

OPERATION POCKET CHANGE (OVERVIEW)

- FIRST INDICATION THERE MAY BE AMERICAN POWS IN LAOS.
- *Data* : POSSIBLE LAOS DETENTION FACILITIES. *MT*
- *Data* : PROBABLE LAOS DETENTION FACILITY. *MT*
- *Data* : CINCPAC TASKED W/ DEVELOPMENT OF U.S. POW RESCUE CONOP.
- *Data* : INFORMED OF PENDING MISSION.
- *Data* : INITIAL OPTIONS/THREAT BRIEFED TO CINCPAC
- *Data* : *MT*
- *Data* : CINCPAC POCKET CHANGE TABLETOP CONDUCTED.

OPERATION POCKET CHANGE (OVERVIEW - CONTINUED)

- *Date* CONOP COMPLETION DEADLINE.
- *Date* : *MT* *MT*
- *Date* *MT* DEBRIEF BEGINS.
- *Date* CINCIPAC RECOMMENDS TO CJCS TO PUT
POCKET CHANGE OP ON BACK-BURNER DUE TO *Date*
Date

DIRECTORATE FOR INTELLIGENCE
 ANALYSIS DIVISION

ANALYSIS MEMORANDUM

TO : DT-7C (Attn: NAME)

DATE: FEB 23 1981

FROM : Data

SUBJECT : Detention Camp in Laos

COUNTRY:
 LA

1. REFERENCE/REQUIREMENT: (U)
 PLO 00228C2-81

B.E. NO:
Data

2. TARGET INFORMATION:

Geo Coords
 17-30-46N/105-25-19E
 UTM WE 545492

Map/Chart Ref:
 ATC, 1:200,000, M0617-18HL
 JOG, 1:250,000, NE 48-11

TDI Cat.
Data

3. MT DATA:

Project MT Date MT MT

See MT Data Sheet, Appendix 1

4. COLLATERAL REFERENCES:

N/A

5. MT ANALYSIS/COMMENTS:

NOTE: Information contained in this report is derived primarily from MT sources and is not intended to constitute all-source, finished intelligence.

A detention camp Data is located in central Laos, 67 kilometers east of Thakhek, Laos at 17-30-46N/105-25-19E. The camp was built between April 1978 and September 1979 and has been definitely occupied since at least 10 December 1980. The probable former location of this camp is about 7 kilometers southwest of the current site at 17-29-00N/105-21-55E.

I believe that this camp Data and the probable former camp 7 km SW are related because of the close location of the two sites, the timing of dismantlement and construction of the camps and the similar appearance and size of the camps. Both camps have two compounds enclosed by fences with a trench between them. Both have two observation towers. The inner compound of both has a corridor that extends from the inner area with a building at the end; however, the current site has a double-fenced corridor to the former site's single corridor. The former site's outer fence, after a 1976-78 addition, enclosed an area of approximately 163,000 square feet, which is close to the current site's area of about 170,000 square feet. The former site's inner compound enclosed an area of about 17,000 square feet in 1976 and, after nearly

compound, near the entrance to the inner compound. The inner fence is basically rectangular with a wide, open corridor off the long side opposite the observation tower. One small building is at the end of this corridor, and two larger and three smaller buildings are within the rectangular area. The outside fence is basically square, with the main entrance on the north side and a smaller entrance on the east side. The camp is connected to Route 12 by vehicle tracks, although no vehicles are *MT* and to two villages by trails.

MT of 17 January 1976 *MT* there was little change to this installation. One very small building in the outer compound was added and one is gone (*MT*). *MT* is the best of the camp and *MT* However, because of the *MT* the measurements obtained could be off by as much as eleven feet. Using measurements of the buildings in the camp and assigning 50 square feet per person, about 100 people could reside in the inner compound and about 55 in the outer compound. This does not take in account space used for storage, cooking, etc., which would reduce these estimates.

There was no *MT* in this area during 1977.

The next *MT* of this former site was on 5 April 1978. The *MT*, but it was determined that there has been significant changes since January 1976 *MT*. The area of the inner compound appears to have nearly doubled with expansion to the south and west. At least two buildings have been added to the inner compound and probably more, but *MT* At least two buildings have been added to the outer compound and the outer fence has been extended to the south. Looking over to the current location of the camp *MT* only a small trail where the camp would be built *MT*

MT 14 September 1979 *MT* the former site nearly dismantled. The only remaining features were the outer fence, two observation towers, and three buildings. *MT* from previously existing buildings could be seen as well as *MT* from the inner compound fence *MT*

On 14 September the current site *Data* is in the final stages of construction in the northwest corner of a large, cleared area of slash and burn activity *MT*. The camp consists of an inner and outer compound both enclosed by fences. The inner compound contains five buildings and has a double fenced corridor extending to the south with a building at the end of the corridor. The main entrance to the inner compound is near the southwest corner. There are ten buildings in the outer compound and a trench. The main entrance to the camp is near the southwest corner and the outer fence is not complete on the east side. One building is outside the fence near the southwest corner and some buildings are south of the camp and the slash and burn area. A small stream flowing south is just to the east of the camp and the entire slash and burn area is enclosed by a low fence, probably intended to contain domestic animals. A small amount of row crops have been planted just outside the northeast corner of the inner compound, indicating that the camp is probably occupied.

I believe the former camp, 7 km SW, was moved to this new site for greater isolation and a fresh water supply. Evidence of row crops maintained by the water supply shows a desire to achieve some self-sufficiency. Row crops were not seen at the former location and therefore most supplies had to be brought in from the outside, increasing the camp's contact with other people. The tall trees left standing in the southeast corner provide some shade from the sun, a comfort not present at the former camp.

Data *MT* of 4 December 1980 first confirmed the presence of the camp, but details were *MT*. However *Data* *MT* 10 December 1980 *MT* a completed and occupied camp. The outer fence is completed, two observation towers have been built, two earthen dams within the camp have been built on the stream, five additional buildings

the fences found around villages in the area which are very low, about 3 feet high, compared to over 8 feet in some places around the camp. Military facilities in central Laos usually have no fences at all and none that resemble the fences around this camp. Second, the vegetation on the north and west sides of the camp is very close to the outside fence, concealing any attacker till he reached the fence. Third, the camp is not on the high ground to observe the surrounding terrain, in fact, the high ground is just to the northwest overlooking the camp. Fourth, the two observation towers have good views of the inner compound but limited views outside the camp. The shade trees inside the camp cause a large blind spot to the southeast. Finally there appears to be a low level of activity between the camp and nearby villages and no vehicle tracks have been

30 December 1980 no physical change to the camp. A small entrance on the northwest corner of the inner compound is seen and another earthen dam about 30 meters outside the camp to the southeast. About 40 meters east of the camp is a nearby square, cleared area that has no apparent function. The number "52" is still there, although the center portion of the "2" is slightly different. There has also been some changes to the row crops east of the inner compound. There are probably 17 individuals inside the inner compound and 4 in the outer compound. Ten of the individuals are grouped in the southwest corner of the inner compound. I have provided a to give you an overview of the area.

The number "52" is still visible with no change on 2 January 1981. This lack of change indicates that the numerals may have been dug into the earth.

January 7 another entrance to the inner compound near the northeast corner, bringing to three the number of entrances to the inner compound. There is an of the double-fenced corridor and the building at the end of it. I believe that this building and the one in the corridor at the former site are used for isolation/segregation of prisoners. I can't explain the double fenced corridor and have nothing like it in the area or in POW camps in Vietnam. For an

There is no change to the camp on 24 January 1981, but some trees have been cut to the south of the slash and burn area. The only change on 31 January is more trees have been cut down south of the slash and burn area.

On 4 February the product of the tree cutting can be seen. A fence has been built about 10 meters outside the present outer fence on the north and west sides. An entrance in the outer fence on the northeast side for the first time. The new fence is complete on 5 February and joins the original outer fence in the northeast corner of the camp. On 6 February, 8 February, and 9 February the original outer fence on the north and west sides is being torn down. The camp is occupied during this time and the number "52" is clearly visible on 6 February.

In an attempt to judge the housing capacity of this camp I assigned 50 square feet per person. The isolated building could house 12 people, about 100 individuals could reside in the inner compound and 130 in the outer compound. Space for storage, cooking, etc., was not taken into account and would lower these estimates. However, it does that if the outer area is housing for a guard force then there is at least a 1:1 ratio between prisoners and guards. This ratio would help explain why the gates to the entrances are always open. Also these gates may be closed at night when the chances of escape are best. The 200+ individuals who could reside here compares closely to the former site. From 1976 I estimated approximately 150 people could be housed in the former site, with the expansion in 1978 the former camp probably could have housed 200+ individuals.

The buildings in the camp are similar to buildings in Central Laos, i.e. they have thatch-roofs, many have porches, and some are elevated a few feet above the ground. The observation

6. ANALYST: ANALYST Date
SECTION CHIEF: NAME Data

44 Enclosures a/s
24 MT
20 MT

NAME

LTC USA
Chief, Eastern Branch
MT Analysis Division

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

memorandum

DATE: 12 Dec 1980

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: DI

SUBJECT: PW Report

TO: Director, DIA (ONLY)

° In April 1979, Lao refugee, SSc reported that 18 U.S. PW's had been moved to Muong Nhommarath in March 1979 (note April 1979 MT). He has satisfactorily passed a polygraph in October 1980, regarding this second-hand information.

° On 18 November 1980, MT reported that a very reliable MT source had reported information relating to 30 U.S. PW's which he claimed to have received from an untested sub-source. The skepticism expressed in paragraph 3 to Enclosure 1 has diminished appreciably at

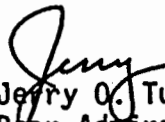
° MT, the presence of a detention facility located southeast of Muong Nhommarath. Five annotated briefing boards are attached (Enclosure 2). A written report will follow on 16 December 1980. Your attention is invited to dates of MT and Route 12 which was heavily traveled in the spring of 1978, but is now nearly grown over.

° A mt employee indicated on 12 December 1980 that they expect the possible mt referred to in Enclosure 1 during the week of 15 December 1980.

° We will immediately request mt on this location.

° Request attached be returned to me after you have reviewed.

Very respectfully,


Jerry O. Tuttle
Rear Admiral, USN
Vice Deputy Director for
Intelligence and External Affairs

2 Enclosures

1. memo of 18 Nov 80
2. Five mini-board graphics



Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

From ADM TUTTLE
DIA - PROVIDED ON 13 MAY 81

BRIEFINGS PRESENTED

R

EARLY JANUARY 1981	LTG Gast & MG Johnson SOD J3 Col Stearns Col Redmond
27 JANUARY 1981	Members of IAG
27 JANUARY 1981	CDR JCRC (Data
30 JANUARY 1981	BG Shoultes Lt Col Lenahan CDR Tom Lawson Lt Col Bob Horton BG Forgan
9 FEBRUARY 1981	Richard Allen, Adm. Nance, Bob Kimmet & Mr. Allen's Special Assistant
10 FEBRUARY 1981	John Negroponte, D. Anderson and M. Gelner
10 FEBRUARY 1981	Col Zehrer, CINCPAC Staff
13 FEBRUARY 1981	Ms. E. Sanders and Mr. Brodus Bailey - Senate Foreign Relations Committee
24 FEBRUARY 1981	Gen Gast Updated
27 FEBRUARY 1981	Operations Deputies Briefed
2 MARCH 1981	Gen Lawson Briefed
3 MARCH 1981	The Chairman and each Service Chief briefed
5 MARCH 1981	Mr. Armitage, OSD/ISA, briefed
5 MARCH 1981	MG Fautz, J2, CINCPAC, briefed
11 MARCH 1981	CINCPAC, Adm. Long, briefed
13 MARCH 1981	Congressman Robert Dornan briefed
16 MARCH 1981	Charge to Laos, Leo Moser briefed
18 MARCH 1981	PW/MIA Tank Force, Congressmen Dornan, Gelman, Guyer and Lagomarsino
20 MARCH 1981	Adm. Inman briefed
23 MARCH 1981	Congressmen William Hendon and LeBoutillier
26 MARCH 1981	Mr. James Buckley, State Dept, briefed
27 MARCH 1981	Gen Stillwell briefed
7 APRIL 1981	SECAF briefed
APRIL 1981	Congressman Murtha briefed
0 APRIL 1981	Congressman Moore briefed
0 APRIL 1981	Ambs. Abromowitz & B. Levin briefed
9 APRIL 1981	Sen Humphrey's briefing
PR/MAY 1981	Congressman Robert Dornan Update briefing
MAY 1981	Gary L. Peisen (INSCOM) (Security Leaks)
2 MAY 1981	M. Armitage (Update)

101259 Apr 21

Memo for CG

Subject: SC CONVERSATION w/ Col Ronald A. Duchin

Col Duchin read NM memo and said it is basically on the mark. Some of the dates may be a bit off.

The reporter that Col Duchin has been in contact w/ on this matter is Michael Satchell, associate editor of Parade Publications, Inc. He writes the "Parade" cover stories. He appears to have gotten his information from Congressman Donnan and or Montgomery.

Satchell asked Col Duchin "... will you have problems if I publish a story that says that there are PWs and that an operation is being planned on will be conducted by Data and Data"

Col Duchin spoke w/ Admiral Tuttle, Gen Johnson and the Chairman concerning this matter. They agreed upon response

this matter.

Col Duchin believes that Satchell knows much more than he has revealed. Col Duchin feels that Satchell has access to "... copious notes..." from Donnan/Montgomery.

Col Duchin believes that he currently has a "... good relationship with Satchell."

Sc

Pocket Change Brief

Background:

Since the close of the war in Vietnam reports have persisted that Americans were still being held prisoner in Southeast Asia.

In a 17 April 1979 letter to General Vang Pao and in subsequent OOD interviews (held in Oct 79, Feb 80, and Sep/Oct 80 - including positive polygraph results)

a Lao refugee reported that two groups of prisoners were being held separately in caves in the vicinity of Kham Keut (^{17°31'19"N}_{105°51'35"E}) approximately 70 km East-Southeast from Muong Khommarath (WE 1946), Khammouate Province (NE of NKP Thailand), in Laos. A total of 20 Americans were reported in these groups.

Need Map here

One group of prisoners reportedly consisted of 18 U.S. PWs and 25 Lao. The second group consisted of 2 U.S. PWs, 1 Australian, and 1 Japanese.

July 1979

✓ MT

a cave entrance

was located approximately 500 meters - from the location at which the second group was reportedly detained. A cave entrance could not be located at the point at which the first group were reportedly detained. However, heavy foliage in that area could have precluded its discovery. The refugee identified the source of his information to be a Lao resistance fighter.

Debate!

~~On 18 November 1980, MT reported that it had received information concerning the alleged detention of 30 U.S. PWs at Muong Khommorath. This information was received from a highly reliable FIS who had received it from an untested Laa. subsource. On 21 Jan 81 this same source reported that the U.S. PWs had been moved from Khommorath to Kontam, RVN.~~

As a result of these reports of U.S. PWs in MT

MT of the area was initiated for possible detention/PW facilities.

MT 10 Dec 80 MT a completed and

occupied detention camp Data WE 458357, 19-30-46N/

105-25-19E) located in central Laos, 67 kilometers east of Thakhek.

Need Map

Follow-on study ^{MT} of this area showed that the camp was built between April

1978 and September 1979. The study also showed

that this camp was probably previously located about

7 KM southwest of the current site. This

point out on Map

relationship of the old site and the current camp

is supported by the close proximity of the sites to

each other; the concurrent ^(Sep 79) dismantlement of the old

camp and construction of the new camp; and

finally the similar appearance and size of the camps.

It is believed the camp was moved to the new

site to provide a fresh water supply which would allow

more self-sufficiency and thus greater isolation from

the surrounding population.

As previously stated, ^{1 MT} ~~10 Dec 80~~ ^{1 MT} a completed and occupied camp.

The camp is located in the northwest corner of a large cleared area of slash and burn activity. What appears to be a low fence is present at the tree line around part of the clearing. The camp consists of outer and inner areas, each of which is enclosed by a fence. Both areas are irregular in shape with the approximate dimensions of 130 x 170 meters for the outer area and 50 x 60 meters for the inner area. Both inner and outer fences are stockade-type about 6 to 8 feet (2-2.5 meters) in height.

Between the outer and inner stockade fences there are probable guard quarters, a trench, an automatic weapons

position, two observation/guard towers, a stream with two earthen dams, and row crops. The towers appear to be positioned for observing the inner compound. They are thatch-roofed and each has a platform estimated to be 3-4 meters above the ground. The main entrances through both the inner and outer fences are at their southwest corners. A trail leads from the main entrance to Route 12, some 500 meters to the west. The trail is wide enough for vehicles but no vehicle tracks have been observed to date. The trail appears to be lightly traveled by foot traffic. Foot traffic has been noted on Route 12 in the vicinity of the detention camp.

The inner compound is located near the center of the camp. In addition to the SW corner entrance, is a second near the NW corner and a third near the northeast corner. The inner compound contains five buildings, several sheds, and various unidentified structures/objects located mostly along the compound perimeter.

The two largest buildings are to be barracks and measure 6 meters by 26 meters by 5 meters in height. Approximately

25 people were MIA within this inner compound on 30 Dec 80. Two parallel fenced corridors extend from the southeast corner of the inner compound to a building in the cluster of trees. The function of the corridors & the building in the trees has not been determined.

It is estimated that the camp could house 200+ personnel. This estimate was arrived at by assigning 50 square feet per person. Using this figure the inner compound plus the isolated buildings could house approximately 112 personnel and the outer area approximately 130. Storage, cooking and etc, space was not taken into account and could lower the estimate.

Of particular note at this camp is what appeared to be the number MT visible on the ground in the now crop area between the inner compound and the stream on the east side of the camp. Each numeral was 1.5 to 2 meters wide and 3 meters high. Both numerals could be

MT

The two numerals

appear to be shallow depressions, possibly w/ low vegetation along some of the outer edges. The location of the numerals was such that they most likely could not be seen from either of the two observation towers because of trees located in the line of sight.

The camp MT continuously since MT

MT and remains occupied to date w/ several

fence building and tree cutting/cleaning activities noted.

On Data a MT MT
 team consisting of ethnic Loo ~~person~~ led by
 FIS personnel was sent into the area to observe
 the camp. We hope to receive information from the
 team o/a ^{the} Data w/ final debriefing completed
 o/a the Data. Detailed MT has
 been provided to the team from Data and Data

Preliminary analysis of the area, in conjunction with PACCOM, indicates that the threat to a Data

Data is as follows (remember this is worst case):

{
 Weather
 Enemy
 Terrain

a. A ^{possible} 130 man ground force at the camp.

b. Ground reinforcements in approximately one hour.

c. MIG 21s from Vientiane in approximately 43 min.

d. Minimal assault aircraft detection threat from Laoation/RUM radar (assuming Data

Data

e. Probable detection of aircraft by Data

f. Weather begins to deteriorate in late May early

June.



OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3040

92 MAR 18 PH 5:13

COMMAND, CONTROL,
COMMUNICATIONS
AND INTELLIGENCE

U-259/DoD POW/MIA CDO

16 March 1992

Mr. J. William Codinha
Chief Counsel, Senate Select Committee on
POW/MIA Affairs
United States Senate
Washington DC 20510

Dear Mr. Codinha:

In reference to your letter dated 2 Mar requesting "contact reports" prepared by the U.S. Army related to contacts with Mr. Bo Gritz or members of his group, the enclosed memo is provided as an interim response.

The U.S. Army has located Special Access classified material that responds to your request. They are in the process of reviewing the material and will forward it to the CDO when complete. They also stand ready for cleared members of the Committee staff to review the unredacted material.

If you have questions concerning this response, please contact either of the CDO liaison officers, Mr. Wells at (703) 908-2871, or Ms. Tompkins at (703) 908-2681.

Sincerely,

MARGARET R. MUNSON
Director, DoD POW/MIA Central
Documentation Office

1 Encl
U.S. Army Memo 11 Mar 92

cc:
OSD/Legislative Affairs
w/o enclosures
DASD/International Security
Affairs POW/MIA w/o enclosures
OSD/C3I w/o enclosures
OSD/General Counsel w/o enclosures

To: Nancy Cuddy, Bill Codinha, Steve Gekoski, Rich Smith, Bob Taylor
Subject: Mason Deposition

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

CIA has arranged for John Mason to be available for a deposition on 1 October, Thursday, at 0930.

Subject: Nhom Marrot

Nancy/Rich, Pls make the necessary arrangements for room (S-407) and reporter. Level up to TS/SI

Rich, you already have his address & phone number to arrange delivery of depo notice and rules. No subpoena is required

Bill C is tentatively set to perform depo. (He is doing Graver later the same afternoon, same subject.)

Mason will be accompanied by Doug Bowman, CIA lawyer.

I will attend.

Tuesday 930

as hoaxes by POW activists or Mennonite missionaries.

This will lead to a in-depth review on the second day of the Hearing, into perhaps one of the most dramatic attempts to investigate a site of one of these symbols, Nhom Marrot in Laos. It was the "52K" observed within the prison compound, that according to several key intelligence officials deposed by the SSC, triggered an actual operation to confirm the presence of American POWs and planning for a possible rescue.

Because of the nature of information concerning the operation itself, CIA has insisted that the "Nhom Marrot operation" be reviewed in closed session. This is probably unavoidable for those portions concerning CIA's operational involvement. However, there is no substantive or security reason why the first half of the Nhom Marrot case can not be discussed in a open session. Most of this would involve the various sources of intelligence, pointing to the possibility of American POWs being present at Nhom Marrot, such as HUMINT reporting and satellite photography. Pending the declassification of this intelligence data, the Committee could easily hold an "open" hearing on the morning of the second day on the Nhom Marrot intelligence, and then go to a "closed" session to discuss the details of the CIA operation.

Such a scenario would have the benefit of allowing the Committee to share, with the American public, all the multisource intelligence available by 1981, indicating Americans may have been present at Nhom Marrot. This is actually the most compelling aspect of the Nhom Marrot story. If necessary, the Committee could reconvene in open session, after the "closed" operational portion, to address the press leak issue and to make concluding statements.

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

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

NTOM MARROTT

31 DECEMBER 1988

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

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

POLITBUREAU ORDERS THEY BE REMOVED FROM ATTOPEU PROVINCE.

IT WILL PICK UP POWS AT THE AIRFIELD ON 28 DEC AT

1232 HOURS.

RVW DEC 02 DRV NFIB-9.1/36.

1243Z INT SSL K

This work sheet contains information affecting the National Defense of the United States within the meaning of Section 793, 794 and 798, the transmission or the revelation of which in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

Mem Memo

Bob Taylor

TASKER NUMBER CDO-012

DUE DATE 10 Dec 92

REDACT DECLASSIFY X

DOCUMENTS REMOVED BEING REVIEWED:

• OIA/ERD-307/80 ; DTD 16 Dec 80 (4 pgs) PAJ

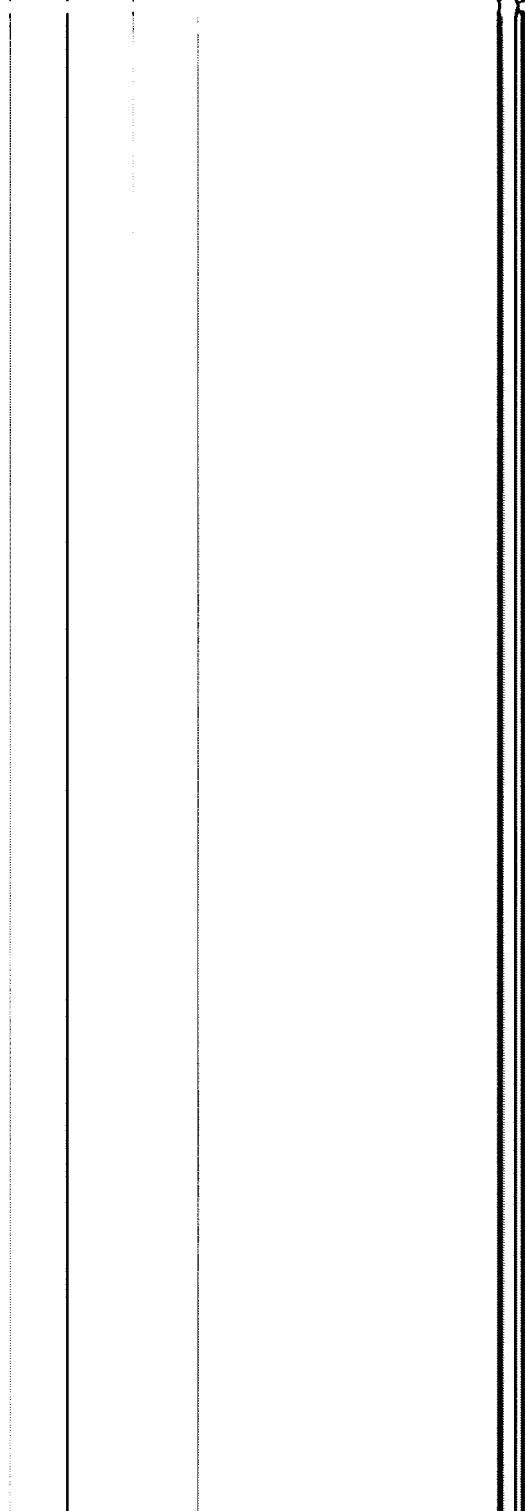
**DOCUMENTS
REMOVED**

**NOT
DECLASSIFIED**

PER CIA

DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

28 JAN 1981



JCS 1

REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES



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 - Variously dated Imagery
- F - 24 January 1981 Imagery

DOCUMENT PROCESSING RECORD

CONTROL NUMBER

183

DATE RECEIVED

29 Jan 81

RETURN TO: OFFICE, CHAIRMAN, JCS-ROOM 2E865, THE PENTAGON

DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION

DATE OF DOCUMENT

Memo to CJCS fm DIA Tighe
SUBJECT

28 Jan 81

Current U.S. Prisoner of War Intelligence

THE ABOVE-DESCRIBED DOCUMENT HAS BEEN RECEIVED IN THIS OFFICE. CIRCULATION OF THIS DOCUMENT WILL BE LIMITED TO INDIVIDUALS INDICATED BELOW. THE DOCUMENT WILL BE RETURNED TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE FOR RECORD PRIOR TO DISPATCH TO ANOTHER OFFICE, OR OTHER DISPOSITION.
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TO	NAME	INITIAL	REMARKS
	CHAIRMAN, JCS	00	
5	EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT	02	
4	DEPUTY EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT	03	
3	THE ASSISTANT TO THE CHAIRMAN	01	
2	EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT	01A	
8	ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	04	
	DEPUTY ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	04A	
1	CHAIRMAN'S STAFF GROUP AIR FORCE MEMBER	01B	
	CHAIRMAN'S STAFF GROUP NAVY MEMBER	01C	
	CHAIRMAN'S STAFF GROUP MARINE MEMBER	01D	
	CHAIRMAN'S STAFF GROUP ARMY MEMBER	01E	
	LEGAL ADVISOR AND LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT	01F	
6	SPECIAL ASSISTANT	01G	
	SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS	01H	
	ARMY AIDE	05	
	MARINE AIDE	05A	
	PROTOCOL	06	
7	MAY MOSES		

29 Jan 81

① Very interesting....

② note that Gen Tighe recommends a contingency plan be developed in the event CIA confirms presence of US PWs. Could be a mission for JSOC.

COL WOLCOTT

DJS informed by note N2

Refer to our depts in my close hold -

Paraphrasing

Very, very close hold

W2

File O
2 Feb 81

CIA
E 94-0036

<input type="checkbox"/> INDEX	[REDACTED]	1	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDEX		2	
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		4	

NOV 66

DESTROY RETURN TO BRANCH

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CLASSIFICATION: [REDACTED] DATE AND TIME FILED: [REDACTED] REFERENCE NUMBER: [REDACTED]

CITE DIRECTOR

48917

VIENTIANE

REFERENCE: [REDACTED] (IN 31961)

VIENTIANE

E
E

WOULD IT BE FEASIBLE TO QUERY ANY OTHER SOURCES
 WHILE EXAMINING AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY IN AN EFFORT TO
 OBTAIN FURTHER VERIFICATION OF THE ALLEGED CAVE ^{FOR} ~~AND~~ ANY
 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WHICH MIGHT SUPPORT THE CONTENTION
 THAT AMERICAN PRISONERS ARE BEING HELD THERE. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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END OF MESSAGE