDENT SON. ACCORDING TO [REDACTED] THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT KEO IS INVOLVED IN ANY "INTELLIGENCE" OPERATIONS. REGARDING THE "MYSTERIOUS WOMAN" WHO GAVE HIM THE PHOTO, AS STATED EARLIER, HE WAS REFERRING TO MRS. LIM, THE RIGHTFUL OWNER OF THE PHOTO AND THE PERSON TO WHOM UM SAM OL SHOULD HAVE DELIVERED IT WITHOUT DEMANDING GOLD IN RETURN.

10. REGARDING [REDACTED] INVOLVEMENT IN THE PHOTOGRAPH INCIDENT VIA HIS LONG-TIME KPNLF FRIENDS [REDACTED] COMMENTED THAT [REDACTED] WAS HESITANT TO GET INVOLVED IN MIA/POW MATTERS AS HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND THE ISSUES. IN THE FALL OF 1990, A KHMER WOMAN CAME TO [REDACTED] AND ASKED HIS ASSISTANCE IN CONTACTING AMERICANS REGARDING MIA/POW MATERIAL. THE WOMAN (NAME UNKNOWN) WAS CIRCA 23 YEARS OLD, MARRIED, FROM KOMPONG CHAM PROVINCE AND A FORMER STUDENT AT SECONDARY SCHOOL IN PHNOM PENH. THE WOMAN CONTACTED [REDACTED] BECAUSE SHE HAD HEARD THAT [REDACTED] HAD PERIODIC CONTACT WITH AMERICANS. BECAUSE OF [REDACTED] RELUCTANCE TO GET INVOLVED IN SUCH MATTERS, HE ASKED [REDACTED] TO TALK TO THE WOMAN. WHEN [REDACTED] SPOKE WITH THE WOMAN, SHE ATTEMPTED TO PASS AN ALLEGED DOG TAG IMPRINT AND BONE FRAGMENT. [REDACTED] DID NOT ACCEPT THE ITEMS AS THE WOMAN KNEW NOTHING ABOUT THE ORIGIN OF THE ITEMS, CIRCUMSTANCES OF OBTAINING THE ITEMS, ETC. ALTHOUGH THE WOMAN DID NOT SPECIFICALLY STATE HOW THE ITEMS CAME INTO HER POSSESSION, SHE INDICATED A VIETNAMESE WAS INVOLVED. [REDACTED] TOLD THE WOMAN IF SHE WAS ABLE TO OBTAIN SUFFICIENT INFORMATION ABOUT THE MATERIALS, HE WOULD THEN PASS THE INFORMATION AND ITEMS TO THE APPROPRIATE PEOPLE. THE WOMAN MADE NO FURTHER ATTEMPT TO CONTACT EITHER [REDACTED] OR HIM. IN FEB 1991, ANOTHER WOMAN (NFI), CONTACTED [REDACTED] AND PASSED THE PHOTOGRAPH AND TAPE RECORDING. [REDACTED] IMMEDIATELY PASSED THE ITEMS TO [REDACTED] WHO CAME TO ARANYAPRATHET AND GAVE THE ITEMS TO [REDACTED] AT HIS HOUSE. NOTHING MORE IS KNOWN ABOUT THIS SECOND WOMAN.

11. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] WHEN CREY WAS UNAVAILABLE, EM WAS HELPFUL TO [REDACTED] IN LOCATING DEBRIEFING SOURCES. THIS CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPED INTO A PERSONAL ONE AS WELL, WHICH REMAINS TO THIS DATE. REGARDING [REDACTED] POSSIBLE CONNECTION WITH PRK INTEL SERVICE OFFICIALS [REDACTED] STATED HE IS UNAWARE OF ANY CONNECTION, ALTHOUGH [REDACTED] NATIVE VILLAGE, SOENG, IN SISAPHON DISTRICT, BANTEAY MEANCHHEY PROVINCE, IS LOCATED CLOSE TO NONG CHAN CAMP. SOME OF [REDACTED] RELATIVES WERE IN THE LOCAL PRK MILITIA AND SOME FORMER SECONDARY SCHOOL CLASSMATES SERVED WITH THE PRK MILITARY IN SISAPHON. [REDACTED] IS UNAWARE OF THE CURRENT STATUS OF [REDACTED] FRIENDS/RELATIVES. [REDACTED] IS LIKEWISE UNAWARE OF [REDACTED] HAVING ANY PRK INTEL SERVICE CONNECTIONS.

12. [REDACTED] WILL CONTACT [REDACTED] AND ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN FURTHER DETAILS ON ABOVE PARA TEN UNIDENTIFIED WOMAN WHO PREVIOUSLY THE

NND 982018

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~PAGE 004
TOT: 041943Z SEP 91

PHOTOGRAPH AND TAPE RECORDING.

13. [REDACTED]

14. CLASSIFIED BY SIGNER. DECL OADR DRV [REDACTED] ALL ~~SECRET~~

END OF MESSAGE

~~SECRET~~

NND 982018

~~SECRET~~