

The Mooney Documents

Note to the reader: The information presented in these Mooney Memo's was uncovered by George J. Veith in the microfilm rolls of the Library of Congress (LOC). Jay wrote these Memo's over a period of three months. The only piece missing from the original Memo's is a section in Memo 1 that contained an unredacted NSA message that still had classified Code-word material on it. Although he found it in an open source, it is not included here to prevent any unnecessary interference from the National Security Agency (NSA). Please read these Memo's as a complete body. It will help you understand the evolution of the research, and provide an insight into the workings of one of America's most secret government organizations, NSA. If anyone wishes to further investigate the NSA material at the LOC, please contact Jay Veith and he can provide you the Reel numbers.

November 21, 1995
Al Santoli
Office of the Hon. Robert Dornan
Washington, DC

Dino Carluccio
Office of the Hon. Bob Smith
Washington, DC

Dear Al and Dino:

As you know, former NSA analyst Jerry Mooney has presented testimony on the POW/MIA issue for many years. He has insisted that NSA monitored North Vietnamese communications indicating the capture and imprisonment of many American pilots, men who never returned from communist captivity. For his efforts, he has been called a liar by DIA, his analysis the result of "intellectual musings."

One of the most important pieces of information Mooney has related is the 1972 execution of 10 Americans, an event Jerry was deeply involved in. This story was published in the book *The Bamboo Cage* by Nigel Cawthorne. (See page labeled 1 of my fax.) Until now, there has been no documentation to support Jerry's statements.

QUOTED FROM:

The Bamboo Cage - The full story of the American Servicemen still held hotage in Southeast Asia
by Nigel Cawthorne, Leo Cooper Press

Revenge execution was permitted if it was necessary for the morale of the unit. This was generally employed by the subordinate units of Division 367 to avenge a 'Sown' - a VIP, a cadreman or above- who was killed by the Americans in an air strike. Normally, only one PoW would be killed, but as many as ten were executed at High Point 310 following the death of the commander of Division 377/673 during a bombing raid.

In late 1972, a Sown of Division 673/377 was killed by an American airstrike. The next pilot downed in that area was executed by a single bullet in the head. One of the following was executed: Leonard Robertson, William Price, Bobby Jones, Dwight Rickman, John Peacock, Ralph Chipman, Ronald Forrester, Jack Harvey, Francis Townsend, Lee Tigner, Peter Cleary, Charles Darr, Wayne Brown. (7) The rest were probably killed in an airstrike or worked to death as slave labour. Leonard Robertson's co-pilot Alan Kroboth was told by the Viet Cong that Robertson was dead. Kroboth himself was returned in 1973.

Earlier in 1972, another more chilling incident had taken place though. Mooney had analyzed intelligence that revealed that '10 enemy' were being taken to a High Point 310, south of Khe Sanh, to be executed. It was not revealed if they were South Vietnamese servicemen, American or both. A recent airstrike which had killed a very important Sown - probably the commander of Division 673/377 - strongly indicated that at least some of those who were going to be killed were American. Time was of the essence. The data had been received and decoded at Fort Meade just a few hours before the executions were to take place. There was still time to alert the commanders in the field in Vietnam for a possible rescue mission, but they would have to move fast.

Mooney's immediate superiors would not let him release the information until a higher authority reviewed it. They did not want to make a mistake that could embarrass the agency. The problem was the 'higher authority' was out to lunch. So Mooney sat and waited. Two hours later the officer returned. He gave his approval and released the report without changing a word. But by then it was too late. Ten men - possibly Americans - on the other side of the world were dead, all because one officer, thousands of miles from the combat zone, was late back from lunch.

Mooney has some candidates for these executions. On 18 June, 1972, an AC130A carrying Mark Danielson, Gerald Ayres, Larry Newman, Richard Cole, Paul Gibert, Leon Hunt, Robert Harrison, Donald Klinke, Stanley Lehrke, Jacob Mercer, Richard Myhof and Robert Wilson was flaktrapped by anti-aircraft Regiment 218. Three of the occupants survived the shutdown. One was Danielson, another possibly Mercer. They would not have been returned for security reasons in any event and might possibly have been executed at High Point 310.

I have discovered the declassified, albeit redacted, NSA cable describing the executions of 10 Americans, giving all the details exactly as Mooney described them. (See page labeled 2 of my fax.)

[NOTE: BLANK AREAS WERE REDACTED/ \$ WERE IN ORIGINAL TEXT]

2

1891548

Z 071545Z JUL 72

FM

TO

NVN 377TH AIR DEFENSE

DIVISION PLANS TO EXECUTE 10 AMERICANS
ON 6 JULY, THE NVN 377TH AIR DEFENSE DIVISION (UNLOCATED, LOWER QUANG BINH PROVINCE) THE 284TH AAA REGIMENT AND DIRECTED THE EXECUTION OF 10 AMERICANS. \$ON 8 JULY.

CADRES

SHALL BE LEFT BEHIND TO KILL THE 10 AMERICANS.
COMPLETE THE TASK AND RETURN

THE 284TH AAA REGIMENT DEPARTED QUANG TRI CITY ON 5 JULY AND IS PRESENTLY LOCATING IN THE AREAS OF CAM LO (16-49N 107-00E), DONG LON (16-47N 107-05E) AND TAN VINH (16-46N 107-06E)

The last cable, labeled 4, is the type of message traffic he was seeing that created his belief in

the "Warm Body Count" scenario, whereby the Vietnamese were intent on capturing as many prisoners alive as possible to fool Kissinger at the Paris Peace Talks.

[NOTE: BLANK AREAS WERE REDACTED/ \$ WERE IN ORIGINAL TEXT]

4

M = 156

0982239

072148Z APR 72

FM
TO

QUANG BINH PROVINCIAL
UNIT REGARDING CAPTURED ALLIED PILOTS
THE QUANG BINH PROVINCIAL UNIT HAS GUIDANCE ON
THE HANDLING OF CAPTURED ALLIED PILOTS. ON 7 APRIL,
ALL 12.7-MM ANTI-AIRCRAFT UNITS TO MAKE PLANS FOR CAPTURING PILOTS, \$ THE
HQ, QUANG BINH PROVINCIAL UNIT ANY UNIT WHICH CAPTURES PILOTS IS
TO AVOID CROWDED AREAS\$ AND IS TO ADOPT A PROPER ATTITUDE TOWARD THE
PRISONERS.\$ THE \$PROPER ATTITUDE\$ WAS DEFINED BY THE PROVINCIAL UNIT AS
PROHIBITING ITS SUBORDINATES FROM \$BEATING PRISONERS OR TAKING THEIR PERSONAL
PROPERTY \$ ACCORDING TO THE ORDERS, ONLY WEAPONS ARE TO BE TAKEN FROM
CAPTURED PILOTS.

I hope you find this information useful. Jerry asked that I spread this to the POW/MIA community. My question to you is, "Will this have any impact?"

Sincerely,

Jay Veith

Enclosures: (4)

Information on the Execution Message

The information you have just read basically applies to the Execution message also, except Mooney says he actually wrote this message, and it is from Director, NSA to all the important agencies, like DOD. The 377th was part of the 673 Air Division. Both belonged to the 367th Air Defense Division. These units lead the invasion South during the Easter offensive. They maintained constant contact with their parent unit using Soviet R109 radios, which are low power, low VHF, constant wave. Because of the low power, they had to be routed through com-mo-liaison stations at Ben Thanh in the DMZ, which then routed them to a switchboard located in the Thach Ban/Long Dai region. They maintained this communications on constant wave electronic signal with Hqs, MR-4, (home of Gen. Quang of 1205 fame), near Vinh, and from there to the Joint Command Hqs in Hanoi. These planned executions were authorized all the way up the chain of command, including General "I never handled any American POWs" Quang, to the Politburo in Hanoi.

Jerry further told me that the 284th AAA regiment was one of their top 5 AAA regiments. The blanked out portion refers to the exact time and coordinates for the execution. As we all know, the message sat in someone's in box until he returned from lunch. This man, known as the Group Senior Analyst Linguist, approved the message without changing a word.

Any mistakes or omissions are strictly my fault, and not that of Jerry Mooney.

Memorandum #2

Date: 5 December 1995
To: Al Santoli, Dino Carluccio, Bill Bell
From: Jay Veith
re: Further SIGINT information

As Jerry and I continue to discuss this SIGINT material, I have come to strongly believe a statement Jerry made to me earlier this year. There is a great difference between knowing SIGINT and just reading SIGINT. While only 2% of all NSA material dealt with POWs, you have to understand the other 98% to be able to place the 2% in context. This is the reason I am sending this second message to you. Before you explore this issue further, I think its necessary to provide you with as much background info as possible. Thus, I wanted to provide you some of the information that Jerry has so patiently taught me. I hope that this memo, along with the next one, will enable you, and any one else reading this, to gain a greater appreciation and understanding of the intricacies of the "10 Americans executed" message. My next memo, hopefully later this week, will discuss that message in detail, how it was developed, and its importance. This memo is designed to provide some of the background necessary to understand the execution message.

Additional documents supporting Mooney

On page 43 and 44 of The Bamboo Cage, Jerry told Nigel Cawthorne details concerning the shootdown of an ICCS helicopter in 1973, how NSA monitored the increase in alert status of the PAVN AAA units, and the NSA's belief that the North Vietnamese would shoot the helicopter down. Please see page labeled 1 for a copy of a message I found dealing with this. While this message doesn't pertain to missing Americans, I believe it shows a growing group of documents that are supporting some of Mooney's prior statements.

[NOTE: BLANK AREAS WERE REDACTED/ \$ WERE IN THE ORIGINAL TEXT] 1
M = 46

0991052
O 091949Z APR 73
FM
TO
ZEM
XXMM

\$NVN ELEMENT

HANDLING OF ICCS SHOOTDOWN\$
XXCC

BTWN 1029Z AND 1051Z, 08 APR 73,
DOWNING OF TWO ICCS HELICOPTERS AND THE FIELD ELEMENTS ARE TO HANDLE THE
ICCS REPRESENTATIVES INVESTIGATING THE INCIDENT. ARE
DEFENDING AGAINST ACFT WELL AND HAVE SHOT DOWN ONE ACFT AND FORCED
ONE ACFT TO LAND. FURTHER STATED ARE NOT TO DESTROY THE ACFT
OR PICK UP ANYTHING FROM THE ACFT MUST BEHAVE WELL WHEN THE
REPRESENTA- TIVES OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION ARRIVES.

Declassified NSA material

We must be careful in dealing with the declassified NSA material that has been released. For the most part, it is heavily redacted, generally is vague, and often is wrong. With the PAVN units name blacked out, it becomes difficult to separate accurate material from inaccurate material.

According to Jerry, almost 60% of NSA material dealing with shootdowns came from Border Guard troops broadcasting in clear text. This was called "Hot B." They would attempt to shootdown planes from the rear, known as "tailshooting." When a pilot would see the tracers going by, he would kick in the afterburners and bank away. The PAVN troops would see the afterburner and think they had shot down the plane, a fact they invariably radioed in. We intercept it, and then verify it against the Operational Reports, called OPREPs, that list plane losses. However, that erroneous message still enters the database. This is one of the reasons why one must be careful against taking an isolated piece of intelligence and then trying to build something out of it that it is not.

Collateral

This is where collateral material comes in, both as a check on the COMINT, and as a step towards looking at events from an "all-source" perspective, which is the integration of all types of intelligence to form a more complete picture. For instance, an intercept discusses the capture of too many people (South Vietnamese) for the prison system in Binh Dinh Province to handle. (See page labeled 2.)

[NOTE: BLANK AREAS WERE REDACTED/ \$ WERE IN THE ORIGINAL TEXT] 2
M = 403

1522051

P 311923Z MAY 72

FM

TO

PRISONER OF WAR CAMPS

TO BE BUILT IN SOUTHERN BIN DINH PROVINCE

FR ((BINH DINH PROVINCE)), ((HQ, BINH DINH PU)) 19 MAY 72 TO

--06 IN

IN ORDER TO GIVE TIMELY SUPPORT TO THE UPCOMING PLAN, AND FROM NOW UNTIL 5 JUNE, IT IS NECESSARY TO PREPARE AT LEAST 20 TONS OF RICE AND, AFTER THAT, TO CONTINUE TO PREPARE MORE ((RICE)). (IT IS NECESSARY) TO PICK UP

FROM VAN CANH ((2)) AND IMMEDIATELY BUILD TWO PRISONER OF WAR CAMPS, WITH A CAPACITY OF 1000 PERSONS. (IT IS NECESSARY) TO CAREFULLY PREPARE RICE, SALT AND CASSAVA FOR THE PRISONERS. ((B)) 14-08N 108-58E, BR 828 065. 19 MAY 72 0117Z

Later, a document is captured that supports this intercept. (See page labeled 3. I put these two together.)

[NOTE: BLANK AREAS WERE REDACTED] 3
IN 636181
IDCS-314/04542-72
PAGE 2 OF 2 PAGES

SUMMARY: A VEIT CONG (VC) DOCUMENT CAPTURED IN EARLY JUNE REVEALS THAT THE VC CAPTURED MANY MORE PRISONERS IN APRIL 1972 THAN EXPECTED, WHEN THEY OCCUPIED THE NORTHERN DISTRICTS OF BINH DINH PROVINCE. THE DOCUMENT INSTRUCTS VC CADRES ON TECHNIQUES TO BE EMPLOYED IN CONTROLLING AND EXPLOITING PRISONERS. SUGGESTIONS ARE GIVEN REGARDING BUILDING DETENTION CAMPS, ENSURING CAMP SECURITY, TRAINING GUARDS AND CAMP WORKERS, ACQUISITION OF SUPPLIES, SEGREGATING MILITARY AND CIVILIAN PRISONERS, THE TYPES OF PERSONAL BELONGINGS TO BE PERMANENTLY OR TEMPORARILY CONFISCATED, AND TECHNIQUES OF OBTAINING INFORMATION FROM PRISONERS. END SUMMARY.

1. A VC DOCUMENT DATED 6 MAY 1972 AND ORIGINATED BY "T.1B," IS ADDRESSED TO "ALL P'S, CITY AND PRISONER OF WAR AND DEFECTING SOLDIERS' CAMPS." MENT: T.1B IS PROBABLY THE MILITARY PROSELYTING SECTION OF THE BINH DINH PROVINCE COMMITTEE. THE "P'S" ARE PROBABLY DISTRICT 5 COMMITTEES.) THE DOCUMENT EXPLAINS THAT WITHIN A FEW DAYS

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1

14 203

This is the type of material that an NSA analyst would turn to in trying to help verify the earlier COMINT. In essence, the NSA views Collateral as supporting documentation. They place a higher value on the SIGINT, naturally, but captured documents, FBIS material, interrogation reports, all enter into the big picture. To the NSA, SIGINT has a higher value because it comes directly from the mouth of the enemy, and is more real time, whereas the other material is a lagging indicator.

Who to Ask List

Jerry has also discussed in the past a program he referred to as the "Who to Ask List." Frankly, we had the PAVN AAA system thoroughly penetrated. They would broadcast in the clear, (as opposed to the encrypted signals we generally have), using code groups, generally based upon numbers. This code was based on a Soviet style code called "Ferrier." We knew their locations, types of equipment, names of the officers, Order of Battle, and could even hear the Soviets talking in the background. (See page labeled 4 for an example.)

[NOTE: BLANK AREAS WERE REDACTED/ {} UNDELINED BY JAY VEITH] 4
3211844

P 161750Z NOV 72

FM

TO

NVN 377TH AIR

DEFENSE DIVISION

AIRCRAFT SHOOTDOWNS

XXCC

-- -- ((IN HERE)) 136 ENGAGEMENTS (EIGHT AT NIGHT); AMMUNITION ((EXPENDED)) 4,146 ROUNDS AND SHOT DOWN EIGHT AIRCRAFT. 241 ((1)) SHOT DOWN 13 AIRCRAFT. RESULTS OF SHOT DOWN NINE AIRCRAFT. 284((2)) STRUCK IN 43 ENCOUNTERS (24 AT NIGHT); AMMUNITION ((EXPENDED)) 2,900 ROUNDS AND SHOT DOWN THREE AIRCRAFT ONE OF WHICH WAS AN F-4 THAT WAS DOWNED ON THE NIGHT OF 21 SEPTEMBER BY BATTALION 120 ((3)). 243((4)) STRUCK IN 236 ENCOUNTERS (84 AT NIGHT); AMMUNITION ((EXPENDED)) 1,340 ROUNDS AND SHOT DOWN SIX AIRCRAFT. 236((5)) STRUCK IN SEVEN ENGAGEMENTS (ONE OF WHICH WAS BY THE ANTI-AIRCRAFT COMPANY) FIRED SEVEN MISSILES) AND SHOT DOWN THREE B-52'S. DIVISION) DECIDED THAT THE 230TH REGIMENT ((6)) IS A UNIT WHICH ADOPTED A {SEETHING EMULATIVE MOVEMENT} ((IN THAT)) THEY POSITIVELY STRUCK IN ENEMY DURING THE NIGHT, AND SEIZED THE INITIATIVE IN EFFECTIVELY STRIKING ENEMY WELL WHEN ((THEY)) APPEARED, AND THAT THEY SHOT DOWN ELEVEN AIRCRAFT. ((WE)) COMMEND THE FOLLOWING UNITS, BATTALION (120((3)) AND 284((2)) FOUGHT WELL AND SHOT DOWN TWO AIRCRAFT ONE OF WHICH WAS AN F-4 AT NIGHT. BATTALION 102((7)) 280((8)) WAS POSITIVE IN SEIZING THE INITIATIVE TO STRIKE THE ENEMY AND PROVIDING SECURITY. THEY SHOT DOWN THREE AIRCRAFT. BATTALION 8((9)) AND 241((1)) HAD THE SPIRIT TO OVER DIFFI- CULTIES BY POSITIVELY STRIKING THE ENEM, SHOOTING DOWN TEN AIRRAFT, AND THEREFORE COMPLETING THE MISSION WELL. BATTALION 11((10)) OF 250((11)) FOUGHT

COURAGEOUSLY AND STEADFASTLY, AND THEY POSITIVELY STRUCK THE ENEMY, REINFORCED THE FRIENDLY UNITS AND SHOT DOWN FOUR AIRCRAFT. BATTALIONS 61((12)) AND 62((13)) OF 263((5)) HAD THE SPIRIT TO OVERCOME DIFFICULTIES BY TRANS- PORTING EIGHT PIECES OF EQUIPMENT TO STRIKE WELL AND ((THEY)) SHOT DOWN THREE B-52'S. BATTALION 4((14)) OF 243((4)) ENTHUSIASTICALLY STRUCK ALL DAY AND NIGHT, AND SHOT DOWN FOUR AIRCRAFT. ((1)) NVN 241ST AAA REGIMENT. ((2)) NVN 284TH AAA REGIMENT. ((3)) 120TH AAA BATTALION, NVA 284TH AAA REGIMENT. ((4)) NVN 243RD AAA REGIMENT. -((5)) NVN 236TH SAM REGIMENT. ((6)) NVN 230TH AAA REGIMENT. ((7)) 102ND AAA BATTALION, NVN 280TH AAA REGIMENT. ((8)) NVN 280TH AAA REGIMENT. ((7)) 102ND AAA BATTALION, NVN 280TH AAA REGIMENT. ((8)) NVN 280TH AAA REGIMENT. ((9)) 8TH AAA BATTALION, NVN 241ST AAA REGIMENT. ((10)) 11TH AAA BATTALION, NVN 250TH AAA REGIMENT. ((11)) NVN 250TH AAA REGIMENT. ((12)) 61ST SAM BATTALION, NVN 236TH SAM REGIMENT. ((13)) 62ND SAM BATTALION, NVN 236TH SAM REGIMENT. ((14)) 4TH AAA BATTALION, NVN 243RD AAA REGIMENT.

In late 1972, Mooney's group was asked to comply a list of the names of Americans shot down by the various AAA and SAM units. Mooney's group did the various Regiments and Divisions for North Vietnam, while the people who followed Group 559 complied one for the Binh Trams in Laos. This was to be given to Kissinger at the Paris Peace Talks so that he could ask the North Vietnamese to account for the missing men. It is Mooney's contention that we should be asking for, and receiving, the Weapons Control Center logs for each of the Air Defense units. These records are better than the Politburo records, Jerry believes, since they should be unsullied by political concerns.

In reviewing the list of documents turned over by the Vietnamese in 1993, I do note something referred to as "shootdown records." The documents I have seen from that group are clearly not what Mooney is referring to. The most important Air Defense document, the 58 page Group 559 list of shoot downs, appears to be a compilation from these types of Air Defense Logs. I find it fascinating that how the PAVN Air Defense reports read in the Group 559 document is exactly how Mooney describes them in his affidavit listed in the January, 1992 hearing transcript. In various Oral Histories conducted, JTF-FA interviewed the authors of the PAVN Air Defense Command History.

They claim to have written the book only using newspaper and magazine articles. Also, in having looked at the material turned over in 1995 by the Vietnamese, there is very little Air Defense information. I have not seen the 1994 documents. Thus, the question becomes, have we asked for it, and if so, what has been the Vietnamese response.

Dummy and control traffic vs. the real McCoy Finally, how does the NSA tell a dummy or a propaganda message from the real thing. A dummy message could be the Vietnamese trying to pass false data, or more often, is a political officer who is trying to bolster troop morale. Jerry called these "Emulation" messages. (Please look at page 4 again to see where I have underlined the words.) To anyone who has studied communist documents, the term is used often by the communists, such as in conducting an "emulation movement," a campaign to get other units to mimic the actions of some successful unit.

In summary, I have tried to make several points. First, a growing body of documentation to back up Jerry's claims, claims such as the shootdown of the ICCS helicopter, our penetration of the Vietnamese AAA communication nets, and obviously, the execution incident.

Second, the necessity of being careful in handling any type of intelligence in isolation, and of guarding against creating unwarranted claims from mis-reading the available declassified NSA material. Lastly, the ability of the NSA to verify dummy traffic versus real time, highly significant intelligence. This goes to the heart of the execution message. It is a combination of technology, experience, and having an outstanding database to check the validity of a message against. Simply put, my next memo will discuss the NSA in-house Quality Control checks that will propel the execution message out of the realm of speculation, and provide you with a clear-

cut description of the difference between a dummy and control message, and a message, like the execution message, that was believed not to be.

This is the difference between just reading SIGINT and knowing SIGINT.

Thank you for your patience as I have tried to explain this complex subject. If you have any questions, please call.

Memorandum #3

Date: 7 December 1995

To: Al Santoli, Dino Carluccio, Bill Bell

From: Jay Veith

re: Mooney interview concerning "10 American Executed" message In this memo, I will discuss the results of a lengthy interview I had with Jerry Mooney concerning the execution message. Frankly, if one thinks about this message, it flies in the face of what we have come to understand as North Vietnamese policy towards American POWs.

DPMO can be expected to ask some hard but honest questions, questions I also had over the contents of the message. Even with Jerry's extraordinary recall of the events, we should not abandon our responsibility to think critically about this before we can charitably ask JTF-FA to politely ask the Vietnamese whether one of their units committed a war crime. I have had some preliminary discussions with Bill Bell about this. His analysis should also be sought, since he possesses an entirely different set of experiences and perspective.

I strongly suspect that DPMO has already conducted an analysis of this message; they should be encouraged to share it. To me, one of three plausible scenarios exists for this message; it's a fake, it's real but didn't happen; it's real and did happen. I believe the following discussion will shed some light on what NSA thought about this message. I apologize for the length of this memo, but this is complex issue that prevents simplicity. While at times this may read like some spy novel, I believe it's necessary to completely examine this before you can determine the appropriate course of action.

Dummy and Control Traffic

What steps does NSA take to tell the difference between solid intelligence and fake intelligence? If you look at page 1 of my fax, you will see what purports to be another execution message.

[NOTE: BLANK AREAS WERE REDACTED/ \$ WERE IN THE ORIGINAL TEXT] 1
M = 509

1891554

071502Z

FM
TO
ZEM
XXMM

SHOOTDOWN OF AN F-4

AIRCRAFT AND EXECUTION OF TWO PILOTS

ON 5 JULY, 370 (UNIDENTIFIED/UNLOCATED UNIT)
ON 4 JULY, COMPANY 3 (UNIDENTIFIED/UNLOCATED UNITS) WAS SUCCESSFUL
IN STRIKING THE ENEMY AND WERE VICTORIOUS OVER THEM. \$
\$THEY SHOT DOWN ON THE SPOT, ONE F-4 AIRCRAFT AND AFTERWARDS ANNIHILATED THE
TWO PILOTS WITH ONE BULLET (EACH). \$ COMMENTS, AVAILABLE OPERATIONAL
DATA REVEALS THAT NO F-4 AIRCRAFT WERE LOST TO ENEMY ACTION ON 4 JULY.
NNNN

However, by comparing it against page 2, the "10 Americans" message, we note some contrasts. First, while NSA monitored this message, they had problems identifying the units involved, a clear indication to NSA, since they had PAVN AAA Order of Battle down cold, that this message was probably a propaganda message designed to impress the troops and/or shake us up a bit. (Jerry thinks that the 370 may be a unit in the Hanoi area.)

[NOTE: BLANK AREAS WERE REDACTED/ \$ WERE IN ORIGINAL TEXT]
1891548

2

Z 071545Z JUL 72
FM
TO

NVN 377TH AIR DEFENSE

DIVISION PLANS TO EXECUTE 10 AMERICANS
ON 6 JULY, THE NVN 377TH AIR DEFENSE DIVISION (UNLOCATED, LOWER QUANG BINH
PROVINCE) THE 284TH AAA REGIMENT AND DIRECTED THE EXECUTION OF 10
AMERICANS. \$ON 8 JULY.

CADRES

SHALL BE LEFT BEHIND TO KILL THE 10 AMERICANS.
COMPLETE THE TASK AND RETURN

THE 284TH AAA REGIMENT DEPARTED QUANG TRI CITY ON 5 JULY AND IS
PRESENTLY LOCATING IN THE AREAS OF CAM LO (16-49N 107-00E), DONG LON (16-47N
107-05E) AND TAN VINH (16-46N 107-06E)

Second, note the Comments section. The Operational reports revealed that no F-4's were shot down on 4 July. Therefore, to the analysts at NSA, this incident probably didn't happen. (However, I remain deeply concerned over this message, not so much for its content, because the Date/Time Group is so close to the 10 Americans one. There was F-4's shot down on the 1st and the 3rd of July, but everyone but one guy returned.) There are additional messages that discuss the execution of American pilots. (Please see page 3.) In

[NOTE: BLANK AREAS WERE REDACTED/ \$ WERE IN THE ORIGINAL TEXT]
M = 553

3

2011445

191448Z JUL 72
FM
TO
ZEM
XXMM

NVN

290 RECONNAISSANCE REGIMENTS ORDERS UNITS TO ANNIHILATE DOWNED PILOTS
ON 18 JULY, THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE 290TH RECONNAISSANCE REGIMENT
ORDERED SUBORDINATE UNITS TO ANNIHILATE DOWNED PILOTS. \$THE
CREW OF ANY B-52 SHORT DOWN WILL BE ANNIHILATED ALONG WITH THE
((CREWS)) OF ANY A6 AIRCRAFT ((THAT ARE SHOT DOWN)). COMMENTS, THE
HEADQUARTERS OF THE 290TH RECONNAISSANCE REGIMENT IS AT BA DON (17-50N
106-24E).
NNN

this case, the 290th Recon regiment is a Radar unit. It had no guns, except a few for self-defense. They were ordered never to fire at the Americans for fear of retaliation. Since the Radar units were the backbone of the PAVN Air Defense grid, it was essential that they not invite attack. Again, this makes it doubtful that the 290th committed these acts.

What then separates these dummy execution messages from the "10 Americans" message. NSA Quality Control, and the combined 110 years SIGINT experience of the men who signed off on the message before it was transmitted from NSA to DOD. Most importantly, the priority that this message was assigned by the NSA. Look carefully at the upper left corner of the message, in the area just before the date/time group. The letter "Z" appears. This letter signifies "Flash" priority, which is the highest priority NSA can assign to a message.

The title for these types of messages is called "Critic." Critic messages have to be sent out within 1 minute to the consumers, mainly State, DOD, and the White House. The following summarizes Jerry's account of what occurred at NSA.

The execution message was picked up by both a U-2 and a C-130 code-named "Comfy Gator," and was immediately transmitted to NSA. This is known as double copy, or getting the same message from two different sources at the same time. The 377th code was being used, a code

unique to that unit, and the message was signed by the Combat Watch Officer of the 377th. At the bottom of each Vietnamese encrypted message is a signature block. Once NSA decodes the message, the name of the officer listed is entered into the database, called COINS. Immediately, any Collateral and all COMINT this enemy officer has done is retrieved and shown on the computer to the analyst. This is the first step in Quality Control. (The original Vietnamese From/To version would be from the Combat Watch officer at the 377th, to its subordinate unit, the 284th AAA Regiment.)

When Mooney received the intelligence giving the exact time and location for the execution, he created a message from the intercept.

He is known as the drafter, and as such he is not allowed by regulation (during this time frame) to send out that same message he drafted. This prevents any potential bias of the people who work at NSA from influencing message traffic. When Jerry received this message, he created a cover sheet, which has signature blocks that must be filled in to enable the message to be released. He then takes it to a releaser, in this case his immediate supervisor, who signed off on the message and assigned it an importance, i.e. low or high. (This is different than message priority.) A total of 5 different people signed off on the message, including the original linguist, Jerry's boss, two levels of management above his supervisor, and finally, the most senior Vietnamese linguist at NSA.

(The Division Chief, citing the sensitivity of the message, told Mooney to have the top Vietnamese linguist in NSA, a guy known as the Group Senior Linguist, look at the message. This is the man who was out to lunch.)

According to Jerry, it took about 5 minutes to coordinate this release until they ran into the problem of the man being out to lunch. When this Senior Linguist returned, he checked the translation, didn't change a word, assigned it the highest priority, Flash, and signed off. The SIGINT experience of the people who signed off on the message totals a combined 110 years of training and direct field experience.

Mooney took the message to the Comm. Center and sent it directly to DOD and the field via a regular CAMS distribution. (It was not initially sent to the White House. See my first memo for what CAMS is.) Mooney went and sat by the secure phone. Within several minutes, the DIA's AAA analyst for Southeast Asia was calling. The first question he asked, "Was the message valid?" Yes, because of the information mentioned earlier. The second question was, "Who the hell are they, were did they get ten men?" Mooney answered they didn't know. The DIA analyst replied, "You have twenty minutes to find an us answer." Mooney came back in ten minutes with several possibilities, some of which are listed in The Bamboo Cage.

Unfortunately, by the time it got to the field, it was too late. According to Jerry, DIA called back several days later with a problem. DIA believed that it was only 7 Americans and 3 ARVNs. Because of the uncertainty, Jerry and the DIA man decided to leave the message in its original configuration.

In Jerry's mind, this intelligence was solid, that if the PAVN had attempted to send a dummy message, their experience would have enabled them to detect it. They never monitored any other reports in Vietnamese tactical communications, which is what this stuff is, about Americans being killed for any other reason, such as from bombings. What is critical to Jerry is the Quality Control exercised at NSA both in general and over this message. In his 22 years of work, he never saw another message at the "Flash" precedence level held up like this. Afterwards, procedures were changed to allow the drafter to send out messages under his own authority, with the caveat that it's your butt if it's wrong.

Here are some of the additional questions I asked Jerry. Was there any Collateral on this? Yes, but it apparently it was fairly weak. Did NSA intercept any acknowledgement of a done deed, or an authorization message? No, nor did they expect to. The channels for that may have been different, plus they might have missed it. Furthermore, they believed this style of revenge killings was an SOP for the Air Defense Divisions, so they really didn't expect to see any follow-up. Why was there no outrage, why didn't heads roll over this? Apparently there was, but not

enough to get anyone fired. Why would a AAA unit be holding 10 Americans in the South, when all the rest of the Americans in M.R.T.T.H. had been moved North in the 1970, 1971 time frame? This gets into Mooney's theories of men being held back because they had seen classified Vietnamese installations, and the need for slave labor to assist the 282th AAA Reg. of the 377th Division movement from Laos into South Vietnam during the Easter Offensive. Is it possible that people then didn't believe it? No, otherwise it wouldn't have been assigned the priority it had, nor would the people involved signed off on it. Was there any Soviet connection? No, they didn't go that far South.

Returning to my three scenarios, based on the above account I believe we can assign a low priority to the message being a fake.

That leaves us with it's real and never happened, or it's real and did happen. I fear that we may be facing another "1205 document" here, where everyone agrees that it's an authentic Russian document, but what it purports is incorrect. What also comes to mind is the McConnell theory, where the mysterious PAVN officer tells Ted that they tortured and killed many Americans. Unfortunately, one of the problems we have faced since Jerry decided to go public has been our inability to synthesize the world of SIGINT with the more traditional forms of intelligence, i.e. rallier reports, captured documents, what Jerry would refer to as Collateral. I think the major stumbling block has been that Jerry has talked about the PAVN Air Defense network, while we are more familiar with the world of PLAF and PAVN main infantry units. These worlds are vastly different. The PAVN AAA units never came South.

Consequently, we probably have few ralliers and almost no captured documents that would provide us insight into AAA unit activities.

These units were the cream of the crop, among the Vietnamese most professional units, dedicated to defending the homeland.

Consequently, only once did these units venture south of the DMZ during the war.

Lastly, Jerry asked me if I believed this. I think the man deserves an answer. I believe Jerry's account of what happened at NSA, and his depiction of the QC at NSA. If you had heard him relate these details with the precision and clarity he displayed, you would be convinced also, although it would be helpful to have one of the other people involved step forward and buttress his account. As to whether 10 Americans were actually executed, I feel we need to reserve judgement until NSA releases the full text and we have done more research. However, I strongly believe that we need to thoroughly investigate this. The evidence, especially the experts at NSA, provide convincing proof that something happened. DPMO can reasonably be expected to provide their analysis, a copy of Jerry's DIA Blue Book article discussing the execution incident. This should include a search of the SAFE system for rallier/refugee reports on this incident, a determination on the retrieval of the Weapons Control logs for the 377th, and should conduct an Oral History with the Combat Watch Officer and Political Officer from those units. NSA should release the full text, along with the cover sheet showing the signatures, and the various Collateral and SIGINT from the Combat Watch Officer.

Jerry has given me the names of the men he thinks are the best candidates. This will be the most dangerous ground, when we get into the "Who are the Candidates" game. I will pass those to you verbally.

Memorandum #3

Date: 7 December 1995

To: Al Santoli, Dino Carluccio, Bill Bell

From: Jay Veith

re: Mooney interview concerning "10 American Executed" message In this memo, I will discuss

the results of a lengthy interview I had with Jerry Mooney concerning the execution message. Frankly, if one thinks about this message, it flies in the face of what we have come to understand as North Vietnamese policy towards American POWs.

DPMO can be expected to ask some hard but honest questions, questions I also had over the contents of the message. Even with Jerry's extraordinary recall of the events, we should not abandon our responsibility to think critically about this before we can charitably ask JTF-FA to politely ask the Vietnamese whether one of their units committed a war crime. I have had some preliminary discussions with Bill Bell about this. His analysis should also be sought, since he possesses an entirely different set of experiences and perspective.

I strongly suspect that DPMO has already conducted an analysis of this message; they should be encouraged to share it. To me, one of three plausible scenarios exists for this message; it's a fake, it's real but didn't happen; it's real and did happen. I believe the following discussion will shed some light on what NSA thought about this message. I apologize for the length of this memo, but this is complex issue that prevents simplicity. While at times this may read like some spy novel, I believe it's necessary to completely examine this before you can determine the appropriate course of action.

Dummy and Control Traffic

What steps does NSA take to tell the difference between solid intelligence and fake intelligence? If you look at page 1 of my fax, you will see what purports to be another execution message.

[NOTE: BLANK AREAS WERE REDACTED/ \$ WERE IN THE ORIGINAL TEXT] 1
M = 509

1891554

071502Z

FM
TO
ZEM
XXMM

SHOOTDOWN OF AN F-4

AIRCRAFT AND EXECUTION OF TWO PILOTS

ON 5 JULY, 370 (UNIDENTIFIED/UNLOCATED UNIT)
ON 4 JULY, COMPANY 3 (UNIDENTIFIED/UNLOCATED UNITS) WAS SUCCESSFUL
IN STRIKING THE ENEMY AND WERE VICTORIOUS OVER THEM. \$
\$THEY SHOT DOWN ON THE SPOT, ONE F-4 AIRCRAFT AND AFTERWARDS ANNIHILATED THE
TWO PILOTS WITH ONE BULLET (EACH). \$ COMMENTS, AVAILABLE OPERATIONAL
DATA REVEALS THAT NO F-4 AIRCRAFT WERE LOST TO ENEMY ACTION ON 4 JULY.
NNNN

However, by comparing it against page 2, the "10 Americans" message, we note some contrasts. First, while NSA monitored this message, they had problems identifying the units involved, a clear indication to NSA, since they had PAVN AAA Order of Battle down cold, that this message was probably a propaganda message designed to impress the troops and/or shake us up a bit. (Jerry thinks that the 370 may be a unit in the Hanoi area.)

[NOTE: BLANK AREAS WERE REDACTED/ \$ WERE IN ORIGINAL TEXT] 2
1891548

Z 071545Z JUL 72
FM
TO

NVN 377TH AIR DEFENSE

DIVISION PLANS TO EXECUTE 10 AMERICANS
ON 6 JULY, THE NVN 377TH AIR DEFENSE DIVISION (UNLOCATED, LOWER QUANG BINH
PROVINCE) THE 284TH AAA REGIMENT AND DIRECTED THE EXECUTION OF 10
AMERICANS. \$ON 8 JULY.

CADRES

SHALL BE LEFT BEHIND TO KILL THE 10 AMERICANS.
COMPLETE THE TASK AND RETURN

THE 284TH AAA REGIMENT DEPARTED QUANG TRI CITY ON 5 JULY AND IS PRESENTLY LOCATING IN THE AREAS OF CAM LO (16-49N 107-00E), DONG LON (16-47N 107-05E) AND TAN VINH (16-46N 107-06E)

Second, note the Comments section. The Operational reports revealed that no F-4's were shot down on 4 July. Therefore, to the analysts at NSA, this incident probably didn't happen. (However, I remain deeply concerned over this message, not so much for its content, because the Date/Time Group is so close to the 10 Americans one. There was F-4's shot down on the 1st and the 3rd of July, but everyone but one guy returned.) There are additional messages that discuss the execution of American pilots. (Please see page 3.) In

[NOTE: BLANK AREAS WERE REDACTED/ \$ WERE IN THE ORIGINAL TEXT] 3
M = 553

2011445
191448Z JUL 72
FM
TO
ZEM
XXMM

NVN

290 RECONNAISSANCE REGIMENTS ORDERS UNITS TO ANNIHILATE DOWNED PILOTS
ON 18 JULY, THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE 290TH RECONNAISSANCE REGIMENT
ORDERED SUBORDINATE UNITS TO ANNIHILATE DOWNED PILOTS. \$THE
CREW OF ANY B-52 SHORT DOWN WILL BE ANNIHILATED ALONG WITH THE
(CREWS) OF ANY A6 AIRCRAFT (THAT ARE SHOT DOWN). COMMENTS, THE
HEADQUARTERS OF THE 290TH RECONNAISSANCE REGIMENT IS AT BA DON (17-50N
106-24E).
NNN

this case, the 290th Recon regiment is a Radar unit. It had no guns, except a few for self-defense. They were ordered never to fire at the Americans for fear of retaliation. Since the Radar units were the backbone of the PAVN Air Defense grid, it was essential that they not invite attack. Again, this makes it doubtful that the 290th committed these acts.

What then separates these dummy execution messages from the "10 Americans" message. NSA Quality Control, and the combined 110 years SIGINT experience of the men who signed off on the message before it was transmitted from NSA to DOD. Most importantly, the priority that this message was assigned by the NSA. Look carefully at the upper left corner of the message, in the area just before the date/time group. The letter "Z" appears. This letter signifies "Flash" priority, which is the highest priority NSA can assign to a message.

The title for these types of messages is called "Critic." Critic messages have to be sent out within 1 minute to the consumers, mainly State, DOD, and the White House. The following summarizes Jerry's account of what occurred at NSA.

The execution message was picked up by both a U-2 and a C-130 code-named "Comfy Gator," and was immediately transmitted to NSA.

This is known as double copy, or getting the same message from two different sources at the same time. The 377th code was being used, a code unique to that unit, and the message was signed by the Combat Watch Officer of the 377th. At the bottom of each Vietnamese encrypted message is a signature block. Once NSA decodes the message, the name of the officer listed is entered into the database, called COINS. Immediately, any Collateral and all COMINT this enemy officer has done is retrieved and shown on the computer to the analyst. This is the first step in Quality Control. (The original Vietnamese From/To version would be from the Combat Watch officer at the 377th, to its subordinate unit, the 284th AAA Regiment.)

When Mooney received the intelligence giving the exact time and location for the execution, he created a message from the intercept.

He is known as the drafter, and as such he is not allowed by regulation (during this time frame)

to send out that same message he drafted. This prevents any potential bias of the people who work at NSA from influencing message traffic. When Jerry received this message, he created a cover sheet, which has signature blocks that must be filled in to enable the message to be released. He then takes it to a releaser, in this case his immediate supervisor, who signed off on the message and assigned it an importance, i.e. low or high. (This is different than message priority.) A total of 5 different people signed off on the message, including the original linguist, Jerry's boss, two levels of management above his supervisor, and finally, the most senior Vietnamese linguist at NSA.

(The Division Chief, citing the sensitivity of the message, told Mooney to have the top Vietnamese linguist in NSA, a guy known as the Group Senior Linguist, look at the message. This is the man who was out to lunch.)

According to Jerry, it took about 5 minutes to coordinate this release until they ran into the problem of the man being out to lunch. When this Senior Linguist returned, he checked the translation, didn't change a word, assigned it the highest priority, Flash, and signed off. The SIGINT experience of the people who signed off on the message totals a combined 110 years of training and direct field experience.

Mooney took the message to the Comm. Center and sent it directly to DOD and the field via a regular CAMS distribution. (It was not initially sent to the White House. See my first memo for what CAMS is.) Mooney went and sat by the secure phone. Within several minutes, the DIA's AAA analyst for Southeast Asia was calling. The first question he asked, "Was the message valid?" Yes, because of the information mentioned earlier. The second question was, "Who the hell are they, were did they get ten men?" Mooney answered they didn't know. The DIA analyst replied, "You have twenty minutes to find an us answer." Mooney came back in ten minutes with several possibilities, some of which are listed in The Bamboo Cage.

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Here are some of the additional questions I asked Jerry. Was there any Collateral on this? Yes, but it apparently it was fairly weak. Did NSA intercept any acknowledgement of a done deed, or an authorization message? No, nor did they expect to. The channels for that may have been different, plus they might have missed it.

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Jerry has given me the names of the men he thinks are the best candidates. This will be the most dangerous ground, when we get into the "Who are the Candidates" game. I will pass those to you verbally.

Memorandum #5

Date: 12 January 1996

To: Al Santoli, Dino Carluccio, Bill Bell

From: Jay Veith

re: Continued research in SIGINT material

I have discovered 3 new rolls of SIGINT and/or NSA related materials, for a new total of 9.

There could possibly be a tenth.

I have completed a review of 7 of the rolls. The roll in the FRD set that I initially thought was a Lone Ranger apparently has a few friends. I continue to find extremely interesting material, and this memo will answer your request for any information on third party involvement with American POWs.

Follow-up to Memo #4

Bill Bell believes that the "American Colonel" is in all likelihood Tucker Gougleman, and that the Lt. Col. mentioned in the fall of Ban Me Thout is probably Paul Struharik, a senior Province Advisor, although listed as a State Employee, was probably CIA.

In terms of the April 4th, 1970 execution message, Jerry is convinced after reviewing it that this is the Dennis Pugh incident that he wrote an earlier affidavit on entitled, "A Mother's Tears."

His original affidavit stated Pugh was killed in 1972, but he now concedes that it was 1970. Even Jerry, whose recall has been impressive, occasionally has a memory lapse. He fully expected a 5% error ratio. More importantly, Jerry believes the bombing of the SAM site to prevent the shutdown of the U-2 that I described in Memo #4 is what triggered this incident. He wishes to emphasize, though, that this was DIA's, not his, estimate, (accent on estimate), as to who the likely candidate was. If you want to further investigate this incident at NSA, Jerry has informed me of the individual at NSA who sent the follow on message confirming the execution, (a message I have not discovered), the channels used, and the office in NSA where this person worked at. He believes there was only about a dozen total revenge killings incidents by PAVN Air Defense units against Americans.

Additional information on "10 Americans Executed"

I have found the "10 Americans executed" referenced in the NSA "Southeast Asia Daily Summary" for 7 July 1972. (See page labeled 1.) This constitutes more internal evidence that NSA took this

[NOTE: BLANK AREAS WERE REDACTED]

1

1892200

P 072999Z JUL 72

FM

TO

[STRUCK] TOPSECRET SECTION ONE

THIS REPORT SUMMARIZES DEVELOPMENTS NOTED THROUGHOUT SOUTHEAST ASIA
AVAILABLE AS OF 1500Z, 7 JULY

284TH REGIMENT HAD WITHDRWN FROM QUANG TRI CITY. ON 6 JULY, THE DIVISION

284TH AAA REGIMENT TO EXECUTE TEN AMERICANS. ELEMENTS OF THE 274TH
SAM REGIMENT IN THE LINH/DMZ AREA HAVE TO PREPARE TO
RETREAT.

intercept quite seriously, and its placement in this report is a key indicator. Items do not simply appear in the "Daily Summary" because of requirements or Technical Instructions. This "Daily Summary" is sent to the various National Consumers of Intelligence, and highlights the most important material in that section for that particular day. Let me explain this procedure, so that you can judge for yourself its importance.

Before items appear in the "Daily Summary," they are re-translated and re-reviewed by higher echelon NSA staff. This is essentially a second check on the accuracy of the original spot report. As you can see, no changes were made to it by the NSA staff. On a daily basis, the staff is looking for highlight items to place in the summary, which are then read by high level customers known as "downtowners" in NSA slang. (Think of an editor who has 50 news items. He is trying to determine what goes on page 1 vs. page 12. The field can issue 25 "Songbirds" in one day, but they all can't be in the summary.) Once an item meets the criteria, the staff sends it back to the originator, in this case Mooney and his boss, to write a short "blurb" describing the incident. Since this incident happened outside North Vietnam, Mooney had to coordinate this with the other Divisions involved in Southeast Asia work. They did not disagree with the analysis. Obviously, this item was considered important enough to make the 7 July summary. Again, nothing was changed/deleted by either the NSA staff or the other Southeast Asia Divisions. Remember, the "Daily Summary" is issued by the NSA staff to other agencies, not by Jerry Mooney. The NSA staff would therefore have a vested interest in ensuring that the material in the summary is accurate. I am not trying to over-emphasize the importance of the placement of the "10 Americans" in the "Daily Summary", but this is not some "FYI" type report. This is specifically written for high level government personnel, although eventually it filters down to the analyst level.

Thus, DOD and the White House were informed of this intercept on a second occasion, but until we get DPMO's analysis of their response, what ultimately transpired remains unknown.

Chinese/Soviet/Cuban/North Korean involvement In April of 1992, Tom Lang of the Senate Select Staff asked the NSA to search its database for any references to Chinese/Soviet/Cubans in conjunction with American POWs. (I added North Korea.) The only Soviet references I have discovered so far relates to joint Soviet/Vietnamese manned SAM sites, one of which mentions a shootdown by a "unit of friends." (This one is different than one I found mentioned in the NSA Correlation Study. There are some unexplained differences between the microfilm, the NSA Correlation Study, and the 15 Volume Uncorrelated set.) However, the NSA reported the only Soviet references that they found were some CIA SIGINT on Soviet journalist activity with U.S. POWs.

If there are additional references to the Soviets, either they weren't included, or they must be in the redacted portions. While Jerry has mentioned the use of the word Ban (friend) by the Vietnamese to describe the Soviets, the main use I have seen of the term "friends" in mentioning allies is to describe the Pathet Lao.

Jerry has told me that a fellow co-worker at NSA did a study of all the Ban traffic, including Soviets heard speaking in the background of Vietnamese radio traffic while they were assisting them at the SAM sites. Yet, in the April of 1995 Joint Committee (the old Task Force Russia) meeting held in Moscow, the Russians stated the Vietnamese would not allow them in the SAM Command and Control vans, a statement both Minarcin and Mooney find, at best, humorous. If other Soviet material exists, none of it was released, or it is so cleverly disguised that it is impossible to even recognize. This would appear to be a violation of the Legal Agreement Mooney signed with NSA during the Senate Select Committee. NSA was to review the Russian Shipping and Civil Air traffic for references to American POWs and release that material. I did see one or two Soviet Civil Air and one Chinese Civil Air message. The Chinese message referenced the movement of early released American POWs, and the Soviet mentioned the transport of senior North Vietnamese leaders.

However, if the NSA fulfilled their part of the Agreement, I have been unable to discover any correspondence even mentioning it, let alone describing their actions. I would recommend that this question be addressed.

The only mention of the North Koreans is of piloting MIGs against U.S. aircraft. The Cubans are mentioned once. The Chinese, however, are a somewhat more interesting story. In the NSA's reply to Lang's request, NSA stated they could find only four reports. "In November 1967, two probable Americans were being held prisoner by Chinese Communist forces responsible for shooting them down. In December 1969, an American agent was captured and interrogated in northern Laos..." I could not find the two mentioned above, but I did find this next one. If memory serves, I believe that the NVVC newsletter also published this intercept early last year. "In 1974 the possible Chinese-directed Division in Burma requesting information on all captured in 1973, including Americans." However, the actual intercept, dated 9 January 1974, is part of the "Daily ChiCom Ground Forces Laos/Burma Summary." The request is for statistics from 1973 on numbers of criminals captured, executed, etc., and includes a category on "American (word unknown)." That "word unknown" creates ambiguity in the worth of this intercept, but it still should be examined.

Although NSA may have labored under narrower restrictions than is indicated in the text of the memo, I did find other intercepts dealing with the Chinese, including about a dozen that deal with the losses of American planes over or near Chinese airspace. Another report states that "a Chinese merchant vessel had recovered an American corpse floating in the water." I have not done any additional research to determine whether this body was returned to the U.S. or not. Two other intercepts describe the efforts by the Chinese to recover U.S. aircraft debris. One of these intercepts, from February of 1967, mentions the capture of US pilots by "CFNVN" (Chinese Forces North Vietnam) near Kep airfield and that "there were several items on the aircraft which had not been recovered by the Chicoms."

An Air Activity report for 18 Oct 1967 describes an A6A, also near Kep airfield, that fell into a rice paddy, and "they (the Chinese) did not have sufficient forces to pursue the pilots," and

"certain parts of the aircraft (possibly radar/electrical) were not recovered because those parts were underwater." No aircraft could be correlated to this incident by NSA in this "conversation." However, in a 22 Oct 1967 message to CINCPAC, (see page labeled 2), NSA stated

[NOTE: BLANK AREAS WERE REDACTED]

2

OCT 22 15 47Z67

DTG: 221600Z OCT 67

FM:

TO:

[STRUCK] SECRET

SUBJ: BULLETIN

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WERE SUBMITTED TO CINCPAC DURING THE 24-HOUR PERIOD ENDING 22/1600Z. THESE ITEMS ARE PASSED TO YOU FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND TO SOLICIT YOUR COMMENTS. THEY ARE NOT INTENDED FOR REPRODUCTION AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT COMMAND POSITION.

NORTH VIETNAM

ITEM 1: A DOWNED "A6A" AIRCRAFT
ON 13 OCTOBER,
NEAR KEP AIRFIELD
A DOWNED A6A (INTRUDER) AIRCRAFT.

THE AIRCRAFT

HAD FALLEN INTO A PADDIE AND WAS NEARLY INTACT, BUT CIVILIANS AND PEOPLE'S ARMY PERSONNEL STRIPPING THE AIRCRAFT. THE RECOVERY OF THE IMPORTANT PARTS, THE WEAPONS CONTROL SECTION WAS ONE OF THEM. RECOVERY WAS IMPOSSIBLE DUE TO THE POSITION OF THE AIRCRAFT AND THE DEPTH OF THE WATER.

THE AIRCRAFT WAS NOT SHOT DOWN - IT JUST FELL , AND THE CREW, AFTER BAILING OUT, HAD BEEN TAKEN AWAY BY CIVILIANS.

COMMENT: OPERATIONAL DATA CURRENTLY AVAILABLE INDICATES THAT NO A6A AIRCRAFT WAS LOST ON 17 OR 18 OCTOBER. AN A4E WAS LOST ON BOTH OF THESE DAYS; HOWEVER THE WOULD TEND TO DISCOUNT THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE TPE OF AIRCRAFT WAS ERRONEOUSLY IDENTIFIED [STRUCK] SECRET

that operational data indicated an A4E was lost on both 17 and 18 October, and "the (Blank) would tend to discount the possibility that the type of aircraft was erroneously identified." In this message to CINCPAC, NSA states the crew is listed as "being taken away by civilians." Apparently, NSA judged the radio traffic to be recounting an authentic incident, but couldn't correlate it to an A6A loss based on U.S. operational data reported to NSA.

Is there Collateral to support this Chinese activity to recover American aircraft parts? In a CIA cable from April of 1973 describing the "Exchange of Intelligence Information by North Vietnam with Soviet Bloc countries and Communist countries between 1958 and 1968," the source reported that "Ministry of Public Security (MPS) officials speculated that the Chinese intended to use...examination of US aircraft to supplement Chinese Communist aircraft design," and further, that the Soviets were being beaten to downed aircraft sites by Chinese technicians. It appears the Chinese were interested in recovering U.S. aircraft debris, just as Mooney has stated. We have two "INTS", SIGINT and HUMINT, describing this activity, which brings us closer to the vaunted "all-source" requirements DPMO rightly argues about.

Therefore, if the Chinese were interested in American aircraft parts, does it then follow that they would also be interested in the pilots, the "China Bound" group that Mooney claims DIA told him about? Jerry has consistently spoken about watching for a "Quantum Leap" in ChiCom/Soviet aviation related technology, the so-called "Sighting reports without people," that might provide a signature to watchful intelligence analysts regarding a possible connection to U.S. POWs.

Unfortunately, the limited confines of this memo don't permit a wider ranging discussion of this

topic, but given these intercepts, perhaps it is something you may care to discuss in a different setting.

Still Reading Vietnam's Mail

I found page labeled 3 of the fax material interesting, not

[NOTE: BLANK AREAS WERE REDACTED] 3
[STRUCK] SECRET
*** BEGIN MESSAGE 1***
CLASS [STRUCK] SECRET
1991511
P 171455Z JUL 92
FM
TO
[STRUCK] SECRET
SERIAL:
SUBJ: POW-MIA MATTERS: QUANG BINH PROVINCIAL
UNIT BLOCK [HANDWRITTEN "ILLEGAL"] ACTIVITIES OF THE
AMERICANS MIA SEARCH TEAM ON 12 JULY 1992
TEXT:
VIETNAM'S QUANG BINH PROVINCIAL HEADQUARTERS
SUBORDINATE UNIT TO WATCH FOR AND BLOCK ANY ATTEMPTS BY THE AMERICAN
MIA SEARCH TEAM TO CONTACT PEOPLE OR TAKE "ILLEGAL" PHOTOGRAPHS ON
12 JULY 1992 THE PROVINCIAL HEADQUARTERS BORDER DEFENSE
POST (*BDP) 192 (A) *TIGHTLY MANAGE MANAGE SURVEILLANCE OF THE TEAM
(B), AND TO BE PARTICULARLY ATTENTIVE TO ANY ACTIONS BY THE TEAM TO
MAKE CONTACT WITH THE LOCAL POPULATION. SUCH ACTIONS AS
"ILLEGAL PHOTOGRAPHING" WERE TO BE PROMPTLY BLOCKED. EVERY ACTION
TAKEN BY THE 21-MEMBER SEARCH TEAM WAS TO BE REPORTED BY THE *BDP IN
DETAIL.
(A) LOCATED IN THE BO *TRACH (1734N 10625E) AREA
OF QUANG BINH PROVINCE.
(B) PRESENTLY IN THE YEN *TRACH SUBDISTRICT OF PROBABLE
BO *TRACH. 141712Z JUL 92.
[STRUCK] SECRET

because I expect someone to climb the ramparts and wave this around while screaming about Vietnam's "superb" cooperation, but for two other factors. One, the obvious implication is that our intercept capabilities in Southeast Asia, while nowhere near wartime levels, still can provide the occasional nugget. This is only one more piece in a growing mosaic on Vietnamese POW/MIA cooperation. I would expect certain elements of Vietnam's Army and Security forces to be less than thrilled over American military teams roaming their countryside. But after reading Mike Janich's testimony, my sympathy has increased for the average JTF-FA team leader or DPMO analyst trying to find answers to old questions, all the while having to deal with the Vietnamese. I suspect that some of these individuals would have an interesting perspective on Vietnamese cooperation vs. the current rhetoric.

REFNO 1937

Although I haven't investigated particular cases, in reviewing some intercepts from the 267th SAM Regiment, one in particular has caught our eye. On 18 Oct 1972, Battalion 52 of the 267th SAM Regiment reported the transfer of two captured pilots. In attempting to determine who they might be, based on location and approximate date, the loss of Peacock and Price, both non-returnees, in an A6A has intrigued us.

REFNO 1937 took off on 12 Oct 72 on a night recon mission from Thailand, heading east. 29 minutes after takeoff they reported into the FAC and went Tactical. 4 minutes later they reported the weather was too poor over the target and they were returning to base. 8 minutes later the FAC reported an explosion on the ground at approx. UTM XE600450, (17-28N 106-25E) which is middle Quang Binh Province, northwest of the ferry at Song Gianh at Dong Hoi. There was no beeper, no voice, and SAR efforts were terminated on October 14th without locating the

aircraft. JTF-FA has investigated the case once, and found nothing. DPMO believes the SRV has little info on this case, and our reporting, both "special" and HUMINT, is not very good. When I checked the NSA Correlation Study, 1937 was not listed.

What are the North Vietnamese saying? On 18 Oct 72, Battalion 52 of the 267th wants to "transfer two captured pilots from Trung Thuan (17-51N 106-18E) and on to Ha Tinh." They report that at least one of the pilots is very weak, and they are having problems moving him because of "transportation difficulties." Trung Thuan is about 10 klicks north of Dong Hoi, well within the area reported by the FAC.

The Song Gianh ferry, located north of Dong Hoi, is a major logistics point, and had AAA defenses around it. The report is definitely not emulation traffic, as Ha Tinh is where the Air Defense Command authority is located. This intercept appears to be the Division getting ready to accept the prisoners, even though the last Order of Battle location puts the 267th in the Nam Dinh area, over 100 klicks to the north of this incident. In fact, this location would remain on the books well into November. I checked the "All-Loss" report to see if there could anyone else in the area to account for the pilots, but the only pertinent loss is a USMC A6 on 13 Oct 72 that went down at UTM XE504316. But it can't be these guys because they are listed as an "Operational" loss, which means they were recovered, assuming that U.S. records are accurate. They are accurate, aren't they?

This area of Quang Binh is a poor area, and although it has remained a bit of a "No man's land," there is some reporting of POWs in this area. The Larry Potts case, or possibly Clemmie Mckinney, was in this area, and Bill has heard rumors of holding camps in this district. Could in this SIGINT correlate to Price and Peacock?

Possibly. At least, it deserves further study.

Memorandum #6

Date: 24 January 1996

To: Al Santoli, Dino Carluccio, Bill Bell

From: Jay Veith

re: The Debacle of Phou Pha Thi: Laos, 1977

Per your request, here is what I have found on the loss of the U.S. Air Force TACAN/TSQ base, called Lima Site 85, on Phou Pha Thi mountain in Houa Phan Province, Laos. As you know, in the early hours of 11 March 1968, a North Vietnamese sapper unit scaled the sheer northwest cliff of the mountain and overran the American installation, killing most of the U.S. technicians working there.

Five American survivors were helicoptered off the next morning.

Accounting for the 11 Americans lost when Pha Thi fell has been a nightmare. The U.S. government in the last two years has attempted to solve the problem by interviewing the commander of the PAVN sapper unit that attacked Site 85, LTC Truong Muc, (see CDR JTF-FA message dated 250902Z Oct 94 to SECDEF entitled, "Interview of LTC Truong Muc, Leader of Attack on Lima Site 85 - Case 2052.") and JTF-FA has conducted two excavations at Site 85. The first excavation was 18-20 Mar 94, (see Amembassy Vientiane message 070200Z Apr 94, "Summary Report of Joint U.S.-Lao Joint Field Activity 94-4L, 9 Mar-4 Apr 1994." This is actually a JTF-FA document, and is available from them.) and it resulted in the infamous NBC TV production. The second one involved having LTC Muc come to the location in December 1994 to actually point out the positions of where his men buried the American bodies. Yet, the JTF-FA has been unable to discover any American remains on the mountain top, even given the rocky terrain and thin soil.

Interrogation reports from the war indicated one American may have been captured during the attack. Also, one of the most intriguing pieces of information in recent years was an interview in August 1990 with Pathet Lao General Singkapo, former Pathet Lao M.R. 2 commander.

Although not considered among the top five Pathet Lao leaders, Singkapo nonetheless was a senior Pathet Lao figure, and certainly was in a position to possess detailed knowledge of the incident.

Singkapo related that three wounded Americans were removed from the TACAN site after the battle. (See Dr. Timothy Castle's book, "At War in the Shadow of Vietnam: U.S. Military aid to the Royal Lao Government 1955-1975," p. 97.)

Given the notoriety of the case, and assuming that JTF-FA claims of Lao cooperation as outstanding are indeed correct, one would reasonably expect that if the Lao or Vietnamese governments had recovered any American remains from Site 85, they would have returned them to U.S. control. Yet, I found SIGINT evidence of Lao government involvement in concealing evidence from Pha Thi that would answer some of the questions regarding the men at Site 85.

An NSA intercept dated 092128Z Jun 77, which is a Follow-up One to another message dated 071949Z Jun 77, is entitled, "LPLA to Recover

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1
M = 209

1880339

R 062127Z JUL 77

FM

TO

[STRUCK] SECRET

FOLLOW UP TWO TO

071949Z JUN 77

LAOS

REMAINS OF AMERICAN WAR DEAD

LAOTIAN OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN SEARCHING FOR AMERICAN WAR DEAD SOMEWHAT EARLIER THAN ORIGINALLY THOUGHT, AS RECENTLY AVAILABLE INFORMATION REVEALS THE SEARCH WAS ONGOING IN APRIL AND MAY RATHER THAN EARLY JUNE.

IN XIENG KHOANG PROVINCE

ONE.

INDIVIDUAL TO SEARCH THE PROVINCE FOR GRAVES OF AMERICANS.

PURSUANT TO AN AGREEMENT REACHED BY THE LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC (LPDR) THE

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SOMEWHERE IN HOUA

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AUTHORITIES

IN VIENG SAI (20224N 10412E VH1955) TO INVESTIGATE THE LOCATION OF THE REMAINS.

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(I'm not entirely convinced these messages are NSA work. They may be either Third-Party intercepts, i.e. the Thai, or may be CIA intercepts.)

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SOURCE
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RESPONSE TO RFI ON POW-MIA REQUIREMENT

R 170156Z NOV 90

FM

TO

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CONCUR:

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Memorandum #7

Date: 9 February 1996

To: Al Santoli, Dino Carluccio, Bill Bell

From: Jay Veith

re: Post-war Lao SIGINT concerning Americans

The Site 85 memo created interest among various people for further study of any post-war SIGINT information from Laos on American POWs.

I did some additional research, and after re-looking at the Site 85 material, the Nhommarth operation in 1980/81, and some other post-war documents generously sent to me by another researcher, Jerry and I began to see a pattern that we thought you might find quite interesting. Consequently, I would like to create a scenario for discussion, a "strawman" if you will, that you, DPMO, or anyone else can add to, take pot shots at, or what ever.

The difficulty in attempting this review is the heavy redaction of the NSA material. Because we had to make some "educated guesses," and because some of the SIGINT material exists in an analytical "gray area" that can provide several varying interpretations, we may very well get some points incorrect. Obviously the government believes that this material does not demonstrate that Americans were held back in Laos. Their stance would probably be that from an "all-source" perspective, there are no indicators that U.S. POWs remained in Laos after Homecoming.

However, by putting this material together as a body, a "history" so to speak, of Lao post-war intercepts, we believe it shows a potential mutually reinforcing trend. Viewing pieces of this material in isolation can lead to debunking of those individual pieces. We are not suggesting that each piece not be thoroughly examined to see if it in fact does fit into the pattern. But if a significant margin of interpretation does exist, then the other side of the equation, that SIGINT suggests the possibility the Lao are holding U.S. POWs, also needs to be completely explored. To keep these memos to a reasonable length, I need to break this into two parts. Any time I place quotation marks around a statement from a document, I have the document, but I have not included it in this fax. First, some education is needed concerning what are known as "Third Party Intercepts" provided to the U.S. government. Because I'm starting to dance close to the edge here, I am leaving out some information like codewords, etc. Memo 7 discuss intercepts from 1974 to the Nhom Marot operation. In Memo 8, I will discuss intercepts from 1982 through 1986, including an incident in 1984 that I think is as intriguing as Nhommarth, mainly because we have the documentation to provide a more detailed analysis. Forgive me for repeating any information you already know.

After the American withdrawal in 1973, the U.S. began to dismantle its intelligence gathering apparatus in SE Asia. The EC-135 called "Combat Apple" left in early 1974, and the C-130 known as "Comfy Gator" departed in the summer. NSA left the U-2 "Olympic Torch" to provide SIGINT coverage to support the ARVNs. With the fall of Saigon and the war's end, most PAVN communications had switched to landline and Manual Morse, so the U-2 was withdrawn in 1976. Jerry states that he went to the CIA in 1976 to discuss the re-deployment of the "Torch." He raised concerns over potential loss of coverage on American POWs with the CIA rep, who assured him they had plenty of HUMINT to follow U.S. POWs. Jerry brought this point up during his Select Committee deposition. Apparently, the CIA rep denied meeting Jerry, so Jerry

asked the Senate investigators to check the sign-in logs, which Jerry claims would support his attendance at this meeting. Jerry never heard if this was done.

Foreign countries provide SIGINT data to the U.S. government. They are broken down into First, Second, and Third Parties. First Party are countries we have close cultural ties with. Second Party are countries with which we have politically significant relationships.

Third party are with smaller countries, such as Thailand. For Third Party intercept capabilities, the intelligence community furnishes much of the funding, assists in training their operators, and supplies a team of Americans for support. In return, these countries provide us with the raw intelligence in computer formats similar to our own.

With the removal of the "Torch," this left the Thai and the American Embassy in Vientiane as the two primary SIGINT operators for U.S. intelligence in SE Asia. Jerry always found the Thai excellent and very reliable. They were not in the business to fool anyone or play games, as their funding depended on it. Generally, the Thai's stationed at Udorn did the intercept and NSA then did the analysis and issued the reports.

More on Site 85

I have found the initial Site 85 intercept that the Follow-up One and Two I sent in Memo 6 were based on. (Please see page labeled 1 of

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THE REMAINS.
XGD8 2

this fax.) This material is therefore either Thai or CIA embassy intercept. Note the standard NSA format. We lean towards the Thai doing the intercepts, and with NSA issuing the reports.

However, based on the limited information, this is a guess.

Any doubts that DIA had possession of this material in 1977 were erased when I reviewed a document FOIAed out several years ago by a researcher. Entitled "Pathet Lao Knowledgeability on U.S. PWs," dated 7 Dec 1977, it is from CDR. Bruce Heller of DIA's PW/MIA Branch. The second page mentions reports of Pathet Lao efforts to search for American remains. (See page 2.) If you look at the

REPORT OF LAO EFFORTS TO SEARCH FOR THE REMAINS
OF UNACCOUNTED-FOR U.S. PERSONNEL
Information received over the years indicates that the Pathet Lao did not have an organized system to account for enemy crash/gravesites. However, during the Presidential Commission's visit to Vientiane in March 1977, Lao officials stated that there was great difficulty in finding MIA information and remains in the rugged terrain, particularly in view of the country's small population and lack of material means. The Lao Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs assured the commission that "the Government of Laos has ordered before and will again for the people of Laos to seek infor-

mation and remains." During both formal and informal meetings, responsible Lao officials agreed to receive further MIA case files and other pertinent material to assist in their search.

In recent months, information has been received through intelligence channels which report that the Lao have initiated efforts to locate and exhume the remains of unaccounted-for U.S. personnel in various areas of Laos. These reports indicate that the Pathet Lao investigations have been primarily concentrated in traditionally Pathet Lao controlled territory. An analysis of the information appears generally accurate with relation to the type of aircraft involved and the incident locations.

second paragraph, and then read the intercepts, you can clearly see Heller is discussing the intercept material. This memo is not the place to fully discuss the implications of DIA having this SIGINT material on Site 85 in June 1977. That's a matter for the families and the National organizations, but one good question to ask is why this was not in Mel Holland's classified file. You may not be aware that Mrs. Holland had never seen any of this material.

After the delegation's visit in 1977, the Lao began searching for the remains of Americans. The question is both how successful they were in recovering remains, and what is the potential universe of recovered remains. A CIA cable, TDCS-315/04928-77, which appears to be a conversation with a high ranking Lao official, added that there are, "graves of American servicemen in Sam Neua province which are not difficult to locate." Site 85 is in Sam Neua province, (now called Houa Phan) as are the cases of David Hrdlicka and Charles Shelton. In regards to live POWs being taken off Site 85, further research reveals that the LPDR Company 18 mentioned in the intercepts is the Patchay Hmong Company 18, which was a group of Hmong which fought for the Pathet Lao. These Hmong were stationed at Phou Pha Thi after the war, and probably came from the area. If they were involved in the battle, they would have acted as guides, engaged in tactical reconnaissance, and acted as porters for the PAVN forces engaged in the battle. Therefore, they should have some knowledge of the incident beyond the remains recovery attempt. Additionally, if these Hmong forces did serve in the area during the battle, they should have been under the command of Lao Gen. Singkapo. This may be the source of Singkapo's claim of 3 Americans taken off the hill. You might want to pursue this further with DPMO.

Nhommarth

It is not my intention here to revisit the entire Nhommarth operation, only to highlight the NSA portion, which from the available records appears to be fairly minor. However, some interesting patterns develop when the NSA information is reviewed.

Given that the incursion and overhead imagery has been thoroughly discussed, perhaps this is will add a different slant to the story.

The first indication of NSA involvement is a meeting held on 12 Dec 1979 between DIA and NSA. An intercept from 15 Nov 79 mentions the movement of three US PWs from Vieng Sai to Attopeu to work in the mines. Somebody asked COS Bangkok to obtain any additional info "without compromising the source." This leads us to believe that the Thai's again intercepted a message, or the CIA had HUMINT that revealed this prisoner movement. Again, the redaction prevents further clarity.

On 2 Dec 80, a CIA source had information concerning the movement of 20 American POWs. NSA apparently didn't have any (Blank) to "substantiate the case" and thought it "a fraud," but there was collateral that "specifically mentioned 20 American prisoners." On 12 Dec 80, DIA asked NSA to review all information from "March 79 to present." On 18 Dec 1980, the NSA responded, mentioning a 1979 transport of "13 special prisoners transferred from northern Laos to southern Laos," which is "correlated to collateral reports of transfers of American and Thai prisoners." This is probably the earlier 15 Nov 79 message. If so, then the mention of "correlated collateral" makes the Nov message more interesting.

At 0700 hrs on 27 Dec 80, a Thai Spec Ops Intercept Unit, Team 213, intercepted the famous message discussing the movement of the American and Thai PWs from Attopeu Province. The message read:

"Refer to the Politbureau Ministry of Defense, that because the US and Thai prisoners have been identified by Thais, Politbureau orders they be removed from Attopeu Province. Aircraft will pick up POWs at the airfield on 28 Dec at 1230hrs. Station Comment: Message allegedly sent from Vientiane (call sign 53) to Attopeu Headquarters and intercepted by Team-213. It was signed by the Supreme Commander of the LPDR."

The CIA asked the Thai for a copy of the message. The Thai said they had not recorded the transmission, so the CIA had doubts about Team-213's capabilities and the validity of the message. According to CIA files, the CIA felt this was "a fabrication. It was, therefore, never disseminated."

Jerry is only vaguely familiar with the Nhommarth operation. This is his analysis of this intercept, one he had never seen before. He feels that one reason the Thai may not have recorded the message is that Team-213 was probably a back pack team sent either into Laos or nearby to monitor low power transmissions from Vientiane. They would write out the code, and someone else would do the decrypt. This could account for the Thai not presenting the information to the CIA until the evening of the 29th. More importantly, and a telling indicator for Jerry, is the use by the Lao of the two digit call sign, called dinomes. This was standard PAVN or Pathet Lao practice for voice transmissions during the war. Finally, not being disseminated is a suppression of intelligence. You can mention in a cable you believe a message is a fabrication, but filing it away is a violation of intelligence collection requirements.

Concurrently, on the same day, the CIA, who had a very sensitive source close to senior members of the Lao government, passed them virtually the same information. In this instance, Collateral, and by the Agency's own later admission, very good Collateral, backed up the SIGINT. This same source had initially reported on 14 Nov 1980 that 30 Americans were being held at Nhommarth. DIA is informed, and then asks NSA for help. One month later, the Thai get an intercept.

Incredibly, apparently because the CIA dismissed the Thai intercept, they never put the two together.

These are the 1977-1980 instances of Thai intelligence tracking the movement of U.S. and Thai POWs or remains recovery that I could find.

I'm sure other people have other pieces. Looking closely at the POW intelligence gathered in Laos by the Thai's, Jerry believes the CIA should not have so easily dismissed their capabilities. I realize the Nhommarth operation has been scrutinized heavily, and perhaps we are finding coincidences were none exist. Memo 8, however, will show a continuing pattern of this combined SIGINT/HUMINT POW intelligence from the Thai.

Memorandum #8

Date: 19 February 1996

To: Al Santoli, Dino Carluccio, Bill Bell

From: Jay Veith

re: More Post-war Lao SIGINT

After the Nhommarth operation, there was another intriguing SIGINT/HUMINT combination. On 30 Aug 1984, the Thai again informed the U.S. government, through the NSA, of a 21

August HUMINT report of a POW camp holding 23 Americans located in Laos. (See page 1 of my

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NSC FOR MR. CHILDRESS ROOM 392 OLD EOB; CIA FOR MR. FALLS;
DIA FOR MR. TROWBRIDGE
85-0210-84

SUBJ THAI REPORT OF AMERICAN POW CAMP IN LAOS

1. THE FOLLOWING IS AN UNEVALUATED VERSION OF THE TRAI
LANGUAGE ROYAL THAI ARMED FORCES SECURITY CENTER (AFSC) HUMINT
REPORT WHICH HAS PASSED TO U.S. ADVISORS BY AN AFSC OFFICER,
CONCERNING A POW/MIA CAMP LOCATED IN SARAVAN PROVINCE, LAOS,
QUOTE

SUBJECT: AMERICAN POW CAMP IN SARAVAN PROVINCE ((LAOS))
DATE: 21 AUG 84

1. THE SPECIAL AFSC DETACHED ELEMENT RECEIVED AN UNCONFIRMED
REPORT THAT THERE IS A CAMP FOR AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR IN THE
AREA OF THE HEUP VALLEY, BAN KADON VILLAGE, NAM HIANG SUB-DISTRI
MYANG LAMAMDISTRICT, SARAVAN PROVINCE. A SUMMARY OF THE IMPORT
FACTS ARE AS FOLLOWS: (BRIEF MAP IS ATTACHED)

1.1 NUMBER OF PERSONS IN CUSTODY: 23 AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR

1.2 LOCATION: THE CAMP IS IN THE AREA OF THE FOOT OF A MOUNTAI

[HANDWRITTEN, CIRCLED, WITH A LINE TO
THE #23 ABOVE

"CIA/JCRC REPORTING
SAYS 20 POWS"]

* * * * *

fax. This document was generously given to me by another researcher.) There was some confusion over the exact location of the camp, which resulted in several cables back and forth. Note who this message is from, Director NSA (DIRNSA), to the Special Security Officer (SSO), DIA.

The Thai source reported that the camp had "a radio transceiver in contact with the parent station in Vientiane." NSA asked the Thai SIGINT group to "search for any comms which may be emanating from that area or serving units stationed in the area." On 4 Sept 1984, someone, probably the Thai again, intercepted a message coming from the Savannakhet Headquarters reporting the movement of "23 unidentified prisoners." (See page 2 of my fax.) The Comments

[NOTE: BLANK AREAS WERE REDACTED/{COMMENTS} WITHIN BRACKETS WERE
HANDWRITTEN]

P 132106Z SEP 84

FM

TO

SUBJ: UNIDENTIFIED PRISONER TRANSFER IN SOUTHERN LAOS
{SAVANNAKHET PROVINCE HQA} THE SA THA CENTER
(POSS BAN SA THE 1624N 10625E XD5214) ON 4 SEPTEMBER CONCERNING
THE TRANSFER OF 23 UNIDENTIFIED PRISONERS FROM THE MUONG SEPONE
PRISON (1641N 10614E X03244) TO THE THA VANG CENTER (1553N
10716E Y04357). THE SA THA CENTER WAS TO RESPOND
IMMEDIATELY CONCERNING WHAT ARRANGEMENTS IT HAD MADE CONCERNING
THE PROVISION OF RATIONS AND WHETHER SEPONEHAD PROVIDED
THE FUNDING FOR THE PRISONERS RATIONS.

COMMENT: {DISCUSSIONS BY ONE LAO OF} UNIDENTIFIED
PRISONER TRANSFERS ARE INFREQUENT BUT NOT UNUSUAL. RECENT
COLLATERAL, HOWEVER, REPORTED THE PRESENCE OF THE SAME NUMBER
(23) OF AMERICAN POW'S AT A CAMP IN SOUTHERN LAOS IN THE
AREA OF BAN KADON (1519N 10658E YB1195)
DECL: OADR

section mentions the earlier Collateral on the 23 U.S. POWs.

While the areas given in the HUMINT and the SIGINT are somewhat different, for NSA to request the Thai to search for "comms" and then to have one discussing 23 prisoners turn up several days later is a highly unusual coincidence. However, I'm sure these reports were dismissed as "23 Lao" under going "reeducation."

Cover Name: Sontay

One of my goals has been to find a "common ground" between Bell and Mooney. I have arranged discussions between the two, and the results so far have been interesting. First, we have identified the location of the PW camp where Jerry claims the Soviets began processing U.S. POWs for "Moscow Bound," called "Sontay." While Bill does not have any knowledge of Soviets in this area, the location of the camp and another nearby major PAVN base are fascinating. We also have a solid grid location on the area were Mooney claims the Vietnamese began building large underground bunkers to store AAA munitions, which would include the American "Pick and Shovel" Brigade Jerry has spoken of. Also, we have a possible grid for the area were the "10 Americans" were executed. If you care, I would ask DPMO to do a circle search for sources and crash sites around these locations.

This would provide you with both potential Americans for "Moscow Bound" and source reporting.