FRENCH PRESS ARTICLE

On 17 October 1979, source a Vietnamese refugee in France published an article in source DATA concerning Cuban forces in Vietnam, Soviet missile launcher bases and 33 American PWs in Hanoi. Numerous attempts were made by the American Embassy, the USDAO, and French officials to contact refugee source Refugee finally was contacted and agreed to be interviewed by the DIA Debriefing Team on 22 November 1979.

The Team's debrief of source began as scheduled on 22 November. He agreed to provide as many days as necessary for his debrief. He spoke of his respect for Ho Chi Minh and his distain for the actions of the current leadership under Le Duan.

source has stated he had access to US PWs between 1970-75 and that he would provide the debriefers with all he knew on the subject. He states that all US PWs were classified in four categories:

a. All the PWs released throughout the war--He said ~~said~~ 556 Americans were in this category. This number is fairly accurate.

b. An unknown number of PWs who were sons of rich families--Based on hearsay, he said they were to be ransomed direct to their families.

c. An unknown number who would never be released--No further explanation was provided. Follow-up is ongoing.

d. Progressive PWs--He claims to have seen this group of 33. States they were categorized by their receptiveness to indoctrination and were undergoing training to eventually serve as agents for Vietnam in the US. Claims he saw this group in mid-1974 while on an inspection tour of their housing facility in the western outskirts of Hanoi.

Much of his hearsay information is of doubtful accuracy. The source has declined a polygraph examination. Information on live Americans will be pursued further.

VIETNAMESE REFUGEE IN BOURGES, FRANCE

The National League of Families provided a 20 October 1979 letter written by a Vietnamese refugee, source who had been resettled in France. In the letter source indicated that he had information on US PWs still in Vietnam and would like to provide his information to the US.

Inasmuch as the DIA Debriefing Team was in Stuttgart, West Germany at the time, the information was passed to them to locate source with the assistance of the US Defense Attache Office (DAO) in Paris and to interview him when located. The team departed France before there was any indication that source would be located.

On 3 November the Embassy in Paris informed DIA that they had, after some difficulty, located source in a refugee camp in Bourges, France. The DAO in Paris interviewed him on 7 November 1979. Questions asked of the source were passed to the DAO for the interview. Upon completion of the DAO's interview it was recommended that DIA's Debrief Team meet with source DIA's Team is presently in Paris and is scheduled to debrief source in Bourges, France on 28 November 1979.

During the 7 November interview with the DAO in Paris, source stated that he had seen 25 US PWs on 25 October 1978 and 28 on 2 November 1978--the same group with three others added. On these two occasions the PWs were on hard labor details; carrying wood on the 25th and digging for agricultural purposes on the 2nd. The PWs were guarded and held in a camp, in five small thatched huts, in a forested part of a valley about 150 kilometers northwest of Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City). The PWs wore striped and black clothing (some without coats because of the heat); they appeared thin and very tired. source was unable to make contact with them, although he tried. source also briefly identified four US Advisors, with whom he had worked during the period 1965 through 1971, while he was the source DATA at Tan Son Nhut Air Base, Saigon. He also stated he had received a Victory medal, Bronze Star (Bronze Star with the "V" device) from President Johnson in 1966.

The four advisors have been identified and efforts have been initiated to verify his statements relative to them. Three of the four has been contacted, two of the three recall him well and consider him trustworthy. One of the U.S. Advisors had recommended him for the Bronze Star and another verified that he had received the award.