

Reel 1

SUBJECT: PW/MIA Meeting

30 December 1980

REF : RADM J. O. Tuttle, Assistant Deputy Director for Defense Intelligence (DI) Phonecon 24 Dec 80; same subject, meeting 1300 hours, 30 Dec 80, Rm 2D921

1. RADM Tuttle's meeting was held as scheduled, 1300-1500, 30 Dec 80. Representatives from DIA (4), CIA (2) and NSA (4) attended. See Inclosure for attendees.
2. RADM Tuttle reviewed DIA photo and report chronology (Mar 79-Dec 80) on American PW facilities and sitings in Laos. RADM Tuttle has a strong suspicion that American POW's remain in Laos. NSA representatives do not have to substantiate the case. Early December 80 case of 20 American POW's reported in , and not corroborated is typical. December 80 case is a fraud, and view American POW's in Laos as unlikely.
3. Overhead photography of facility confirms prison like structures and fence. facility may hold prisoners, but that it is highly unlikely the prisoners are American.
4. DIA has a Vietnamese source (Le Ba Oanh) who has passed a polygraph examination, and claims to have been in a prison facility near Tay Ninh, Northwest of Ho Chi Minh City, which contained American POW's. The POW camp coordinates are 111911N 1062010E. Le Ba Oanh has drawn an accurate sketch of the facility (verified by overhead photography) which he claims to have visited as recently as August 80, when he observed American POW's. Le Ba Oanh will be interrogated by DIA for approximately 10 days starting on 7 Jan 81. The DIA analyst has detected discrepancies in the source's story, and items will be addressed during the interrogation period.
5. RADM Tuttle announced that in January 81, a PW/MIA interagency group is to be formed. The group composition will be: State Department, ISA, JCS/J-5, DIA and SEA sub-committee. Early in the meeting, RADM Tuttle stated he wanted a DIA and NSA chronology of PW/MIA events, however, the DIA action officer (P. Hurt) said the request needs further DIA definition before NSA inputs are required. The DIA request for NSA time line inputs will be through NCRDEF office.
6. The DIA analyst handling Le Ba Oanh's interrogation was requested to provide his initial report. If the report is releasable, the document will be forwarded to NSA via NCRDEF office.

SECTION 2

SUMMARY

DAILY ASIAN

SOUTHEAST ASIA A. HIGHLIGHTS THE LAO ARE TRANSFERRING FOREIGN PRISONERS
 TO ATTOPEU PROVINCE. A VIETNAMESE RECONNAISSANCE TEAM MET OPPOSING FORCES
 INSIDE THAI TERRITORY IN EARLY JUNE. D. LAOS LAO TO TRANSFER FOREIGN
 PRISONERS TO ATTOPEU PROVINCE FOREIGN PRISONERS UNDER THE
 JURISDICTION OF THE LAO PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY (LPLA) ARE TO BE TRANSFERRED
 FROM THEIR CURRENT PRISON LOCATION IN LPLA MILITARY REGION (MR) I TO AN
 UNSPECIFIED LOCATION IN LPLA MR IV'S ATTOPEU PROVINCE.

PROVINCE HEADQUARTERS AND THE LPLA 5TH DIVISION WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE
 PRISONERS. THE FATE OF THE FOREIGNERS, WHOSE NUMBER AND NATIONALITY WERE NOT
 PROVIDED, IS UNCLEAR. THE DIVISION WAS INSTRUCTED TO 'PUT AWAY' THE PRISONERS,
 WHICH COULD MEAN THE LPLA INTENDS TO KILL THEM, OR MORE LIKELY, TO SECRETLY
 HOLD THEM. (SC) THE LAO HAVE MADE REFERENCES TO TRANSFERRING PRISONERS TO
 ATTOPEU PROVINCE SEVERAL TIMES DURING THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS. THESE
 PRISONERS, HOWEVER, APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN LAO NATIONALS DESTINED FOR RE-EDUCATION
 OR 'SEMINAR' CAMPS

REVH 21 JUN 12

See 1 1

12 December 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR:

(NCR Defense)

Subject: Contact Report

1. I received a call from Col Picinich, DIA(DI-7) today wherein he requested we meet with his staff to discuss the issue of POW/MIA in SEA. This request was the result of a meeting between LtGen Tighe, DIRDIA, and MajGen Brown, ACS/I USAF concerning the information I provided the latter about possible indications of US POWs in Laos.
2. We met in DIA spaces for 45 minutes. I recounted all the details known to me concerning the source of the information, actions taken previous actions taken to satisfy USAF requirements, and outlined in general terms the anticipated establishment of a new SEA analytic office.
3. Col Picinich was visibly excited about recent events. It is the opinion of that office that US POWs are in fact still alive in SEA. He commented on his responsibilities to maintain the official government data bank, resolve casualty reports, and inform Congress as the need arises. His immediate superior is RADM Tuttle.
4. Col Picinich desires closer coordination between NSA and DIA, on a formal continuing basis. He suggested this office be their point of contact, and when the new analytic office is established that they visit DIA(DI-7) and arrange for direct exchange of information. He intends to recommend this course of action to Mr John Hughes, D/Director for Intelligence, DIA. Results of that recommendation should be forthcoming within the week.
5. I recommend that we concur with Col Picinich's proposal.
6. I suggest we discuss this matter with and with as well (because of the potential contributions from the . Results of those discussions should be provided to the Director.

cc:

NCR Def(AF Matters)

U.S. Team to Inspect Possible POW Prison in Laos

Mysterious Walled Site Was Target of Clandestine Raid Sponsored by CIA in 1981

By Thomas W. Lippman
Washington Post Staff Writer

Laos has granted permission for a U.S. military team to inspect a mysterious prison that was the target of a clandestine 1981 raid organized by the CIA in search of American prisoners from the Vietnam War, according to Defense Department officials.

There is no substantial reason to think any Americans are held there, or were there in 1981, the officials said. But because intelligence information years ago indicated the prison might house some Caucasians, a Bangkok-based team plans to interview the prison staff and nearby residents during a 30-day field expedition this month.

Laos, taken over by communist insurgents in 1975 not long after North Vietnamese troops captured Saigon, ending the war, has rebuffed most U.S. efforts to search for the missing in action. In recent months, however, the government in Vientiane has become more cooperative, apparently under pressure from Vietnam. U.S. officials said.

The prison is at Nhommarath in central Laos about 20 miles northeast of the Thai border city of Nakhon Phanom. Laos rejected all previous requests to visit the site, fearing international complaints about conditions in the prison, U.S. officials said.

The 1981 raid has long been a topic of speculation because most information about it remains classified.

There is a discussion of "the alleged covert operation" in the voluminous report of a Senate committee that investigated the search for missing Vietnam-era servicemen in 1992. But the place is not named and the organizers of the expedition are not identified.



Some family members, veterans groups and MIA activists have cited the raid as evidence that U.S. intelligence officials knew American prisoners had been left behind after all supposedly came home in "Operation Homecoming" in 1973. If the CIA organized a rescue mission, they argue, there must have been information about people who needed rescuing. But Pentagon officials insist that is not the case.

According to the Senate committee report and a new account by a Defense Department source, U.S. intelligence analysts had "hearsay evidence" in the late 1970s that American prisoners were held at Nhommarath and forced to work as virtual slaves.

Aerial photographs taken in December 1980 revealed a building surrounded by a wall, and what ap-

peared to be the number 52 and the letter K stamped into a farm plot outside. The letter K "was given to U.S. pilots as a ground distress signal. It is thus conceivable that this represents an attempt by a prisoner to signal any aircraft that might pass overhead," according to a CIA report at the time.

The photos also appeared to show crops suitable for a Western diet and tools with handles too long for use by Laotians.

Early in 1981, the new administration of President Ronald Reagan decided to intensify efforts to determine the fate of more than 2,200 Americans unaccounted for from the Vietnam War. One result was a covert operation to learn more about Nhommarath.

"People conclude now that the government acted a certain way because they had information," a Defense Department official said. "They didn't have compelling information; none of those reports held up. But the new administration just felt they had to go further" to check every possible lead, however fragile.

Fearing a political backlash if Americans were detected on a military expedition in Laos, the CIA sent a team of non-American civilians to the site.

"They saw no evidence of Caucasians at the site, but food was being taken into a long building," a Defense Department official said last week. According to the Senate committee, the results were "inconclusive. Steps were underway to resume efforts to obtain a conclusive answer when a press leak killed any further efforts."

That "press leak" was a Washington Post story about the CIA expedition. The Post decided to publish the article after being assured by senior intelligence officials that there were no Americans at the prison camp.

Reel 1

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

memorandum

TO: 4 December 1980

Serial:

FROM: American Prisoners in Laos

1. Regarding the SITSUM item which you received in Bangkok on the subject, we have received a copy of the "collateral" This "collateral" appears to be Oudomsai Province and Vientiane.

is typical of

specifically mention 20 American prisoners. The source.

does
apparently

2. We have requested specific technical details can attempt the from the shipped here for verification of the

to ascertain
so we
Intend to have

3. We have notified RADM Tuttle's Office of the probable vice collateral source for the subject information. has also been advised.

Encl:

SITSUM Item for
Subj: U.S. POW/MIA's in Laos

Cc:

MEMORANDUM

Tuttle - 1702 - 0001

TO: Bill

FROM: Bob T./Vic

SUBJECT: Interview with Admiral Jerry Tuttle, USN

PROJECT: Post 73/75 Military Operations; Covert and Open

DATE: 5 December 1991

We met with Admiral Tuttle on this date at 0915 hrs for approximately 1 1/2 hours. He was friendly, professional, and gave freely of his time.

He stated that in August of 1979, General Eugene Tighe, USAF, who was then Director of DIA, asked him to help with the POW issue. At first, Tuttle said, he encountered skepticism with respect to whether DIA was involved in a cover up of facts about our POW/MIAs. He noted that when he entered the POW/MIA issue, he definitely encountered a "mindset to debunk," although he claimed it was not malicious. It was the information he brought out at Congressional hearings and official briefings concerning the "Mortician" and then the Nhom Marrot project that helped him demonstrate to cynics that he was being as forthright as possible.

Tuttle indicated that in late 1980 ELINT (he may have meant COMINT) reports showed what appeared to be a prison being built along Route #13 in Happy Valley, a remote Laotian area southwest of Nhom Marrot, the nearest sizable town. What had caught the attention of DIA was the rapidity with which the prison was being built, the remoteness of the site, and the lack of labor-saving equipment and resources during construction. Tuttle said the prison was undergoing "explosive" (his word) development. In reviewing evidence of other construction sites, past and present, he said he saw nothing to resemble the circumstances surrounding the build up at this site.

At the time numerous factions of Laotians were battling each other in the surrounding area, making that part of the country particularly hazardous.

Tuttle said that, to the best of his recollection, he knew of three individuals imprisoned at the site during its construction. One of them was Japanese, the other two were Asians. Other intelligence information came in later to indicate American POWs were also interned at Nhom Marrot, to include one source obtained via sensitive codeword channels. Tuttle said the

cumulative "sources were compelling."

Then in December of 1980, photographs showed a figure "52" stomped into the grass in the compound in such a way that it could not be seen by either of the two guard towers. Tuttle never did discover the significance of the number, but speculation ranged from the number of prisoners being held in the prison, something related to the tap code used by U.S. POWs in North Vietnam, to the number of hostages in Iran at the time.

Tuttle brought the information to JCS. He gave only facts and avoided emotion and conjecture. The members of JCS knew of the rapid construction of the prison because of ongoing briefings, but the added component of the "52" caused excitement. Tuttle said he was directed to give a full briefing to the White House (Richard Allen) and to DoD (Richard Armitage). He noted that Richard Allen was particularly interested in the camp. Tuttle said he did not know who briefed the President.

He did not know precisely when, or by whom, SOF-D (Delta) was alerted of the possibility of going on a rescue operation. He also said he was not certain if it was before the "52" photograph was observed or not. He provided intelligence support to JCS but was not otherwise involved in the planning of the operation. He remembered handcarrying a DIA-produced scale model of the prison site to Fort Bragg, where he turned it over to Delta officers and also provided them satellite photography. Tuttle recalled that Delta built a larger scale model from the DIA version.

Tuttle said he did not know who made the decision to use indigenous personnel to reconnoiter the prison and to take ground photos of the site. It was understandable, he thought, in that we would be violating the sovereignty of Laos were we to send armed U.S. troops across its borders. The intelligence, he said, certainly warranted confirmation, but time was of the essence. According to Tuttle, the Monsoon season would soon be starting, and the torrential rain could endanger any rescue attempt for months to come.

Tuttle stated he was then directed by Chairman Jones to inform our Ambassador to Thailand about what was being considered in his theater of responsibility. To this end, he went to Thailand, landing in Bangkok on Good Friday, 1981. He indicated he was surprised to find that Bo Gritz, a former officer in the U.S. Army special forces, was already there. Tuttle learned that Gritz had obtained the surveillance photos and other classified evidence through what Tuttle termed as "leaks" and the "ol' boy network." Gritz was preparing to reconnoiter the prison area with his own privately-funded and equipped group of men. Tuttle said that he was concerned that Gritz's activities would jeopardize the actual recon team, the POWs possibly in the prison, and compromise the entire operation. Gritz seemed concerned that a "cover up" of the POWs' plight was about to take

place again, and that even if the U.S. did mount an operation, it would not do enough to liberate the POWs. In any event, Gritz's people did not carry out their plans.

Tuttle learned that a Tim Geraughty (sp?), a Marine Corps officer who was working for the CIA, had recruited and trained the native team that would do the recon. Tuttle apparently provided intelligence support to Geraughty. The preparation for the recon showed how badly the CIA had fallen in terms of competence. For example, Tuttle said that the team decided they needed rope to scale the mountainous terrain they would be crossing. They had to have the rope sent all the way from Chicago, and when it arrived, it was pure white, making it highly visible, and therefore useless, in the jungle. Tuttle had olive green rope sent up from Ft. Bragg.

The recon team took 27 days to get to the site. Tuttle said the team met with incredible difficulties enroute, to include firefights with various factions, impossible terrain, terrible weather, and bad morale (to the point that one man even committed suicide). He also believes that no particular group ambushed the team in an attempt to thwart the recon mission: All of the factions were enthusiastically ambushing each other throughout the area. However, when asked if he thought the recon operation was compromised before it began, he replied he was "quite confident it was."

Tuttle stated that his access to the project ended on the same day the recon team returned from Laos. He recalled that day was 13 May 1981. Consequently, he knows nothing of the photos brought back by the team, although he thinks CIA may still retain them in the official files; and he had no other experiences with the project thereafter. He was assigned to Carrier Group-6 and ultimately departed.

Tuttle mentioned that when General Tighe told him that he was "being read out of the project" (i.e., no longer involved in the operation), he was also directed to write out everything for the record while events were still fresh in his mind. He gave the report to General Tighe and a copy to his relief. When asked if he thought the report was still on file, he said, "I hope not. There's stuff in there so sensitive no one should be able to see it."

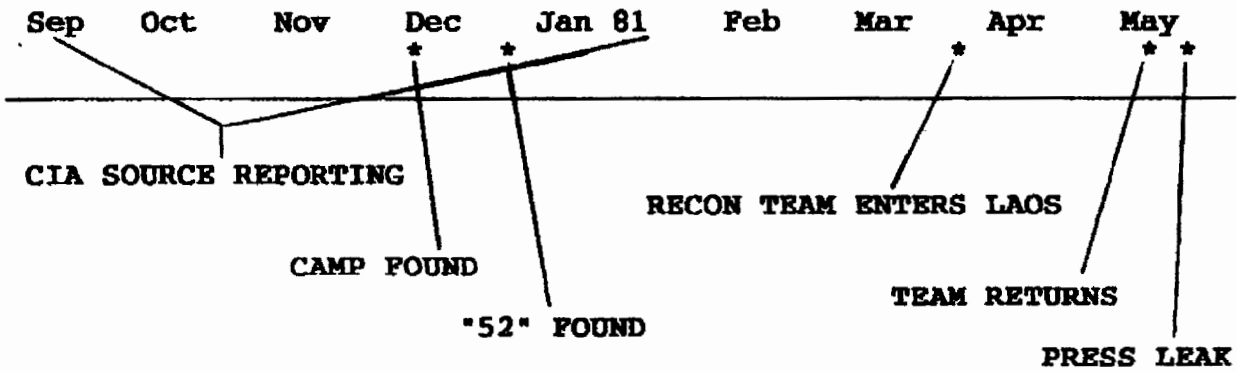
As the interview ended, Tuttle said he thought certain factors pointed to Americans, who though still missing, could be accounted for by the North Vietnamese or Laotians, if they chose:

- No amputees were ever returned;
- No repatriated POW ever talked about being in caves in Laos when evidence showed Americans had in fact been held in caves;
- No repatriated POW stated he saw Soviet personnel when 11the Soviets were known to have interrogated our people.

"We have the forces and will soon have the plan. All we need are domestic and international green lights, good weather and somebody to rescue."

Admiral Long, CINCPAC
Tank Brief to the Joint Chiefs
13 May 1981

Nhommarth Operation



Rec'd ↓

SUBJECT: PW/MIA Meeting

30 December 1980

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NSA representatives do not have to substantiate the case. Early December 80 case of 20 American POW's reported in , and not corroborated is typical. December 80 case is a fraud, and view American POW's in Laos as unlikely.

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To: Bill Codinha, Nancy Cuddy, Steve Gekoski, Rich Smith, Bob Taylor
Subject: New Date for Graver Deposition - 1 Oct

----- Message Contents -----

The deposition of Bill Graver, former CIA related to Nhom Marrot, is now rescheduled for 1 October at 1400, next Thursday.

Rich/Nancy, pls make the necessary arrangements for room and reporter. Prefer S-407. Level still at TS/SI

Bill C should not be available to perform depo.
I will attend as will CIA lawyer, Doug Bowman.

CORRECTION: BILL C. SHOULD "NOW" BE AVAILABLE, VICE "NOT" AVAILABLE -- SORRY FOR TYPO.

Thursday 1000

Reel 1

HHOM MARROTT

31 DECEMBER 1980

IMMEDIATE

TO:

FM:

PER JOHNSON TELEPHONE CONVERSATION OF 31 DECEMBER

FOLLOWING IS

AT 0700 THAI

LOCAL TIME ON 27 DECEMBER

REFER TO THE POLITBUREAU, MINISTRY OF DEFENSE, THAT

THAT U. S. AND THAI POWS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED BY

3 BUREAU ORDERS THEY BE REMOVED FROM ATTOPEU PROVINCE.

3 IT WILL PICK UP POWS AT THE AIRFIELD ON 26 DEC AT

1232 HOURS.

RVW DEC 02 DRV NFIB-9.1/36.

104JZ INT SSL K

This work sheet contains information affecting the National Defense of the United States within the meaning of the Espionage Laws, Title 18, U.S.C., Sections 793, 794 and 798, the transmission or the revelation of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING

SUBJECT: Nhommarath Detention Facility

1. On 17 April 1979, a Lao refugee wrote a letter to Gen Vang Pao in Montana which contained U.S. PW information. He indicated that 18 U.S. PWs and 25 Lao prisoners were detained in a cave near Muong Nhommarath, Khammouane Province (due east of NKP Thailand). The prisoners were reportedly moved to this location from northern Laos on 10 March 1979.
2. During subsequent DoD interviews (Oct 79 and Feb 80), the refugee reported that the above PWs, and a separate group consisting of two U.S. PWs, one Australian, and one Japanese were held in caves in the vicinity of Kham Keut, approximately 70 kms from Nhommarath. He provided a sketch of the detention area. One month after his initial DoD interview, the refugee reported to a Lao associate the detention of U.S. PWs at Muong Nhommarath.
3. Imagery from July 1979 indicated that a cave entrance is located approximately 500 meters from the location at which the two U.S. PWs, the Japanese and the Australian were reportedly detained. A cave entrance could not be located at the location at which the 18 U.S. PWs were reportedly detained. However, heavy foliage in that area offers the possibility that the cave entrance could exist but was obscured.
4. During September/October 1980, the refugee was re-interviewed and polygraphed. The examiner opined that he was reporting information which he believed to be accurate and that he had not conspired with any person to provide false information. The refugee identified the source of his PW information to be a Lao resistance fighter. Efforts to locate the resistance fighter are ongoing.
5. On 18 November 1980, CIA reported (TAB A) that it had received information concerning the alleged detention of 30 U.S. PWs at Muong Nhommarath. The information was received from a highly reliable Thai source who had received it from an untested Lao subsource. On 21 January 1981, CIA reported that the Lao sub-source advised that U.S. PWs had been moved from Nhommarath to Kontum, Vietnam. Additional information is being sought.
6. Imagery (TAB B) from 10 December 1980 indicates the presence of a detention facility at a location southeast of Muong Nhommarath. Imagery indicates this facility did not exist in April 1978 (TAB C) and was partially completed by September 1979 (TAB D). Further, examination of imagery from 10 and 30 December 1980, and 2 January 1981 reveals that the number "52" has been stamped in the dirt in the row crop area located between the camp inner and outer fencing, in a location not apparently observable from either of the two guard towers (TAB E). Imagery of 30 December 1980 indicates the presence of approximately 25 persons in the inner compound and imagery of 24 January 1981 indicates the presence of nine (9) probable persons, 4 in the inner compound and five in the outer compound (TAB F).

7. On 17 January 1981, DIA requested that CIA conduct an operation inside Laos in an attempt to verify the presence of U.S. PWs at this facility. CIA has agreed to undertake this operation, and is currently in the planning stage.

METHOD

THIS ABOVE DESCRIBED DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED IN THIS OFFICE. CIRCULATION OF THIS DOCUMENT WILL BE LIMITED TO INDIVIDUALS INDICATED BELOW. THIS DOCUMENT SHALL BE RETURNED TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE FOR RECORDS PRIOR TO DISSEMINATION TO ANY OTHER OFFICE OR INDIVIDUAL.

- TAB A - CIA Memorandum dated 18 November 1980
- B - 10 December 1980 Imagery
- C - April 1978 Imagery
- D - September 1979 Imagery
- E - Variousy dated Imagery
- F - 24 January 1981 Imagery

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES	
PROPERTY MANAGEMENT	
IDENTIFICATION DIVISION	
OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE	
INTELLIGENCE DIVISION	
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT	
LEGAL ATTACHE	
SPECIAL ASSISTANT	
SPECIAL OPERATIONS	
AGENCY	
METHOD	
PHOTOGRAPH	

to be used with confidence presence of U.S. PWs at this facility.

Handwritten notes and signatures:
 [Circular stamp with illegible text]
 [Large handwritten signature]

*File C
a. Feb*

DAY ONE - Symbols

First Panel "Open" E&E Methods/Possible Symbols

Mr. Warren Grey or Bob Sheetz, Defense Intelligence Agency
Mr. Chuck Knapper, Imagery Analyst, Defense Intelligence Agency
Mr. Bob Dussault, Joint Services SERE Agency
Mr. Al Erickson, Joint Services SERE Agency
CIA Imagery Analyst or Independent Imagery Consultant

Second Panel "Open" DIA Follow-up

Mr. Warren Grey, Analyst, Defense Intelligence Agency
Mr. Chuck Knapper, Imagery Analyst, Defense Intelligence Agency
Mr. William Gadoury, JTF-FA Detachment Three
Mr. Mike Sherwood, Stoney Beach
Mr. Al Shinkle, POW Activist
Mr. Bob Dussault, Joint Services SERE Agency

DAY TWO - Nhom Marrot

First Panel "Open" The Intelligence

Admiral Jerry O. Tuttle, former Deputy Director DIA, 1979-81
Mr. Richard Allen, former National Security Advisor, 1981
Mr. Bill Graver, former Chief SEA office, CIA/DDO, 1981

Second Panel "Closed" The Operation

Admiral Jerry O. Tuttle, former Deputy Director DIA, 1979-1981
Mr. Richard Allen, former National Security Advisor, 1981
Mr. Bill Graver, former Chief SEA office, CIA/DDO, 1981
Mr. Tim Geraghty, Col (Ret) CIA Special Operations Case Officer
Mr. Don Gordon, Col (Ret), former J-2, JSOC, 1981
Mr. Houm Pheng Insisiengmay, CIA Team Leader

Bill
Delta

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Bill

FROM: Bob/Dino

SUBJECT: Interview with Colonel Tom O'Connell

PROJECT: Post 73/75 Military Operations

DATE: 6 December 1991

f We met with Col. Tom O'Connell, U.S. Army, on 22 November, 1300 hrs for approximately 2 hours. Col. O'Connell who is presently Deputy Director of the US Special Operations Command/ Washington Office, was the S-2 (Intelligence Officer) for SOF-D (Special Operations Forces-Delta) during the period June 1980 - February 1983. He returned to Delta for a six month follow-on assignment from February 1985 - July 1985.

Our interview focused on his tenure at Delta during the reportedly aborted Delta operation of early 1981. Col. O'Connell had not been previously interviewed on this subject. As Delta's S-2, Col. O'Connell would have been intimately involved in operational planning and the intelligence on which it was based. He recounted the following:

In the fall of 1980, possibly in November, the new commander of Delta, Colonel Rod Paschall, U.S. Army, informed O'Connell that they would be initiating a compartmented operation concerning a potential rescue of American POWs from a site in south central Laos. The operation would be referred to as "XXXXXXXX" and initially restricted for planning to 8-9 personnel within Delta. O'Connell recalled that intelligence information regarding the suspect site was provided to the command by Admiral Jerry Tuttle, USN, of the Defense Intelligence Agency.

Paschall directed that nothing regarding this operation be typed, nothing transmitted via cable traffic, and that everything be hand-carried. As a result, O'Connell himself hand wrote anything regarding the operation, including questions for DIA, and carried them back and forth to Washington. O'Connell recalled that they did not have specific information by name on which American POWs might be interned, but thought the number was in the range of perhaps 15.

As the S-2, O'Connell concentrated on the tactical aspects of preparing for such an operation, i.e., ingress and egress routes, radar coverage, enemy security and finding a location for secure rehearsals. Security was tight.

He recalled that satellite photography was provided to the

command for planning, but much of the analyses of the imagery came from DIA. He stated that there were a few HUMINT reports involved, but they sketchy, as he remembered. He admitted that the command may not have been privy to everything available to decision-makers in Washington, and that there was some CIA involvement with some of the intelligence analysis.

He recalled that one satellite photograph of the camp piqued a lot of interest, that being the photograph containing what appeared to be a number "52" stomped into the grass, in an area adjacent to or in the camp. (Investigator Note: The "52" was, we believe, first observed on imagery on 30 December 1980. If so, this would have been after Delta was already alerted to begin preparing for this operation and would have been in addition to the intelligence that triggered the alert order.) At the time, O'Connell recalled, there was speculation that this was some sort of coded message being conveyed by interned POWs. O'Connell offered the following theories on what the message may have meant: "S2" for "look here", 52 referring to the number of hostages captured in Iran, B52 bomber crew in captivity, Baron 52 which had been shot down in 1973, or a B52 Special Forces team.

O'Connell said he was sure there was other national intelligence involved, and that he seemed to recall something about a SIGINT site in Thailand that was active.

By the beginning of 1981, planning and training was already underway for a reconnaissance phase and efforts were being made to find a rehearsal site. A team had been sent to the Philippines to locate a suitable - isolated - site to set up a rock camp for rescue rehearsals. O'Connell said that initial planning was already proceeding on the rescue phase itself, to include helicopter routes and fuel consumption rates.

O'Connell recalled that one day Colonel Paschall told him that "someone would not allow Delta to go in on the ground to recon" the camp prior to the rescue operation. He indicated that CIA wanted indigenous personnel to do the recon. O'Connell reflected that there was frustration and disbelief that such a mission would be handed over to individuals of questionable training and capability. wky

He remembered that shortly thereafter, Admiral Tuttle called Paschall on a non-secure line and requested 100 ft of climbing rope, snap links and 12-15 small pairs of aviator gloves for use by the CIA recon team. O'Connell delivered this equipment himself to Admiral Tuttle's office.

O'Connell believed the recon team conducted its operation in February or March. He related that because CIA ran this phase of the operation, Delta received little information on the team's progress. He was aware, however, that it had a difficult time getting to the site and he remembered that he received reports and that some of the team had been ambushed or lost at the

border. He also could not confirm the team actually located the right camp or what navigation equipment they might have had - he doubted they had the sophisticated direction finding (DF) equipment available to Delta, which could have ensured the team's finding the correct camp.

As far as he knew, Delta never received a full debrief. He did, however, see the photos taken by the team, which he described as blurry, taken from a great distance, and inconclusive. The photos did show blurry figures and structures. However, it could not be determined if they were Americans or Asians. He opined they must have used a 1,000mm camera lens, and described it as extremely difficult to use. He doubted the poorly trained CIA recon team knew how to use the equipment properly.

Delta's reaction to what was considered a bungled recon operation was anger. O'Connell questioned why "go that distance and then conduct a third-rate reconnaissance." O'Connell also related that, either during the recon mission or shortly after, a meeting of the Special Operations Advisory Group (SOAG) was convened. The SOAG is a group of former and retired high level military and intelligence officers who advise the Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs on special operations. The SOAG essentially provided a sanity check on proposed operations. O'Connell was at that meeting.

At that meeting, O'Connell remembered that Admiral Tuttle had just been to Thailand and had met with Thai officials. He purportedly was there to see what kind of support the U.S. could expect from Thailand if a rescue operation were mounted. O'Connell recalled that members of the SOAG were shocked when Tuttle listed off all the Thai officials he had spoken to about a possible operation. The consensus seemed to be that Tuttle had spoken to far too many people and was not discreet in his handling of an extremely sensitive operation. The fear was that the operation and the Thai connection might be compromised. O'Connell's opinion was that Tuttle, a surface Navy officer, had little experience in special operations/intelligence and was unfamiliar with discreet procedures to handle such matters.

Colonel O'Connell also provided the names of several persons he recommended be contacted. Many of these individuals were also involved with the 1981 operation, or may have knowledge of subsequent operations. With your approval we will begin contacting these individuals, starting with Rod Paschall commander of Delta at that time. We need to focus particularly on the decision making process, above Colonel Paschall; who was briefed, what was discussed at the high level meetings that certainly occurred and what decisions were made and the rationale behind them.

Recommendation: That Colonel O'Connell's statement on this matter be recorded by affidavit or deposition.

M E M O R A N D U M

Tuttle - 1702 - 0001

TO: Bill

FROM: Bob T./Vic

SUBJECT: Interview with Admiral Jerry Tuttle, USN

PROJECT: Post 73/75 Military Operations; Covert and Open

DATE: 5 December 1991

We met with Admiral Tuttle on this date at 0915 hrs for approximately 1 1/2 hours. He was friendly, professional, and gave freely of his time.

He stated that in August of 1979, General Eugene Tighe, USAF, who was then Director of DIA, asked him to help with the POW issue. At first, Tuttle said, he encountered skepticism with respect to whether DIA was involved in a cover up of facts about our POW/MIAs. He noted that when he entered the POW/MIA issue, he definitely encountered a "mindset to debunk," although he claimed it was not malicious. It was the information he brought out at Congressional hearings and official briefings concerning the "Mortician" and then the Nhom Marrot project that helped him demonstrate to cynics that he was being as forthright as possible.

Tuttle indicated that in late 1980 ELINT (he may have meant COMINT) reports showed what appeared to be a prison being built along Route #13 in Happy Valley, a remote Laotian area southwest of Nhom Marrot, the nearest sizable town. What had caught the attention of DIA was the rapidity with which the prison was being built, the remoteness of the site, and the lack of labor-saving equipment and resources during construction. Tuttle said the prison was undergoing "explosive" (his word) development. In reviewing evidence of other construction sites, past and present, he said he saw nothing to resemble the circumstances surrounding the build up at this site.

At the time numerous factions of Laotians were battling each other in the surrounding area, making that part of the country particularly hazardous.

Tuttle said that, to the best of his recollection, he knew of three individuals imprisoned at the site during its construction. One of them was Japanese, the other two were Asians. Other intelligence information came in later to indicate American POWs were also interned at Nhom Marrot, to include one source obtained via sensitive codeword channels. Tuttle said the

umulative "sources were compelling."

Then in December of 1980, photographs showed a figure "52" stomped into the grass in the compound in such a way that it could not be seen by either of the two guard towers. Tuttle never did discover the significance of the number, but speculation ranged from the number of prisoners being held in the prison, something related to the tap code used by U.S. POWs in North Vietnam, to the number of hostages in Iran at the time.

Tuttle brought the information to JCS. He gave only facts and avoided emotion and conjecture. The members of JCS knew of the rapid construction of the prison because of ongoing briefings, but the added component of the "52" caused excitement. Tuttle said he was directed to give a full briefing to the White House (Richard Allen) and to DoD (Richard Armitage). He noted that Richard Allen was particularly interested in the camp. Tuttle said he did not know who briefed the President.

He did not know precisely when, or by whom, SOF-D (Delta) was alerted of the possibility of going on a rescue operation. He also said he was not certain if it was before the "52" photograph was observed or not. He provided intelligence support to JCS but was not otherwise involved in the planning of the operation. He remembered handcarrying a DIA-produced scale model of the prison site to Fort Bragg, where he turned it over to Delta officers and also provided them satellite photography. Tuttle recalled that Delta built a larger scale model from the DIA version.

Tuttle said he did not know who made the decision to use indigenous personnel to reconnoiter the prison and to take ground photos of the site. It was understandable, he thought, in that we would be violating the sovereignty of Laos were we to send armed U.S. troops across its borders. The intelligence, he said, certainly warranted confirmation, but time was of the essence. According to Tuttle, the Monsoon season would soon be starting, and the torrential rain could endanger any rescue attempt for months to come.

Tuttle stated he was then directed by Chairman Jones to inform our Ambassador to Thailand about what was being considered in his theater of responsibility. To this end, he went to Thailand, landing in Bangkok on Good Friday, 1981. He indicated he was surprised to find that Bo Gritz, a former officer in the U.S. Army special forces, was already there. Tuttle learned that Gritz had obtained the surveillance photos and other classified evidence through what Tuttle termed as "leaks" and the "ol' boy network." Gritz was preparing to reconnoiter the prison area with his own privately-funded and equipped group of men. Tuttle said that he was concerned that Gritz's activities would jeopardize the actual recon team, the POWs possibly in the prison, and compromise the entire operation. Gritz seemed concerned that a "cover up" of the POWs' plight was about to take

place again, and that even if the U.S. did mount an operation, it would not do enough to liberate the POWs. In any event, Gritz's people did not carry out their plans.

Tuttle learned that a Tim Geraughty (sp?), a Marine Corps officer who was working for the CIA, had recruited and trained the native team that would do the recon. Tuttle apparently provided intelligence support to Geraughty. The preparation for the recon showed how badly the CIA had fallen in terms of competence. For example, Tuttle said that the team decided they needed rope to scale the mountainous terrain they would be crossing. They had to have the rope sent all the way from Chicago, and when it arrived, it was pure white, making it highly visible, and therefore useless, in the jungle. Tuttle had olive green rope sent up from Ft. Bragg.

The recon team took 27 days to get to the site. Tuttle said the team met with incredible difficulties enroute, to include firefights with various factions, impossible terrain, terrible weather, and bad morale (to the point that one man even committed suicide). He also believes that no particular group ambushed the team in an attempt to thwart the recon mission: All of the factions were enthusiastically ambushing each other throughout the area. However, when asked if he thought the recon operation was compromised before it began, he replied he was "quite confident it was."

Tuttle stated that his access to the project ended on the same day the recon team returned from Laos. He recalled that day was 13 May 1981. Consequently, he knows nothing of the photos brought back by the team, although he thinks CIA may still retain them in the official files; and he had no other experiences with the project thereafter. He was assigned to Carrier Group-6 and ultimately departed.

Tuttle mentioned that when General Tighe told him that he was "being read out of the project" (i.e., no longer involved in the operation), he was also directed to write out everything for the record while events were still fresh in his mind. He gave the report to General Tighe and a copy to his relief. When asked if he thought the report was still on file, he said, "I hope not. There's stuff in there so sensitive no one should be able to see it."

As the interview ended, Tuttle said he thought certain factors pointed to Americans, who though still missing, could be accounted for by the North Vietnamese or Laotians, if they chose:

- No amputees were ever returned;
- No repatriated POW ever talked about being in caves in Laos when evidence showed Americans had in fact been held in caves;
- No repatriated POW stated he saw Soviet personnel when the Soviets were known to have interrogated our people.

CHAPTER OUTLINE
COVERT OPS/THE CASE OF NHOM MARROT

I. PURPOSE: The purpose of this investigation was to determine what, if any, official U.S. covert operations may have been launched after 1973, or specifically after Operation Homecoming, to confirm the presence of live American POWs in Southeast Asia, and what intelligence information may have been available that necessitated the need for such operations.

II. BACKGROUND: There have been numerous allegations made of possible clandestine intelligence or military operations conducted by the U.S. government into Southeast Asia. Many of these allegations contend that such official operations succeeded in returning with confirmation of live POWs in captivity, but that information was kept secret from the American public. In May of 1981 the Washington Post, one of several newspapers, printed a story of one official incursion into Laos by American sponsored mercenaries, to confirm the presence of POWs at a specific camp monitored by U.S. Intelligence (sometimes referred to as the Nhom Marrot operation). In addition, there have been several unofficial operations mounted by private groups, attempting to penetrate Laos in search of POWs and allegations that some of these attempts were secretly sanctioned by the U.S. government.

III. INVESTIGATIVE PROCEDURES: This Committee held a closed hearing on October 16, into the circumstances of the alleged 1981 "Nhom Marrot" operation, reported by the Washington Post. The Committee has spent many months, and conducted numerous depositions of present and former officials to determine exactly what occurred in this case. Because of the level of classification of some of this material, and in order to protect current operations and capabilities, the details of this case remain classified. Much of the intelligence information, however, leading up to this event may be ultimately declassified.

The investigation into unofficial or "private" operations focused primarily on whether there was official U.S. government sanction or support for any of these operations. Other aspects of these private forays were examined under a separate Committee investigation pertaining to oversight of private POW/MIA organizations and their activities. The private operation commonly known as "Grand Eagle" has been investigated, in regard to government support of that private initiative. We have obtained, enough documentation from Army intelligence files to allow the Committee to draw rather conclusive findings regarding official U.S support for that operation.

IV. FACTS: Final conclusions and findings for this investigation are pending Member evaluation of the facts, which follow:

-- The Committee has identified only one official operation mounted after 1973, to confirm the presence of American POWs in Southeast Asia; this makes the distinction between major cross-border intelligence, military or paramilitary type operations and normal intelligence operations involving collection agents or clandestine sources. There have been numerous intelligence operations involving individual sources or collection agents, with requirements relating to the POW problem.

-- The Intelligence relating to the Nhom Marrot case was perhaps the most compelling and multiple source intelligence ever made available to intelligence officials and policymakers of "possible" live American POWs still in captivity up until that time. The actions of U.S. officials in response to this intelligence attest to the quality and quantity of that intelligence.

-- The U.S. intelligence community had several human intelligence sources reporting the presence of American POWs held in the vicinity of Nhom Marrot from 1979, up through early 1981. One of these was a sensitive source with unusually good access. That particular source provided a series of reports, indicating possibly up to 30 Americans working at a detention camp near Nhom Marrot. The source indicated the prisoners were periodically moved from, then back to the camp on work details. Based on the HUMINT reporting, the intelligence community was able to locate a detention facility through overhead photography near the village of Nhom Marrot in late 1980.

-- A second hand DIA source, in November 1979, reported the camp held an American POW named "Ltc Paul W. Mercland." DIA stated in a briefing to the HFAC on 25 June 1981, that although they could not correlate a "Mercland" to any missing Americans, there was a Paul W. Bannon lost in Laos in 1969. General Tighe, then Director of DIA was at that briefing and told its members that "Mercland" could have been a mispronunciation of "Ame" and speculated that "Bannon" may have been inadvertently c as the information was passed out by the source. The second source passed a polygraph test given by DIA.

-- Admiral Tuttle, who was Deputy Director of DIA at time, testified in his deposition that he also recalled SIGINT reports referring to American POWs at Nhom Marrot. NSA has been able to confirm Admiral Tuttle's memory of SIGINT reports of Americans at Nhom Marrot. Among the declassified reports found at NSA, however, was a copy of an intercept that originated from an allied government, that did report the movement of American POWs from Attepeu in late December 1980. This report which was deemed to be unreliable by CIA, was remarkably similar to an independent HUMINT report within days of intercept, the American POWs, who had been working at Attepeu, were moved back to Nhom Marrot.

-- In late December 1980 what appeared to be the number

"52" scratched in the row crop area within the compound was detected on photography. CIA, in a 6 January 1981 "Spot Report" stated ... "analysis of further imagery of 30 December 1980 located what appears to be the number "52", possibly followed by the letter "K", traced on the ground in an agricultural plot insider the outer perimeter of the above facility. DIA is unable to ascribe any particular significance to the number, but "K" was given to U.S. pilots as a ground distress signal. It is thus conceivable that this represents an attempt by a prisoner to signal to any aircraft that might pass overhead."

-- The "52" was observed over a period of time. DIA imagery analysts in 1981, stated in an Imagery Analysis Memorandum dated February 23 1981 that "the number "52" is still visible with no change. The lack of change indicates that the numerals may have been dug into the earth." This contradicts current DIA analysis, provided during the symbols hearing of 15 October, that contends that the "52" changed shape in different photographs, therefore is questionable as an intentional symbol.

-- The "sensitive" HUMINT source reported that the American POWs had been moved to Vietnam for security reasons by the end of January 1981. Imagery analysts reported the "52" had begun to fade away by February.

-- Other aspects of the intelligence and actions taken to confirm the presence of Americans at the camp remain classified.

-- A report of a sighting of one possible caucasian at the suspect camp was received by CIA, but not reported outside the agency. CIA has been unable to answer exactly why this was not reported to DoD, State and the White House, but contend it must they must have had a valid reason why it was not. They have speculated that they may have determined the possible caucasian was a Chinese prisoner, or that the reporters were fabricating.

-- Later in 1981, the intelligence community interviewed a refugee who was at a camp similar to the Nhom Marrot camp, and saw no Americans or Europeans. They admit, however, they are not certain it was the same camp, and it was during a different period than when the American POWs were allegedly detained there.

-- Efforts taken by the intelligence community and the U.S. military to investigate and prepare for the possibility of live American prisoners were extensive.

-- President Reagan and his National Security Advisor, Mr. Richard Allen were aware of this intelligence and the actions taken. It had the highest national interest. (Allen depo/Tuttle depo/notes)

-- The intelligence community's actions to confirm the presence of American POWs at this camp were inconclusive. Steps were underway to resume efforts to obtain a conclusive answer.

when a press leak killed any further efforts.

Private Operations with Official Support

-- On the question of official U.S. support being provided to the private operation known as "Grand Eagle," U.S. Army intelligence documentation confirms that a component of Army intelligence did in fact provide a long range camera, polygraph and other equipment and financial support to Mr. Gritz in support of his group. This equipment and financial support, however, was provided in advance of that intelligence component receiving full approval to provide such support, and in fact the request (or CIOP proposal) was ultimately denied. The equipment and money had, however, already been released. (Army contact reports and documentation of assistance provided are in Senate Security and are waiting declassification.)

-- The Committee is currently investigating allegations of off-line U.S. government (NSC) support to private organizations in regard to fund raising and movement of funds to indigenous rebel groups - related indirectly to the POW issue or as a cover for providing financial support to resistance groups using non-appropriated funds. We are still looking into these allegations.

-- In 1982, the USG monitored the communications of a private organization operating from Thailand, attempting to undertake a private foray into Laos in search of POWs. DoD requested a determination from Justice Department as to the legality of monitoring the communications of American citizens abroad. This was in fact carried out. (These documents, including legal opinions, are in senate security and waiting declassification.)



DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

28 JAN 1981

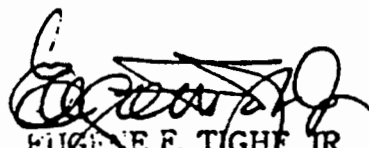
S-9073/DI-7

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHAIRMAN, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

SUBJECT: Current U.S. Prisoner of War Intelligence

1. As you are aware, there are approximately 2,500 Americans unaccounted-for in Southeast Asia. Since 1975, DIA has received approximately 1,000 reports from Indochinese refugees concerning alleged sightings of Americans, crash locations, grave locations, and the handling and disposition of U.S. remains. Of these 1,000 reports, approximately 300 deal with the alleged first hand sighting of U.S. PWs detained in Southeast Asia.
2. Since April 1979, DIA has been investigating information provided by a refugee who alleged the detention of U.S. PWs in Laos. In November 1980, CIA provided information which corroborates the refugee's report. Overhead imagery has verified the existence of a detention facility at the alleged site. At enclosure is a chronological listing with tabs, which support the belief that U.S. PWs may be detained in Laos.
3. On 17 January 1981, DIA requested that CIA attempt to confirm the presence of U.S. PWs in Laos. The details of CIA intentions are contained in the enclosure. As the possibility exists that CIA could confirm these reports, I recommend that you consider preparing a contingency plan in the event this very important undertaking proves successful. To support this effort, I will request that CIA prepare a topographical model of the site and surrounding area.
4. As DIA is also investigating other reports alleging the detention of U.S. PWs in Southeast Asia, it is necessary that DIA (DI) remain the focal point for all intelligence activity relating to this matter. We will continue to obtain imagery of this facility and provide timely information to you concerning the progress of the CIA *MT*.

1 Enclosure
Chronological Listing


EUGENE F. TIGHE, JR.
Lieutenant General, USAF
Director

CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING

SUBJECT: Nhommarath Detention Facility

1. On 17 April 1979, a Lao refugee wrote a letter to Gen Vang Pao in Montana which contained U.S. PW information. He indicated that 18 U.S. PWs and 25 Lao prisoners were detained in a cave near Muong Nhommarath, Khammouane Province (due east of NKP Thailand). The prisoners were reportedly moved to this location from northern Laos on 10 March 1979.
2. During subsequent DoD interviews (Oct 79 and Feb 80), the refugee reported that the above PWs, and a separate group consisting of two U.S. PWs, one Australian, and one Japanese were held in caves in the vicinity of Kham Keut, approximately 70 kms from Nhommarath. He provided a sketch of the detention area. One month after his initial DoD interview, the refugee reported to a Lao associate the detention of U.S. PWs at Muong Nhommarath.
3. Imagery from July 1979 indicated that a cave entrance is located approximately 500 meters from the location at which the two U.S. PWs, the Japanese and the Australian were reportedly detained. A cave entrance could not be located at the location at which the 18 U.S. PWs were reportedly detained. However, heavy foliage in that area offers the possibility that the cave entrance could exist but was obscured.
4. During September/October 1980, the refugee was re-interviewed and polygraphed. The examiner opined that he was reporting information which he believed to be accurate and that he had not conspired with any person to provide false information. The refugee identified the source of his PW information to be a Lao resistance fighter. Efforts to locate the resistance fighter are ongoing.
5. On 18 November 1980, CIA reported (TAB A) that it had received information concerning the alleged detention of 30 U.S. PWs at Muong Nhommarath. The information was received from a highly reliable Thai source who had received it from an untested Lao subsource. On 21 January 1981, CIA reported that the Lao sub-source advised that U.S. PWs had been moved from Nhommarath to Kontum, Vietnam. Additional information is being sought.
6. Imagery (TAB B) from 10 December 1980 indicates the presence of a detention facility at a location southeast of Muong Nhommarath. Imagery indicates this facility did not exist in April 1978 (TAB C) and was partially completed by September 1979 (TAB D). Further, examination of imagery from 10 and 30 December 1980, and 2 January 1981 reveals that the number "52" has been stamped in the dirt in the row crop area located between the camp inner and outer fencing, in a location not apparently observable from either of the two guard towers (TAB E). Imagery of 30 December 1980 indicates the presence of approximately 25 persons in the inner compound and imagery of 24 January 1981 indicates the presence of nine (9) probable persons, 4 in the inner compound and five in the outer compound (TAB F).

7. On 17 January 1981, DIA requested that CIA conduct an operation inside Laos in an attempt to verify the presence of U.S. PWs at this facility. CIA has agreed to undertake this operation, and is currently in the planning stage.

METHOD

TAB A - CIA Memorandum dated 18 November 1980
B - 10 December 1980 Imagery
C - April 1978 Imagery
D - September 1979 Imagery
E - Various dated Imagery
F - 24 January 1981 Imagery

②

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Bill

FROM: Bob T.

DATE: 5 December 1991

SUBJECT: Post 73/75 Military Operations - Don Gordon

On 5 December, I spoke by phone with Mr. Don Gordon, former J-2 (Intelligence Officer) for the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) in 1981. JSOC was then, and still is today, the joint (inter-service) command authority for special operations units such as Delta (Army) and Seal Team-Six (Navy). As the J-2 of JSOC, Mr. Gordon was involved in planning for the 1981 Nhom Marrot operation. He recounted the following:

In early 1981, around January, JSOC had been alerted to a possible rescue attempt in Laos for American POWs and had formed a small team to begin planning. It was obvious that the higher levels in the Pentagon had sensitive intelligence and that they wanted time to evaluate it. He recalled that at some point they obtained overhead photography of the suspect camp, showing what was interpreted to be a "52" stomped into the grass nearby. He recalled this created speculation that this might be a signal from POWs, perhaps associated with the POW tap code, a Rivet Joint collection aircraft that was lost in Laos, or a B-52 crew. They also had conflicting intelligence that this might be a Vietnamese Army camp.

By April, the Pacific Command was actively involved in planning and a 10-15 man PACOM planning team was working with JSOC. Gordon also recalled a special KH satellite mission being tasked to collect on the suspect camp. A scale model of the camp was constructed at the Navy Yard and brought down to Fort Bragg where a "facsimile" model was made. He specifically recalled that overhead photography could make out what was written on a large sign over the entrance of the camp. He thought it said something in Laotian like "Through your labors, you will be free."

Gordon remembered that an interagency meeting was held in April to discuss what action to take. JSOC, JCS, CIA, and NSA attended. At that meeting General Scholts, commander of JSOC, told his CIA counterpart at that meeting that he "wanted round eyes to look at that camp" before an operation was mounted. Gordon could not remember the CIA official, but said he was high ranking. When

In fact, General Scholts had first argued that Delta should perform the recon. However, when CIA insisted it had jurisdiction over the recon, and that it be done with non-U.S. personnel, Scholts demanded that the team have at least one American. CIA agreed they would have an American accompany the team. Gordon recalled it was a Marine Corp officer working for the Agency, although he did not have his name. As far as he knows, he led the team but cannot confirm it. CIA left the meeting saying it would take 6-8 weeks to prepare for the mission.

Gordon described the CIA run mission as ineptly organized and ill-equipped. He recalls that they were equipped with a World-War II era radio. He stated they had no Direction Finding (DF) equipment.

He thought the mission was over by June, but received little feed-back on the results. He learned they had observed the camp for two hours, or two days, depending on "who you talk to" and took photographs, which reportedly contained no indication of Americans. When he asked to see the pictures, he said he was refused. He said the operation essentially ended there, and remembered being surprised at how fast interest dropped.

Gordon also provided a number of names of individuals involved in various aspects of the 1981 operation. We will pursue those leads, especially General Scholts and other participants of the April interagency meeting.

To: Bob Taylor
Subject: MFR on Interview of Larry Waters

----- Message Contents -----

MFR: On 20 July 1992, I conducted a taped interview of Larry Waters, former CIA case officer in Bangkok, 1978 - 82. I had arranged to have him come in regarding his involvement with the Nhom Marrot operation of 1981. Mr. Waters was the officer in charge of running the CIA recon team and was involved in the team debrief, when it returned.

To summarize, Mr. Waters said he did not recall the team bringing back evidence to support the presence of POWs at the camp. He could "not recall" when asked, the cable sent from Bangkok station to HQs, saying that two members of the team said they saw one, repeat one possible caucasian, & thought they had photographed him, but could not find the photo after it was developed. He could not recall nor explain the cables existence at CIA HQs.

His interview tape is on file at Senate Security.

R. Taylor 21/7/92

To: Bob Taylor
Subject: MFR 9/01/92

----- Message Contents -----

On Tuesday, 1 Sep 92, I received a return call from Dick Marcinco former commander of Seal Team-6 until 1983. I had called him pertaining to a number of allegations of a 1983 Seal operation into southeast asia related to POWs. After speaking to him briefly it was obvious the operation which he was aware of was the 1981 Nhom Marrot JSOC rescue plan. He was aware of the planning for this operation because Seal Team-6 was part of JSOC, although they were not directly involved in the planning. Marcinco was aware of no other instance of planning, or an operation, relating to POWs during or after his command of ST-6. He said he would have known of such planning after he left, thru contacts. He also said he was interviewed in July 91 by Tracey Ursery.

Bob Taylor

Thom Marrot

TASKER NUMBER CDO-012

DUE DATE 10 Dec

REDACT _____ DECLASSIFY X

DOCUMENTS REMOVED/BEING REVIEWED:

• MFR ADMIRAL INMAN; DTD 23 Aug 85 (2 pgs)

**DOCUMENTS
REMOVED**

**NOT
DECLASSIFIED**

OPERATIONAL