



Intelligence Information Report

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REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

DATE DISTR. / 3 November 1972

COUNTRY North Vietnam/USSR

DOI April 1972

SUBJECT Soviet Efforts to Gain Access to U.S. POW's in North Vietnam

SOURCE [REDACTED]

1. As of April 1972 the residency in Hanoi of the Chief Intelligence Directorate of the USSR Ministry of Defense (GRU) had for a long time the standing requirement to get direct access to U.S. POW's being held by the North Vietnamese. The North Vietnamese, however, despite repeated requests from the Soviets, had never provided access to the prisoners. Although the Soviets know where the POW compounds were located and could even drive past them, they had no access to the compounds or the POW's.

2. The GRU residency in Hanoi learned through agent operations the names of some of the POW's and asked the North Vietnamese for access to specific individual prisoners. The North Vietnamese did not accede to those specific requests. [REDACTED] Comment: [REDACTED] did not know whether specific names of POW's known to the GRU residency in Hanoi were forwarded to Moscow, but he assumed that they were.) The usual North Vietnamese response to Soviet requests was that access to the prisoners for questioning was not necessary and that they would tell the Soviets everything about the prisoners. The North Vietnamese expressed bewilderment as to why the Soviets would wish to talk with the prisoners.

3. The North Vietnamese never provided any information on the prisoners to the Soviets through official liaison channels. In response to specific questions the North Vietnamese answered only in general terms. As of April 1972, the GRU residency in Hanoi had for some time been undertaking unspecified measures to persuade the North Vietnamese authorities to grant access to the prisoners.

4. Soviet press personnel in Hanoi attended press conferences organized by the North Vietnamese to exploit the prisoners. However, the Soviet representatives were not afforded any special rights.

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to interview the prisoners in conjunction with these press conferences. The impression gained by Soviet personnel attending the conferences was that the prisoners were hardly blooming; they had the look of tired people.

5. Comment: said that he had not received in the USSR any briefing or training with respect to U.S. Armed Forces personnel captured in Vietnam.)

6. Field Dissem: Sent to Saigon (for Ambassador Bunker, Deputy Ambassador Whitehouse and General Weyand only, Vientiane (for Ambassador Godley only), CINCPAC (exclusive for CINCPAC and POLAD only) and Paris (for Ambassador Porter)

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