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ROUTINE
R 200512Z AUG 88
FM CIA/ODD
TO DIA//VO-PW/COL JOSEPH SCHLATTER
INFO NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL//DIRECTOR OF ASIAN
AFFAIRS/RICHARD CHILDRESS
DEPT OF STATE//CHIEF INR/SEA/PAULA CAUSEY

ZYUW RUEAIIAS520 2330521

IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE AMERICANS TO PURSUE THE MATTER OF POW'S
EFFECTIVELY AND THAT THE NUMBER OF POW'S AS ESTIMATED BY THE
AMERICANS, 1,270, IS HIGHER THAN THE ACTUAL FIGURE. HE CONCLUDED BY
SAYING THAT HE HAD NO IDEA HOW MANY POW'S WERE BEING HELD IN LAOS
AND CAMBODIA. (COMMENT: IT IS UNCLEAR WHETHER THE 1,270 FIGURE IS
FOR ALL OF INDOCHINA OR MERELY VIETNAM. THE MOTIVATION FOR THE
[REDACTED] TO MAKE SUCH REVELATIONS TO THE CONTACT
IS UNCLEAR. IT IS ALSO UNCLEAR WHY OR HOW [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] WOULD HAVE ACCESS TO SUCH INFORMATION.)

~~SECRET~~

CITE

5.

6. DECL OADR DRV

BT

SUBJECT: HEARSAY INFORMATION ON VIETNAMESE RETENTION OF POW'S

1. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS OBTAINED FROM THE DEBRIEFING
OF [REDACTED]
THIS SAME [REDACTED] ALSO PROVIDED INFORMATION THAT WAS DISSEMINATED AS
[REDACTED]

2. [REDACTED] DURING AN INFORMAL CONVERSATION IN ABOUT
1986 WITH [REDACTED] AN ASSISTANT CONSULAR
OFFICER OF A VIETNAMESE EMBASSY STATED THAT THE VIETNAMESE
GOVERNMENT STILL HELD AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR (POW) FROM THE
INDOCHINA WAR, BUT COULD NOT RETURN THEM BECAUSE THEY HAD BEEN
KILLED AS THE RESULT OF TORTURE BY THE NORTH VIETNAMESE. HE SAID
THAT TO RETURN THESE PRISONERS WOULD BE TOO EMBARRASSING TO THE
VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT. WHEN ASKED WHETHER HE HAD ACTUALLY SEEN
THESE PRISONERS, OR IF HE WAS ONLY REPEATING RUMORS, HE STATED THAT
HE WOULD NOT MAKE SUCH A COMMENT IF IT WERE NOT TRUE. HIS REMARKS
WERE VERY BRIEF, AND MADE IN AN INFORMAL, PERSONAL CONVERSATION.
[REDACTED] COMMENT: [REDACTED] STATED THAT HE DID
NOT ASK THE CONSULAR ASSISTANT OFFICER ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT
THIS SUBJECT, AND THIS OFFICER DID NOT VOLUNTEER ANY ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION.) [REDACTED] SAID THAT IN THE 10 YEARS HE
HAD WORKED FOR [REDACTED] BOTH IN HANOI AND ABROAD [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] THIS WAS THE ONLY TIME
ANYONE HAD MENTIONED THAT THERE WERE STILL AMERICANS ALIVE IN
VIETNAM. [REDACTED] ASKED THE CONSULAR OFFICER HOW HE KNEW
THIS INFORMATION, BUT THE LATTER GAVE NO DIRECT REPLY, STATING ONLY
THAT HE WOULD NOT HAVE PROVIDED THE INFORMATION IF HE KNEW IT WERE
UNTRUE.

COMMENT: [REDACTED] COULD NOT MAKE A JUDGEMENT AS TO
THE TRUTH OF THE CONSULAR OFFICERS STATEMENTS, BUT SAID THE LATTER
WAS NOT ONE GIVEN TO IDLE STORY-TELLING.)

4. COMMENT: ACCORDING TO [REDACTED]
THE CONSULAR OFFICER MADE SIMILAR ALLEGATIONS ABOUT POW'S
IN FALL 1987, WHEN HE TOLD A CASUAL CONTACT, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] THAT THERE ARE LESS THAN 1,200 POW'S. HE
LATER REMARKED IN A SEPARATE CONVERSATION THAT THERE WERE POW'S IN
LAOS AND CAMBODIA, BOTH IN KNOWN AND UNKNOWN LOCATIONS. HE
CONTINUED THAT U.S. POLICY TOWARD LAOS AND CAMBODIA MAKES IT

ACTION DIA/SPEC/101

982008-1878

which was originally sent exclusively to Dr. DIA.

22 Aug 88

I have just received this info. I will read it.

Cap. [REDACTED] did receive this, passed it to Powell and I really don't know after that, but there is a file.