

SECRET

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SUBJECT: SIGHTING OF A GROUP OF AMERICAN PRISONERS IN NORTHERN SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

SUMMARY: IN MARCH 1974 A GROUP OF PEOPLE'S ARMY OF VIETNAM OFFICER TRAINEES AT A CAMP IN NORTHERN VIETNAM WHILE WALKING ACCIDENTALLY CAME NEAR A PRISON CAMP WHERE NINE TO TEN CAUCASIAN PRISONERS WERE OBSERVED. THE TRAINEE GROUP GOT A BRIEF LOOK BEFORE PRISON GUARDS WARNED THEM AWAY. A MONTH LATER A MAN WHO SAID HE WAS A PRISON GUARD AT THIS CAMP STATED THAT HE GUARDED AMERICAN PRISONERS. THIS SAME GUARD ON LEAVE IN HO CHI MINH CITY IN MAY-JUNE 1976 SAID THAT HE STILL GUARDED AMERICAN PRISONERS, BUT HE DID NOT DISCLOSE ANY INFORMATION ON THEM OR THE CAMP ON GROUNDS OF SENSITIVITY. END SUMMARY.

1. IN MARCH 1974 A GROUP OF NINE OR TEN CAUCASIAN MALES WAS SEEN STANDING NEAR THE BARBED WIRE OF A PRISON CAMP IN THE VICINITY OF PEOPLE'S ARMY OF VIETNAM (PAVN) MILITARY REGION (MR) 5 OFFICERS' SCHOOL (TRUONG BO TUC SI QUAN LUC QUAN CUA QUAN KHU 5) AT PHU (DISTRICT SEAT) NHO QUANG IN NHO QUAN DISTRICT IN NINH BINH PROVINCE (WHICH NOW FORMS PART OF SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM (SRV) HA SON BINH PROVINCE). FIVE NORTH-VIETNAMESE OFFICER TRAINEES, WHO WERE EN ROUTE TO THE ENCAMPMENT OF CONVALESCENCE GROUP 585 (DUAN AN DUONG NU CAN BO MEN NAM 585), WHERE SOUTH VIETNAMESE FEMALES WORKING FOR NORTH VIETNAM WERE CONCENTRATED FOR REST AND RELAXATION, RAN INTO A THREE-MAN GUARD POST, WHICH WAS ABOUT 100 METERS AWAY FROM THE PRISON AND THE SPOT WHERE THE CAUCASIANS WERE STANDING. THE AREA OUTSIDE THE CAMP WAS FORESTED AND HAD RICE PADDIES.

COMMENT: [REDACTED] WHO SIGHTED THE CAUCASIANS.) [REDACTED]

COMMENT: ACCORDING TO THE PARIS ACCORDS OF JANUARY 1975 NORTH VIETNAM WAS TO TURN OVER THE AMERICAN PRISONERS IT HELD, AND SUCH A TURN-OVER OCCURRED IN MARCH 1975.)

2. THE PRISON CAMP WAS MADE UP OF SEVERAL THATCHED-WALLED HUTS WITH TIN ROOFS. THE CAMP WAS SITUATED AT THE END OF A FOREST AT THE FOOT OF A MOUNTAIN RANGE. THE GUARDS AT THE CAMP GUARD POST TOLD THE GROUP OF TRAINEES TO MOVE OUT OF THE AREA; AND THE GROUP MOVED OUT AFTER BEING TOLD TO DO SO. THE CAUCASIANS OBSERVED IN THE CAMP WERE TALL, HAD CREW-CUT HAIR AND WORE PRISON-TYPE PAJAMAS WITH DARK BLUE STRIPES. THE GROUP OF TRAINEES CONCLUDED THAT THE IMPRISONED CAUCASIANS MUST BE AMERICANS.

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5. IN APRIL 1974, A PAVN INFILTRATION GROUP GOING TO SOUTH VIETNAM, WHICH INCLUDED MR-3 OFFICERS SCHOOL TRAINEES, WAS ASSEMBLED AT A RAILROAD STATION IN NINH BINH CITY. SEEN AT THE STATION WAS [REDACTED] WHO HAD BEEN IN THE FORMER SOUTH VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT PRISON CAMP ON PHU QUOC ISLAND AND [REDACTED] IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PARIS ACCORDS WAS RELEASED IN FEBRUARY 1975 FOR RETURN TO NORTH VIETNAM. WHILE AT THE TRAIN STATION, [REDACTED] SAID THAT HE WAS ASSIGNED AS A PRISON GUARD. WHEN ASKED WHAT TYPE OF PRISONERS HE GUARDED HE REPLIED THAT THEY WERE AMERICANS. [REDACTED] STATED THAT HE WAS ASSIGNED AS A GUARD AT THE SAME PRISON WHERE THE CAUCASIANS WERE OBSERVED IN MARCH 1974, THE NAME OF WHICH HE SAID WAS XICH THO PRISON.

4. WHEN [REDACTED] WAS IN HO CHI MINH CITY (HCMC) IN MAY-JUNE 1976, HE SAID THAT HE WAS THEN ON A SIX-DAY LEAVE FROM NORTH VIETNAM. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION HE REPLIED THAT HE WAS STILL ASSIGNED AS A GUARD FOR AMERICANS. HE IMPLIED THAT THIS WAS A VERY SENSITIVE SUBJECT AND WOULD NOT DIVULGE EITHER THE LOCATION OF THE PRISON CAMP FOR AMERICANS IN NORTH VIETNAM OR ITS LETTER BOX. WHEN ASKED FOR HIS ADDRESS IN NORTH VIETNAM, WITH AN AIR OF IMPORTANCE [REDACTED] SAID THAT THE PLACE WHERE HE WORKED WAS ONE THAT EVEN [REDACTED] WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO VISIT WITHOUT PERMISSION, AND THAT NO ONE COULD COME TO VISIT HIM. [REDACTED] COMMENT: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] AFTER VISITING HCMC RETURNED TO HIS ASSIGNMENT IN NORTH VIETNAM. [REDACTED] COMMENT: [REDACTED] PRESUMABLY IS STILL A PRISON GUARD. [REDACTED] HAD AT ONE TIME, SPECIFIC DATE UNKNOWN, BEEN A UNIVERSITY OF SAIGON STUDENT AND SPOKE FLUENT ENGLISH. HE HAD BEEN IMPRISONED AT THE FORMER SOUTH VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT PHU QUOC POW CAMP FROM 1970 TO FEBRUARY 1975.

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