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Rejects Russian POW-MIA 'Fabrication'

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[Text] The Pentagon has said that it has again received a report, found in the archives of the former Soviet Union, that since the early 1970s Vietnam has held captive a few hundred more American **POW's** than it acknowledged to have held and **returned** to the United States. Our attitude toward this issue is crystal clear: We totally reject this claim and affirm that this is a fabrication.

..TEXT:

Our Foreign Ministry spokesman stated on 9 September that Vietnam had in hand 585 American and foreign **POW's** at the time of the signing of the Paris agreement on Vietnam, as the U.S. has been informed. Vietnam **returned** all of them to the U.S. Government in March 1973. So far, no U.S. **POW's** left behind after the war have been held captive in Vietnam. All other figures on U.S. **POW's** in Vietnam are inaccurate due to misinformation or ill-intentioned fabrications.

..TEXT:

As we know, this is not the first Russian document about U.S. prisoners during the Vietnam War. One can still recall that in late 1991 certain people claimed that there were U.S. **POW's** being **sent** to the Soviet Union and now kept under detention in Russia. This immediately sparked a controversy among the public, particularly the U.S. public. We issued a statement affirming that this was 100 percent fabrication, whereas the U.S. Administration did not bother to conduct a search. What about the results? The then U.S. State Department spokesman, Mrs. Margaret Tutwiler, stated in a 13 January 1992 news conference in Washington that American officials at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow had conducted an investigation into reports about American servicemen being captured in Vietnam and detained in Russia. They had, however, found no evidence to confirm these reports. Mrs. Tutwiler said: The U.S. State Department saw this case as conclusive and there was no need to conduct any further investigations and searches.

..TEXT:

In late 1992, certain people again released another fake document related to the fate of missing U.S. servicemen in Vietnam. This document was allegedly taken from the archives of the KGB, a former Soviet counterintelligence agency. We once again rejected this while the U.S. Administration launched an investigation to discover the truth. Like the previous case, this time the U.S. admitted that this document was a fake.

..TEXT:

Senator Tom Harkin stated to the U.S. Congressional **POW-MIA** Committee that certain people cut out photographs from old Russian magazines and then alleged that they were U.S. prisoners during the Vietnam war and were still alive, and that this was a brutally deceitful act.

..TEXT:

Admiral (Thomas Brooks), former director of U.S. Naval Intelligence, also said late last year that the U.S. had met so many reports which were either fabricated or totally inaccurate to the extent that analysts became skeptical of all other reports received.

..TEXT:

As in The previous two cases, early this year certain people raised the question of **POW-MIA** information being found in a third-country document. This scenario, of course, also faced the same fate as that of its two predecessors.

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..TEXT:

After spending some time looking for the truth, the U.S. Administration reached a conclusion. The one who arrived at this conclusion is the incumbent U.S. President, Bill Clinton. At his White House news conference on 23 April 1993, he said: I feel optimistic about Vietnam's latest response to the identification of the Russian document. Vietnam has provided us with evidence that may reduce the value of that information mentioned in the Russian document. He also added: It is thanks to the response from the Vietnamese side to the Russian document that the United States has made some progress toward examining those remaining cases of American POW's and MIA's.

..TEXT:

It was thought that such stories about fake documents on POW-MIA's would no longer resurface, but in this life there are still some people who refuse to change their bad habits even if they are beaten to death. Inherently harboring a deep hate for Vietnam, the U.S. ultrarightist force has sought ways to block or undermine any positive developments in U.S.-Vietnamese relations.

..TEXT:

Lately, they have again released a document claiming that Vietnam held a larger number of American POW's than they returned to the United States. Perhaps, needless to say, one can have sufficient grounds to affirm that this is a new fabricated story. Eventually the curtain on this stage play will drop quickly and those standing behind it will not be able to produce their expected results.

..TEXT:

It is necessary to emphasize here that we regard the POW-MIA question as a genuine humanitarian issue. We condemn anyone who tries to attach this issue to political demands. We hope and struggle for the normalization of U.S.-Vietnamese relations. But these relations should be based on equality and mutual respect for each other's interest and collective interest.

..TEXT: