



North Viet-Nam

*The Responsibilities of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam
Intelligence and Security Services in the Exploitation
of American Prisoners of War*

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DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM
INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY SERVICES IN THE
EXPLOITATION OF AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR

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INTRODUCTION:

The intent of this paper is to present data that can be used in understanding communist interrogation/exploitation techniques. It may also be useful in preparing lesson materials for future "Risk of Capture" training given to American officials and military personnel being assigned overseas.

The February 1973 Paris Peace Agreements led to the release of 566 American Prisoners of War (POWs). There are still some 1,300 Americans listed who are missing, presumed dead, or still being held by the DRV and PRG. In addition, there are some 50 Americans known to have remained in South Vietnam after the fall of the Government of Vietnam (GVN) on 30 April 1975.

Americans were held by the DRV and PRG without disclosure of their names, numbers or whereabouts. It was the policy of the communists not to release the names or numbers of prisoners held. The DRV/PRG could probably clarify the fate of the great majority of the missing and dead if they so desired. It was a known requirement that all data pertaining to the death and/or burial of an American was to be forwarded to Hanoi as quickly as possible. The DRV/PRG did not want to be held accountable at a future date for any given number of prisoners since some may have died in captivity. By not revealing either the names or numbers of Americans detained, the DRV/PRG believed they gained the upper hand in any negotiations or talks with the United States.

One of the reasons why the DRV limited the writing of letters by American POWs was to avoid identifying the names of the prisoners. Any names which were publicized were made known only to serve specific DRV objectives. Revelation of POW names immediately compelled special treatment and protection of these prisoners since, at some future date, the captors could be held accountable for them. Since the

number of POWs could be easily understated, the communists precluded in advance any possible accusation from world public opinion of inhumane treatment of those POWs for whom they were unable to account.

While no specific examples are known, it is possible that some American captives were not released. There are over 300 French Foreign Legion personnel, captured during the French Indochina War (1945-54), who are still being held in the DRV. For years, many of these French POWs were held at the BA VI State Farm in HA TAY Province, DRV. A captured medium-level Lao Dong Party cadre who was considered a knowledgeable and generally reliable source and who was a prolific reporter declared that the DRV planned to keep some Americans secretly because of their technical knowledge or usefulness for political purposes in the distant future.

If any Americans are still being held, the DRV/PRG may attempt to use them to put pressure on the United States. This could take the form of demanding that the U.S. honor the Paris Peace Agreements, which the communists allege provides for war reparations to both the DRV and PRG, and U.S. formal recognition of the communist regime.

The remaining portion of this paper is sourced totally to debriefings of captured or defected communist cadre and officers. The DRV POW system, as applied to Americans, is shown through the eyes of men participating in and knowledgeable of the system. The system in the South, now the PRG, is not described in detail since it is basically identical with that in the DRV. The system in the PRG is controlled by forward commands of the DRV services which serve as the intelligence and security apparatus of the communist structure in the PRG. Information available from the debriefings of released American prisoners has not been used in the preparation of this paper.

THE DRV SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE SERVICES:

The DRV intelligence community is comprised of four services. The senior service is the Ministry of Public Security (MPS)*. The other three services are components of the Ministry of National Defense (MND) and function as the Ministry's intelligence, security and proselyting arms. All four of the services have a role in the prisoner system and the exploitation of captured or detained Americans.

The MPS (Bo Cong-An) is similar in organization and mission to the Soviet Committee for State Security (KGB). The MPS is the executive arm of the communist party (Dang Lao Dong - Workers Party) of the DRV. It is responsible for the overall security of the party, internal security within the DRV, and for foreign intelligence operations. It has the overall responsibility for the administration and detention of POWs. The MPS and MND shared responsibilities for the exploitation of American prisoners.

The intelligence component (G-2) of the Ministry of National Defense (MND) is the Research Department (Cuc Nghien Cuu), and is similar to the Soviet GRU. Within the prisoner system, it conducted interrogations for basically military information (tactical and strategic) and signals intelligence (SIGINT).

The proselyting component of the MND is the Enemy Proselyting Department (Cuc Dich Van). The Enemy Proselyting Department is both a subversive and propaganda organization. It was involved with

*The MPS has recently been merged with the Ministry of Interior and former MPS Minister Tran Quoc Hoan has been named the Minister of Interior. For convenience of reference, we have retained the MPS title.

each POW because of its responsibility for the political indoctrination of military POWs, and the preparation and conduct of psychological warfare operations against Americans. It was responsible for the initial screening of all American POWs in the DRV to determine what treatment and interrogation techniques were to be used in exploiting the individual prisoner.

The security component of the MND is the Military Security Department (Cuc Bao Ve Quan Doi). It is responsible for military counterintelligence. No details are available on its participation in exploiting U.S. POWs. We believe that the Military Security Department probably would interrogate American prisoners believed to have knowledge of intelligence operations directed against the DRV Armed Forces.

A SUMMARY OF THE POW SYSTEM:

Upon capture, a prisoner was evacuated as promptly as possible to Hanoi through the chain of command of the capturing element (either the MPS or MND). At lower levels interrogation was limited to tactical information for basic biographic data and imminent American (or Allied/ARVN) war plans. Once in Hanoi the MPS was responsible for the care, feeding, billeting, transportation and guarding of all American POWs. The Enemy Proselyting Department of the MND made a psychological assessment of each POW to determine how well he would cooperate and what treatment and techniques were to be used in exploiting the individual prisoner. The MPS acquired from the POW, and then prepared, a knowledgeability brief (KB) outlining the areas of the prisoner's knowledge. The KB was coordinated with the MND and the Office of the Prime Minister to determine national intelligence requirements and priorities.

The prisoner was then exploited in depth depending on his cooperation and knowledgeability. The MPS acquired information on economic, political, scientific and strategic military topics, as well as foreign operational leads. The MND collected combat intelligence, SIGINT, indoctrinated prisoners, and collected information used to conduct psychological operations against Americans in South Vietnam (SVN). The MPS conducted psychological operations, including letter writing operations and prisoner exhibitions, targeted against Americans in the United States and third countries.

Throughout his exploitation by the DRV intelligence community, a careful permanent record was maintained of everything the prisoner stated. This record followed him throughout the system. The permanent record file was used to check the POW's veracity and cooperation and to avoid duplication of exploitation. The file system, and the close cooperation among the DRV services, apparently served to prevent most attempts by prisoners to play one interrogator off against another.

During exploitation, indoctrination was the key to gaining the complete cooperation of American prisoners and was sometimes given precedence over intelligence collection. At the same time a continuing review of each prisoner was made to determine if he could or should be publicly identified or released. The MND and MPS, with the concurrence of the highest Lao Dong Party leaders, made these decisions. The MPS joint Research Agency reviewed individual reports and the prisoner's file to determine if exploitation was completed and all requirements fully answered.

THE ROLE OF THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SECURITY:

In accordance with the policies of the Lao Dong Party, the MPS is vested with overall responsibilities relating to the administration, detention and interrogation of all prisoners, including Americans, captured in the DRV, PRG, Laos and Cambodia. Policies on the handling of American prisoners were probably based upon an unspecified 1964 directive or resolution of the Lao Dong Party Central Committee. These policies were based on Viet Minh (1945-54) experiences in handling French prisoners; Soviet and Chinese Communist knowledge of prisoner exploitation; and on the personal experiences of senior DRV officials who at various times had been detained in French prisons.(1)

The MPS was vested with these responsibilities for various reasons. The presence of American prisoners in the DRV constituted a threat to its internal security, a primary responsibility of the MPS. The MPS was already vested with powers relating to the processing and handling of prisoners, both political and criminal, as well as dispatched Government of Vietnam (GVN) agents and commando teams captured in the DRV. The MPS has central-level (national) detention facilities which are administered by its Prisons and Reformation Department (Department C.51), an interrogation capability administered by its Interrogation Department (Department C.44), and a prison guard force administered by its People's Armed Public Security Forces (PAPSF). Additionally, the MPS is responsible for investigating all compromise of national security within the DRV.(2)

In general, the MPS conducted the basic intelligence screening of all U.S. POWs for the DRV intelligence community. It disseminated knowledgeability briefs (KBs) to various interested DRV agencies and ministries. It solicited requirements, except from

the MND which interrogated prisoners on its own requirements. As noted previously, the MPS collected information on economic, political, scientific, and strategic military topics, as well as foreign operational leads. Information was shared with both the Soviets and People's Republic of China (PRC). Within the DRV, the MPS forwarded its KBs and interrogation reports through Party channels to the MND and the Office of the Prime Minister for coordination throughout the remainder of the DRV government.(3)

Within the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), there was an element which had the responsibility for reviewing all the information collected from the POWs in order to determine its potential usefulness to other agencies and ministries. This element notified an agency or ministry of a threat to it or its subordinate components by the United States Armed Forces (usually bombing), and made recommendations as to what must be done to counter the U.S. threat. The OPM was charged with the responsibility for taking all measures necessary to protect the installations, industries, and agencies of the DRV. It was for this reason that the MPS forwarded its interrogation results to the OPM. The Prime Minister himself closely reviewed MPS interrogation results.(4)

The MPS Joint Research Agency (Co Quan Nghien Cuu Hon Hop) was the highest level organization in the DRV intelligence community for the research, analysis, and collation of intelligence information obtained through the interrogation of American prisoners in the DRV. This included the evaluation of interrogation reports collected by either the MPS or the MND. This review was designed to ensure that a POW was thoroughly exploited for intelligence and operational leads in Vietnam and abroad.(5)

The MPS and its People's Armed Public Security Forces (PAPSF) were probably responsible for the internal DRV propaganda use of American prisoners. Color photographs of American POWs being exhibited

to the population or to foreign newsmen have shown that MPS and PAPSF personnel were present at these exhibits. PAVN medical corps personnel were also identified. MPS and PAPSF personnel were easily distinguishable by the color of their collar tab insignia. PAPSF collar tabs were green and MPS collar tabs were red. PAVN collar tabs were yellow. Nevertheless, PAPSF personnel have been mistakenly identified as "military security" or "armed militia" personnel.

THE ROLE OF THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE:(6)

As noted previously, there are three services under the MND: the Enemy Proselyting Department (EPD), the Research Department (RD) and the Military Security Department (MSD). When a prisoner was captured in the DRV by MND elements, both the EPD and the RD were notified. If a prisoner was captured by the MPS or its subordinate elements, the MPS notified the MND before his arrival at the MPS Central Hoa Lo Prison.

When informed of the capture of an American POW, the EPD notified the MND General Political Department of the capture before taking any action. The EPD Policy Office then sent a cadre to the Central Hoa Lo Prison to make arrangements for the POW's reception and housing. Arrangements were also made for the initial interview of the prisoner by an EPD cadre to conduct the psychological assessment.

After arrival at the Central Hoa Lo Prison, the POW was stripped and searched (if not already done), as was all his equipment. They looked especially for a "gold blood chit" which contained the POW's military serial number. Pieces of gold found in the parachutes of downed pilots were believed by senior cadre of the EPD Policy Office to be intended for prisoners to buy off guards to facilitate their escape. After the search was completed, all the

POW's personal effects, documents, military clothing, hand-carried equipment, and dog tags were brought to the EPD Policy Office for examination and storage. When the body of an American was recovered or when a POW died in captivity in the DRV, all the personal effects were turned in to the EPD Policy Office which arranged for burial at an unknown location. This office maintained a central listing of all U.S. POWs detained in the DRV.

Although the EPD did not maintain a permanent representative at the Central Hoa Lo Prison, MPS prison and EPD Policy Office authorities maintained close coordination with each other. One room at the prison was reserved for EPD personnel where they interrogated/indoctrinated POWs. After the POW arrived at the prison, the MPS prison authorities informed the EPD Policy Office POW Reception Unit of his arrival. An EPD cadre conducted a preliminary interrogation for basic biographic data and vulnerability data for a psychological assessment.

Based on the psychological assessment, EPD officers drafted an indoctrination and exploitation plan. This plan included an evaluation of the POW's character; family background; strong and weak personality characteristics; his attitude before, during and after capture; and how the prisoner should be approached in future indoctrination and detailed interrogation sessions. Indoctrination plans were approved by the EPD Policy Office and then by the EPD Director, Major General Le Quang DAO, who is concurrently a deputy director of the General Political Department.

EPD and RD representatives then met to discuss how the plan was to be implemented and what techniques would be used on the POW. RD interrogators complied with EPD recommendations. MPS prison authorities were also required to follow EPD recommendations on the billeting and feeding of POWs. The RD conducted interrogations with or without EPD cadre present. In the case of a "stubborn" POW, an EPD cadre was present in the interrogation room with the RD interrogator.

The RD had the primary responsibility within the MND for the intelligence exploitation of U.S. POWs. This responsibility was much like that performed by its predecessor organization, the Military Intelligence Department (Cuc Quan Bao/Cuc 2/Department 2), during the French Resistance period. Like the EPD, the RD maintained a copy of a master list of all captured American POWs. The RD prepared sanitized lists for the other branches of the PAVN. These lists contained the names of those POWs who came within their field of jurisdiction.

Four subordinate offices of the RD were involved in the interrogation of U.S. POWs: the Research Office (Phong Nghien Cuu/Phong "Office" 70); the Reconnaissance Office (Phong Trinh Sat/Phong 71); the Technical Reconnaissance Office (Phong Ky Thuat Trinh Sat/Phong 72); and the Foreign Countries Intelligence Office (Phong Tinh Bao Ngoai/Phong 76). Offices 70 and 76 conducted interrogations over a wide range of topics, while Office 71 conducted specific tactical interrogations on subjects bearing on MND defensive plans and programs. Office 72* conducted SIGINT interrogations.

*RD Office 72 is the central radio intercept staff component of the DRV Ministry of National Defense. Directly subordinate to it are at least two radio intercept battalions, which were located in the vicinity of Hanoi. The primary target of Office 72 and its two radio intercept battalions were tactical U.S. aircraft communications. In addition, Office 72 functioned as the central coordinating staff component within the DRV Ministry of National Defense for radio intercept activities of the DRV Artillery, Air Force Air Defense, Naval and PAVN High Commands. According to available reporting, Office 72 had no responsibilities for the SIGINT collection of foreign diplomatic communications in the DRV. This was the responsibility of the DRV Ministry of Public Security Technical Department.

RD interrogation reports were channeled through the RD Director to the General Staff Department which disseminated them to the MPS Joint Research Agency, the PAPSF Headquarters and the Office of the Prime Minister. Within the MND, RD reports, depending on their content, were sent to the EPD, and the Artillery, Air Force Air Defense, Naval and PAVN High Commands. If any of the MND high commands desired direct access to a POW, requests were made through the RD. Naval and Air Force Air Defense interrogators exploited U.S. POWs on a systematic basis on specific technical subjects falling within their areas of interest.

The RD considered high ranking American officers the most knowledgeable and concentrated their interrogations on these individuals. RD interrogators preferred to have written statements from POWs, which the POWs were expected to sign. The RD also emphasized political indoctrination during all their interrogations.

Within the MND, the EPD Policy Office and the RD were responsible for determining whether a POW would be eligible for release. These recommendations were then approved by Major General Le Quang DAO, EPD Director; Lieutenant General Song HAO, MND General Political Department Director; Senior General Vo Nguyen GIAP, Minister of National Defense; Prime Minister Pham Van DONG; and finally Lao Dong Party First Secretary Le DUAN.*

Prior to 1964, the RD had no formally organized interrogation component and did not conduct interrogation training programs. RD interrogators were

*We believe that the MPS also recommended POW releases and that the MND and the MPS coordinated with each other before recommendations were sent above the ministerial level for approval. We have, however, no definitive knowledge in this area.

selected on an ad hoc basis for their linguistic capability, specialized technical background, and past interrogation experience during the French Resistance. Following the capture of the first U.S. pilot in August 1964, the RD opened interrogation training courses for selected personnel who were to serve in North and South Vietnam.

Practical training exercises were conducted by both RD and EPD cadre as early as August-September 1965, when trainees from both organization were taken to the Central Hoa Lo Prison for practical training exercises which were held weekly on Thursdays. Both RD and EPD officers were observed in interrogation rooms with American POWs. (Appendix 1 lists known MND personnel who were reported as indoctrinators or interrogators.)

Within the Military Security Department (MSD), the interrogation element is known as the Interrogation Office (Office 50). Office 50 was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Nguyen BICH, who had two deputies and about 20 interrogators, all of officer rank. No other data is available on the composition or activities of MSD Office 50 in the exploitation of American POWs.

THE CAPTURE AND EVACUATION SYSTEM:

The capture of U.S. and other prisoners of war was considered the responsibility of every agency, facility and citizen of the DRV. The initial screening and subsequent exploitation of each U.S. prisoner depended on the date, place and circumstances of capture and on the criteria for classification of prisoners. During the period of heavy U.S. bombing of the DRV and the resulting destruction of transportation facilities, the established procedures for handling POWs and for evacuating them to Hanoi were modified so that POWs were held longer in the

provinces. The proximity to Hanoi of a province where a POW was captured and the availability of transportation were primary considerations affecting the immediate exploitation of a POW and his prompt transfer to Hanoi. Consequently, while Hanoi was subjected to heavy aerial bombings, representatives of the MPS or MND, depending on which was in possession of the prisoner, traveled to the province to exploit the POW locally until arrangements could be made for his transfer to Hanoi. Almost all Americans captured in the PRG area were evacuated to the DRV as soon as possible. While limited exploitation of American POWs was permitted in the PRG, policy dictated that all Americans be evacuated as soon as local exploitation was concluded(7)

Local exploitation in the PRG, particularly of the more knowledgeable Americans, was conducted by DRV military intelligence representatives who were primarily interested in the protection of local communist facilities and concentrations from Allied attack. Strict accountability procedures existed for each captured American, and no communist commander wished to assume responsibility for his safety longer than was necessary.

American prisoners were evacuated to the DRV along the same routes as those used to evacuate the wounded to the DRV. Some American prisoners were evacuated by truck from those areas which received supplies from the DRV by truck, but most traveled on foot. Empty trucks returning to the DRV from the Quang Tri Province area were occasionally used to transport American prisoners to the DRV, and vehicles which transported supplies as far south as Kontum Province were also sometimes used. Because truck and train transport were subject to air attack, even in the DRV, most prisoners made the journey by foot.

Each captured American was considered a valuable hostage as well as a potential source of information. Accordingly, no NVA/VC commander, given the fluid

combat situation in the PRG, wished to run the risk of having a captured American escape once the prisoner came under his jurisdiction. Since there were no secure detention facilities in the PRG, lower echelons transferred Americans to higher echelons and then to the central level in the DRV as quickly as possible.(8)

There is ample evidence that the MPS and its PAPSF units were extensively involved in the capture and subsequent transfer of captured U.S. personnel in the DRV to central level facilities in Hanoi.(9) The MPS maintained its own POW evacuation system for prisoners captured by either local self-defense and militia forces, local public security agencies or PAPSF units. Hamlet and village level self-defense forces captured Americans but were not authorized to conduct interrogations. They were required to notify the district-level public security section of the capture. The PAPSF unit had a direct advisory mission to local self-defense and militia forces. Weapons and personal effects of POWs were confiscated and put in the custody of the village security section which was responsible for guarding and feeding captives until they could be turned over to district public security or PAPSF authorities.

The district public security section was authorized to interrogate captives only for basic biographic data. Afterwards, the captive was transferred under PAPSF escort to the provincial public security service for further interrogation,(10) processing and notifying the MPS headquarters of the capture. The prisoner was then sent under PAPSF escort to a designated MPS detention facility for interrogation, such as the Central Hoa Lo Prison.(11) Like the MND, the MPS had the option of either waiting for a POW's evacuation to Hanoi or dispatching a qualified interrogator to exploit the prisoner in the field.(12)

In the event that a POW was captured by a MND unit, the MND assumed temporary responsibility for the physical security of the POW during his initial

interrogation in the field by MND interrogators. The MND unit was also responsible for notifying the local PAPSF and provincial security service of the capture, and for notifying the MND Research and Enemy Proselyting Departments of the capture. The POW was transferred to the nearest command-level headquarters where he was interrogated before evacuation to Hanoi. Like the MPS, the MND either waited for the POW's transfer to Hanoi or dispatched qualified Research Department interrogators to conduct an immediate tactical interrogation in the field.(13)

MPS PRISONS (14)

There were eleven known central level prison/detention camps in the DRV. Several of these had a number of annexes. With the exception of the detention and interrogation center in the Hanoi Citadel, referred to as "Alcatraz", it appears that the MPS administered all other detention facilities. The "Alcatraz" facility was probably a special MND Enemy Proselyting Department facility where American prisoners underwent indoctrination.

MPS People's Armed Public Security Forces (PAPSF) units were responsible for the physical security of all MPS controlled detention camps in the DRV. These PAPSF units were known as Detention Camp Security Detachments (Phan Doi Bao Ve Trai Giam). At the central level these detachments were subordinate to the MPS Prisons and Reformation Department (Department C.51). Temporary detention facilities existed at the provincial level under the provincial public security service (Ty Cong An Tinh). There were no detention facilities at the district level.

Provincial facilities were guarded by a PAPSF platoon which patrolled the camp perimeter, checked visitors and cadre entering or leaving the camp, and

escorted prisoners from the temporary provincial facility to central level detention camps. Central level camps were guarded by a PAPSF company which was also responsible for escorting prisoners to places where they received political indoctrination, were placed on exhibit, were assigned to work teams and received medical treatment.

Although a precise description of the organization inside a MPS detention facility is not available, a typical facility included a detention section, an interrogation section, an administrative office, and a PAPSF Detention Camp Security Unit. The facility was under the command of a major or lieutenant colonel and a deputy who acted as the political officer. The interrogation section had about four men permanently assigned who supervised the internal guards and turnkeys. Each building in a detention camp housing U.S. prisoners had one turnkey supervisor who was in charge of a three- to five-man security guard cell. Turnkeys were a step above the guards in that they were allowed access to prisoners.

POW HEALTH/TORTURE/DRUGS:(15)

According to one source, the MPS Medical Office assisted the MPS Interrogation Department in the exploitation of U.S. prisoners. The MPS Medical Office was responsible for the health of prisoners and supervised the use of torture and the use of drugs to induce prisoners to cooperate. One of the most prevalent diseases afflicting American prisoners was cachexia. (Cachexia referred basically to a deterioration in the physical condition of American prisoners.) Their susceptibility to cachexia was attributed to a number of factors relating to the prisoners' state of physical and mental health before their capture. Americans generally are accustomed to generous diets and are not plagued with problems of

morale. After capture, although Americans were provided with what was considered a high food ration by DRV standards, they were denied meats, of which there was a shortage in the DRV. POWs were also denied the wide variety of foods to which they were accustomed. After capture, Americans often suffered from depression brought on by the shock of their incarceration and the interrogation to which they were subjected.

As a result, the physical condition of the American prisoners deteriorated. The first symptom was a feeling of general fatigue. If the prisoner was neglected, the fatigue developed into cachexia, or into neurasthenia which is a more severe or advanced form of cachexia. Although prisoners suffering from general fatigue could recover through an improvement in their diet, those suffering from a severe case of cachexia required more than an improved diet, needing generous supplies of vitamins, glucose and blood plasma. Those suffering from neurasthenia were constantly tired, unable to sleep or rest and in a state of almost total physical exhaustion. They also suffered from severe headaches. Prisoners suffering from cachexia or neurasthenia, if neglected sufficiently long or if the treatment provided was inadequate, ultimately died.

The functions of the MPS Medical Office, as it pertained to the exploitation of American prisoners, included the following:

a. Providing medical guidance and support to MPS interrogators on the most effective medical and psychological techniques in exploiting and gaining the cooperation of American POWs in the DRV. This included the use of various drugs and serums and other techniques which might induce the POWs to provide information while in a semi-conscious state.

b. Supervising the application of various forms of torture, particularly those forms used by the Communist Chinese, and providing the necessary medical

care after the use of torture. These forms include propagandizing the POW and of influencing him through the appropriate exposure of different equipment, weapons and torture techniques or by exposing the prisoners to others who were being tortured.

c. Preparing studies and performing research on the most effective Soviet, French, Communist Chinese and other oriental and western medical techniques which could be used in public security activities. The preparation of such research studies included working with Soviet and Communist Chinese intelligence advisers who were qualified in the use of medical techniques for intelligence purposes.

d. Coordinating medical matters with the MPS Technical Department and with its Scientific Criminal Affairs Laboratory in regard to the analysis and preparation of medicines and drugs as well as the preparation of devices/equipment for use by the MPS Medical Office in its support of the MPS interrogation elements.

CATEGORIZATION OF AMERICAN PRISONERS: 4

The exploitation of the prisoner depended upon the category to which he was assigned. The categorization of American prisoners depended upon the affiliation of the initial capturing/screening unit; the extent to which the prisoner had been exploited before his transfer to Hanoi; the prisoner's apparent areas of knowledge established during preliminary screening; the prisoner's age, grade, intelligence and position; evidence of potential compromise of DRV national security; national origin and race of the prisoner; the assessment of the prisoner's intent or desire to escape; and, probably most important, the prisoner's degree of cooperation with his captors.(16)

Using the above factors as criteria for exploitation, the DRV separated American prisoners into the following three categories:(17)

a. Those prisoners considered special because of the importance of the information which they offered to the DRV.

b. Those POWs considered to have the same potential as POWs in the "A" category but who refused to cooperate.

c. Those POWs whose continued presence in the DRV, after thorough debriefing, offered little or no advantages to the DRV. These prisoners were released whenever it best served the DRV's purposes.

The latter PWs, known as "progressive", were those prisoners who voluntarily turned over material in their possession upon capture; who provided all the information available to them, including information about themselves and their friends, relatives and families; and who had been successfully indoctrinated into realizing the "realities of war and its effect upon the DRV". Not every progressive POW was suitable for exploitation because of intellectual limitations; because they had few or no contacts in the U.S. of political value; because some were overly concerned with the well-being of their families and the negative effect their actions might have; and others refused to engage in propaganda or collection activities even though they otherwise cooperated with the DRV(18)

Despite the fact that some U.S. prisoners were labeled by MPS and MND interrogators as "adamant" (cung dau) or "stubborn" (ngoan co) because of their uncooperativeness, they were still considered to be potentially valuable sources of information and suitable for future exploitation (i.e. Category "B" prisoners). Neither the MPS nor the MND made official use of the term "hard core" (trung kien) in

describing uncooperative U.S. prisoners. The expression "hard core" was used only informally to describe the intense feelings of a group of prisoners. The expression "hard core" was reportedly derived from other U.S. prisoners who, when queried about the stubbornness and lack of cooperation on the part of some U.S. POWs, identified them as "hard core" types (19)

Prisoners in categories "A" and "B" were not exploited for the purposes of collecting intelligence information through their contacts in the U.S. or by attempting to persuade these contacts to engage in anti-war activities. This was not done because it might have led to the surfacing of their identities. The identity of category "A" prisoners was carefully guarded because identifying them as POWs rather than as missing or killed-in-action would permit the U.S. to employ countermeasures to negate the value of the information which they provided. Similarly, the identity of the category "B" prisoners was kept secret because they may not have survived the interrogations or other techniques used to make them cooperate. (20)

DRV OBJECTIVES/REQUIREMENTS:

With the assistance of the Soviets, the MPS and MND prepared various types of questionnaires to be used by all MPS and MND interrogators. The assignment of a prisoner to either the MPS or the MND depended not only on the factors enumerated above in the paragraphs dealing with "categorization", but also on the prisoner's "Preliminary Personal Record" (permanent file) and on the screening conducted by the MPS and MND at the central level after the prisoner's arrival in Hanoi. The ensuing interrogations, conducted either by the MND or MPS, covered the following: (21)

- a. American combat tactics, techniques and order of battle, especially AAA and SAM evasive tactics.
- b. American personnel, morale, fighting spirit and motivation factors.
- c. American weaponry, technical equipment, and war materiel; with special attention given to American use of armor, armored vehicles, and aircraft ECM equipment.
- d. American knowledge of communist forces in SVN.
- e. History of American presence in SVN, with details on units, activities, and unit leaders.
- f. War-making potential of the United States and its forces both in SVN and other areas where American support and reinforcements were present.
- g. Nature of coordination and cooperation between U.S. and other Allied units, including relationship between Allied units and the GVN Armed Forces.
- h. Economic war-making potential of the U.S., including information regarding war production capabilities of U.S. industries.
- i. Class origin of U.S. military service personnel.
- j. Professional background, psychological makeup and aspirations of the prisoner.
- k. General knowledge and understanding of Americans in SVN of the military, political and economic situation in SVN and other countries.
- l. Behavior, mental attitude and point of view

of Americans under combat conditions in SVN.

m. Professional background and previous assignments of other U.S. prisoners held in the DRV.

n. Effect of ideological indoctrination on U.S. prisoners in the DRV and results of communist military proselyting efforts in SVN.

Interrogations were aimed at gaining the complete cooperation of a prisoner so he could be used in anti-war activities. These included writing letters to Americans in the U.S., including relatives and friends and also individuals whose names had been obtained from other prisoners; making pro-DRV and anti-U.S. radio broadcasts; and other forms of propaganda. After a prisoner had agreed to cooperate he might be used in those fields where his specialized knowledge could be exploited. American prisoners were indoctrinated to adopt a friendly attitude toward the DRV and upon their return to the U.S. to convey a pro-DRV, anti-war feeling to their families, friends and relatives. *(22)

Appendix 2 represents what is believed to be a standardized questionnaire used on American prisoners by Enemy Proselyting Sections in SVN. The questionnaire was specifically aimed at collecting information on military morale and motivations which would facilitate communist preparation of propaganda and

*According to a senior level cadre, this followed the example of Viet Minh proselyting activities against French prisoners. It was the Viet Minh objective to recruit as many French POWs as possible to foment revolutions against the French Government and the governments of French-dominated countries. The MPS and MND, however, did not believe that U.S. POWs could be successfully proselyted into fomenting a revolution in the U.S. since the majority of POWs were U.S. pilots with middle class backgrounds.

exploitation of DRV sympathies. This questionnaire was also designed to determine the political sophistication of the individual POW by asking questions such as "Why did the U.S. fail at the Bay of Pigs?", "Why was President Kennedy assassinated?", or "Why was Cuba allowed to become a communist country?"

The questionnaire was designed to collect information needed to promote overall communist proselyting goals. Those goals were persuading American military personnel in Vietnam to ask the U.S. Government to send them home; persuading the American military not to fight the communists and to believe that the PRG was fighting for a just cause; persuading the U.S. Government not to support the GVN and its armed forces; and to oppose military operations endangering innocent civilians in areas "liberated" by the PRG.(23)

Information obtained from a prisoner at each level was recorded in detail and incorporated in a "Preliminary Personnel Record." The information was correlated with that already acquired on the prisoner from other sources including, if the prisoner were a pilot, information on his aircraft, its flight plan, tactics, apparent targets, and accompanying aircraft. The apparent targets were deduced from information received from the antiaircraft unit which shot down the plane and from units responsible for the physical security of the targets. This information was used to help establish the veracity of the information provided by the prisoner and to aid the DRV defense of the target.(24)

DRV EXPLOITATION SUCCESS:(25)

Both the MPS and the MND believed that they were extremely successful in exploiting U.S. POWs, particularly U.S. pilots, and gaining their cooperation. Success was attributed to intensive indoctrination

programs which POWs were subjected to from almost the initial moment of capture. Indoctrination, if necessary, took priority over intelligence exploitation by interrogation. One of the most effective methods of indoctrination was the use of intensive lectures followed by demonstrations of the injuries inflicted on women and children.

If indoctrination failed, various forms of physical pressure were applied. The primary form of pressure was related to withholding the amenities of life or granting more privileges, rations and allowances to the POW commensurate with his degree of cooperation. According to MPS and MND officers, the number of prisoners who cooperated was quite high. Cooperative prisoners usually provided their interrogators with details on air targets, weaknesses and shortcomings of U.S. aircraft, U.S. aircraft techniques, aerial bombing tactics, and major problems faced by U.S. pilots when confronted by DRV aircraft.

The MPS did not believe it was difficult to gain the cooperation of American POWs. Cooperation meant that the POW was willing to provide all information of which he was knowledgeable. Besides the factors previously mentioned, the MPS believed the high level of education of most U.S. POWs facilitate their political indoctrination, just as the high standard of living enjoyed by Americans permitted their exploitation when the amenities of life were denied them. When combined with effective techniques of interrogation and the selective use of physical force and torture, the MPS found that a high percentage of the American prisoners cooperated. Torture was applied only as the last recourse when all other attempts at gaining a prisoner's cooperation failed.

One knowledgeable source reported that up to 80 percent of all American POWs were considered by the MPS to be "progressive" and cooperated with DRV interrogators. The DRV believed that American POWs were psychologically prepared for the eventuality of

capture and cooperation. This conclusion was based on information collected on and from the POWs which ranged from the absence of any ideological motivation to fight in South Vietnam: to such minor indicators as the Vietnamese phrases which the POWs learned in anticipation of capture: phrases such as "I am hungry"; "I want water"; "I am wounded." As a result, the DRV concluded that the majority of Americans were in the PRG only because they were obeying orders rather than because they believed in a cause.

The same source believed that the official DRV position was relatively accurate with respect to the American POWs: lack of ideological motivation; their general forthrightness and honesty; their basic sentimentality; their previous lack of exposure to hardship (which was easily exploited by instituting a severe discipline); their poor political comprehension of the world situation and of the enemy; and their revulsion of bombing effects on the DRV. This, combined with an effective indoctrination program and the proper psychological approach by the interrogator, reportedly made the American prisoner susceptible to, and an easy victim for DRV Party exploitation.

The DRV believed that the POW letter writing program yielded results. It was mentioned officially during party briefings and lectures that the prevalence of anti-war attitudes in the U.S. could be attributed in part to the letter writing activities of the American POWs. Aside from the contribution which the American POWs made to the DRV's understanding of American combat techniques, they also made a significant contribution to the DRV's comprehension of the American psychology and ideology. This permitted the DRV to mount a more effective psychological warfare operation against the U.S. in the attempt to persuade the American people to demand an end to the war.

SOVIET AND CHICOM INTEREST IN U.S. POWs:

The Soviet KGB, with its wide range of activities against the U.S., provided political and military information to the DRV. In exchange, the MPS and the MND furnished the KGB with information on U.S. pilots imprisoned in DRV hands. There was one KGB officer, of either colonel or senior colonel rank, assigned to each MPS department. The KGB worked with the MPS in establishing the original interrogation requirements for all U.S. prisoners. Although the KGB did request direct access to U.S. prisoners, neither the KGB nor the Chinese Communist Ministry of Public Security were allowed direct access to any U.S. prisoner. The MPS, however, accepted specific intelligence requirements from the Soviets and Chinese which were included in prisoner interrogations. Chinese requirements were primarily concerned with the capabilities of U.S. aircraft. (26)

According to a cadre of the MND Enemy Proselyting Department, the Soviet and Chinese Embassies in Hanoi were given sanitized interrogation reports of U.S. prisoners upon request. This same cadre stated that both the Soviets and Chinese requested permission to inspect and study crashed U.S. aircraft as well as the equipment carried by U.S. pilots. Both were allowed to study U.S. aircraft parts and equipment at the MND Air Force Institute. In August 1965 the Chinese requested a U.S. pilot flight suit which was supplied by the MND Enemy Proselyting Department.(27) Neither the Soviets nor the Chinese were entirely satisfied with the degree of access they had to downed U.S. aircraft. In fact, the Soviets reportedly complained that they were given less access than the Chinese.

An MPS officer assigned to the Hanoi Security Office stated that all foreign embassies in Hanoi, including the Soviet, Czech and Polish embassies, had been placed under special observation. The MPS had

learned that U.S. pilots had been instructed to seek shelter in any foreign embassy in Hanoi if this were possible after they had been shot down. According to information provided in official briefings, all foreign embassies in Hanoi were intensely interested in the presence of American prisoners in the DRV. The DRV, therefore, did not exclude the possibility that the foreign embassies, including the embassies of the communist bloc countries, would accept POWs or attempt to smuggle American prisoners out of the DRV.(28)

As stated previously, both the Soviets and Chinese provided information to the MPS Medical Office on torture techniques to be used against U.S. POWs. The Soviets and Chinese, apparently, were also interested in research studies on the reactions of American prisoners to various psychological and medical techniques used by DRV indoctrinators and interrogators.(29)

While there is no reporting that suggests that either the Chinese Communists or Soviets were allowed access to American POWs for any purpose, at least two POWs were captured by Chinese Communist forces in the DRV and one POW was evacuated to Hanoi by the MPS and what appeared to be Soviet personnel.* Members of

*American POWs returned to the U.S. have reported that a small number of POWs were subjected to extreme harsh treatment and indoctrination by three individuals believed to be Cubans. There is no reporting from communist sources to expand on this reporting. Information is available that Cuban advisers were sent to the DRV to help in unknown training programs. (Readers interested in what the POWs reported should request from the U.S. Air Force ACS/I, Report No. A10-2, Series 700/JP-1, dated June 1975, prepared by the 7602nd Air Intelligence Group.)

Chinese Communist AAA units stationed in northeastern DRV captured American POWs shot down by their units or who landed (parachuted) near their unit locations. In at least one case the Chinese Communists wanted to retain possession of the POW but eventually turned him over to MPS personnel.⁽³⁰⁾ One report stated that three caucasians, believed to be Soviets, who were traveling in a jeep with MPS personnel, picked up an American POW from a provincial detention camp and escorted the POW to Hanoi. No other details were known.⁽³¹⁾

CONCLUSION:

The information presented in this study indicates that the DRV services each had a role to play in the exploitation of American prisoners and that there was a fair amount of cooperation among the services. This, coupled with cooperation and an exchange of information from other communist services, primarily the Soviets and Chinese, provided the DRV interrogator with a data base for use in exploiting Americans.

The DRV system of POW exploitation was efficient. They were well organized administratively to exploit American prisoners. Both the DRV "permanent file" system on each prisoner and their review system to ascertain that all requirements had been answered are indicative of the excellence of their system and that they considered POWs very valuable sources of military intelligence.

Noteworthy in the DRV exploitation system is the emphasis they placed on psywar exploitation and indoctrination of American prisoners. As noted previously; indoctrination was considered the key to intelligence exploitation and was often given precedence in the total exploitation system. Certainly the

DRV Lao Dong Party gave high priority to the collection of intelligence for covert action programs to support their goals on a worldwide basis. Their letter writing program, attempts to use American deserters in Sweden, and propaganda operations directed against the United States were all facilitated by the information provided by American POWs.

Nevertheless, communist claims of the extent of their success in exploiting American prisoners in Vietnam should not be taken at face value. Certainly there were some Americans who cooperated with the enemy while under duress. This is understandable in view of known communist torture techniques and the long period of incarceration which many Americans were subjected to. Any person given an insufficient diet causing physical and mental debilitation, incarcerated in confined quarters for extended periods, exposed to torture, drugs and brutality, and professionally indoctrinated and interrogated, might break under the strain. But many prisoners successfully resisted interrogation, and even a partial review of the data presented in the debriefings of returned prisoners indicates that the DRV did not have as much overall success in their exploitation of Americans as captured and defected sources stated.

APPENDIX I

KNOWN DRV MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE INTERROGATORS AND INDOCTRINATORS

1. Senior Captain Nguyen Van Tam: Chief of the EPD Policy Office, POW Reception Unit. Tam was born about 1930 in Hung Yen Province, DRV. During the Viet Minh era, he was the commandant of a detention camp which held General De Castries who was captured at Dien Bien Phu. Tam spoke fluent French, English and Chinese. In the EPD, Tam functioned both as a training instructor and as an indoctrination specialist. Tam was described as a virtual dictionary of names of U.S. POWs held in NVN.
2. Senior Lieutenant Tran Van Tiet: A cadre of the RD research Office 70. Tiet was born about 1935 in Quang Ngai Province, South Vietnam (SVN), and graduated from the University of Hanoi, majoring in chemistry and physics. Tiet's wife was a close friend and classmate of Nguyen Thanh Linh (see No. 20 below) at the University of Hanoi School of Pedagogy. Tiet had been a member of the RD since at least 1964. During the Viet Minh era, Tiet was a member of an unidentified regimental staff section, which took part in destroying the French Mobile Group 100 at the Mang Yang Pass near An Khe, Pleiku Province. After regrouping to NVN in 1954, he was sent by the NVA to attend the University of Hanoi. He was then assigned as a staff assistant to the Division 305 Staff Office in Phu Tho Province. Tiet was fluent in both French and English. In May 1969 he reportedly infiltrated SVN and was assigned to the VC Military Region 5 Military Staff Office.

3. Senior Lieutenant Tran Van Luong: A RD cadre assigned to Technical Reconnaissance (i.e. Radio Intercept) Office 72. He was also assigned to a RD radio intercept battalion which was located north of the Buoi Market crossroads outside Hanoi. Luong was born about 1935 in Vinh Long Province, SVN. During the Viet Minh era, he was assigned to the Tra Vinh Province Military Intelligence (MI) Section. In September 1965 he attended a RD-sponsored interrogation course and was seen at the Central Hoa Lo Prison in practical interrogation training exercises specializing in communications subjects. In November 1965 he infiltrated SVN in Infiltration Group No. 174 and was assigned to the South Vietnamese Liberation Army (SVNLA) Military Intelligence Office upon arrival. Luong was later transferred at an unknown date to a radio intercept unit--Cum A-60--which was headed by Major Sau Cuc and worked closely with Viet Cong (VC) NVA Worksite (i.e. Division) 9. Luong was fluent in French and English and had a working knowledge of the Thai language.
4. Senior Lieutenant (fnu) Tran: Assigned in mid-1965 to the RD. He was born about 1935 in Bac Giang Province, NVN. In NVN, Tran was formerly an assistant political officer at the NVA E400 Antiaircraft and Artillery School in Son Tay Province. Tran attended an EPD training course with Nguyen Thanh Linh (see No. 26 below) and participated in practical indoctrination exercises on U.S. POWs inside the Central Hoa Lo Prison. Tran was scheduled to infiltrate SVN in mid-1966 for assignment to the VC Tri-Thien-Hue Military Region as an enemy proselyting officer. Tran was fluent in both French and English. Tran was married with two children. His wife was an employee of the Hanoi Soap Factory.
5. Colonel Nguyen The Luong alias Nguyen Tien alias Cao Pha: concurrently Director of RD Research Office 70 and a Deputy RD Director in charge of

research and special operations. He was identified as the supervisor of all RD interrogators. Luong is a native of Duy Xuyen District, Quang Nam Province, and is about 55 to 60 years old. In the early 1940s, he was a forestry irrigation engineer. In March 1945, he attended a French sponsored frontline youth military course. In September 1945 he joined the Viet Minh resistance and was assigned as a company commander to the Hue Regiment 3. In late 1946 he left for Hanoi to attend the Son Tay Infantry Officer School. After graduation he was appointed the commander of the Son La Battalion in 1946. In late 1949 he was recognized as a good military tactician and was transferred to General Vo Nguyen Giap's personal staff. In late 1950 he was transferred to the Military Intelligence Department (MID) as Chief of its Research Section in charge of battlefield preparations for the 1951 to 1954 military campaigns and, concurrently, Deputy Department Chief. During this period, he interrogated several French POWs: Captain Allious (1950), Colonel Lepage, Colonel Langias, Colonel Charton, and General DeCastries. When the RD was established in 1957, he was appointed the Chief of Research Office 70. In 1960/61 he was appointed Deputy Director, RD. Between 1960 and 1963 he attended the Frunze Military Academy in the USSR. He is said to be well liked by both Ho Chi Minh and General Giap. He speaks fluent French and Russian and fair English. He is married to Vu Thi Hanh who is a native of Hanoi and a Senior Lieutenant in RD Political Office 70. They lived (1964) in government quarters with an unknown number of children on Hoang Dieu Street, Hanoi. Luong has one younger sister, Nguyen Thi Xim, who is a civilian medical doctor in Hanoi and who has attended a three-year advanced medical course in the USSR.

6. Lieutenant Colonel Tam: POW administrator and coordinator for EPD interrogations. Tam is a

native of either My Tho or Sadec Provinces and is over 55 years old. On three occasions between 1959 and 1960, he met Nguyen The Luong and Major Phan Cu (Chief of the South Vietnam Section) at RD Office 70. The three exchanged views concerning POW matters. Tam is responsible for the administration of POWs and is in direct contact with the RD on interrogation of POWs.

7. Lieutenant Colonel Nguyen Canh: RD POW administrator and entertainment specialist. Canh is a northerner about 55 years old and is responsible for the administration and organization of entertainment of POWs in the EPD. He was seen once at the People's Army Newspaper Office of the General Political Department. Through hearsay, Canh is well known as a poet among the troops and has contributed many articles for broadcast over Radio Hanoi to South Vietnam. He is also responsible for preparing propaganda for POWs and proselyting materials for use against Government of Vietnam troops in South Vietnam.
8. Lieutenant Colonel Le Hoa: RD POW propaganda specialist. Hoa is a native of Hanoi over 55 years old. He has written many articles on the morale of enemy troops (U.S. and ARVN). He is said to be familiar with POW biographic listings and files. He is fluent in English and accompanied Ho Chi Minh on his trip to Indonesia.
9. Major Nguyen Thuc Dai: EPD POW administrative and indoctrination specialist. Dai is a native of Nam Dan District, Nghe An Province and is about 50 years old. In 1943/44 he attended the Khai Dinh High School in Hue with RD Lieutenant Colonel Tran Ngoc Hien. He passed the French baccalaureate examination in 1945, majoring in mathematics, and left for Hanoi when he joined the Viet Minh resistance with the Capital Regiment. In 1947 he was assigned to the Enemy Proselyting Department and became a specialist on POW administration and

interrogation. He speaks fluent French, English and Chinese and probably has studied in Communist China. Dai and Tran Ngoc Hien met on a regular basis between 1958 and July 1964, when Dai revealed he made frequent trips to POW camps in the Hanoi area. His eldest brother, Nguyen Thuc Mao, has a PhD in mathematics and is the Dean of the Vinh School of Pedagogy. His other older brother, Nguyen Thuc Tung, is a Lieutenant Colonel and medical surgeon at Military Hospital 108 in Hanoi. Hai resided (1964) in the Hanoi Citadel.

10. Major Phan Dinh: Chief of the Tactical and Technical Research Section, RD Office 70. Dinh is a native of Quang Binh Province and is about 52 years old. He was a boy scout in Hue during 1945. In 1946 he left for Hanoi with Ta Quang Buu as the latter's personal secretary when Buu was appointed the Viet Minh Minister of Defense. In 1948 or 1949 he was transferred to the Military Intelligence Department (MID) Research Section as Chief of the Enemy Buildup Situation Cell, serving as a specialist on the organization and deployment of French and Vietnamese military forces. Since 1954 he has concentrated on U.S. and ARVN forces. Between 1950 and 1952 he attended a tactical military training course in Communist China. In 1953 he returned to the MID and resumed his past activities and was assigned to the RD as Chief of the Office 70 South Vietnam Studies Section in 1957. About 1959 he attended the Intermediate and Advanced Military and Political School of the Ministry of National Defense for nine months and returned to his position in RD Office 70. In 1960 he was also Acting Chief, Tactical and Technical Research Section of RD Office 70. He held this position in the absence of Major Quoc Trung until 1961. Dinh is described as a living dictionary of enemy military organizational systems. He is married to a native of Bat Trang Village, Bac Ninh Province and commuted daily (1964) between there and the RD. He speaks good French and English and fair Chinese. He has brown hair, blue eyes and a visible scar on his face.

11. Lieutenant Colonel Nguyen Thanh: former Chief of the Tactical and Technical Research Section, RD Office 70 before 1960, and afterwards a Deputy Director of the RD. Thanh is a native of Thanh Hoa Province and is about 60 years old. Before the resistance he was a student of the Public Works School in Hanoi. In 1945 he joined the resistance in Viet Minh Region 4. In 1950 when Division 304 was established, he was appointed a Battalion Commander. He has attended all military training courses offered in North Vietnam including the Intermediate and Advanced Military and Political School of the Ministry of National Defense. In late 1957 he was assigned as Chief of the RD Research Office 70 Tactical and Technical Research Section until 1959 when he was appointed Deputy Chief, Office 70. Between 1960 and 1963 he attended an Intermediate and Advanced Military Course in Communist China. In late 1963 he was sent to South Vietnam on an inspection tour of field operations in the GVN III Corps area as a tactical research technician. According to RD Lieutenant Colonel Muoi Tung, former Chief of RD Station B49, he returned to North Vietnam in 1966. It is believed that Thanh was assigned to the Military Affairs Committee of the Central Office of South Vietnam (COSVN) during this period. Upon returning to North Vietnam, he was probably appointed the Chief of Research Office 70. In 1963 he was being considered as a potential candidate for the Frunze Military Academy in the USSR. He is married to an instructor of Russian ballet and resided (1964) at his wife's quarters in the Central Cultural Workers' compound on Ma Dich Street which is located about 11 kilometers from Hanoi on the road to Son Tay. He speaks fluent Chinese and French and can understand English and Russian.
12. Senior Captain Nguyen Truong Vo: member of the Foreign Countries Research Section, RD Office 70. Vo is a native of Dien Chau District, Nghe An

Province and is about 45 years old. He joined the resistance in Viet Minh Region 4 and graduated from the Son Tay Officer School in Thanh Hoa Province in 1950. (Comment: The Son Tay Officer School was relocated in Thanh Hoa Province in 1948 and returned to its present location in Son Tay Province in late 1954.) In mid-1951 he was assigned to the MID as a researcher on the enemy situation in the Bac Bo Plain Cell of the Research Section. Between 1955 and 1958 he continued in this assignment and was a part-time student of the Hanoi University School of Pedagogy majoring in the English language. In 1958 he was assigned to the Foreign Countries Research Section of RD Research Office 70. His job was to research English language papers and magazines which were published by Southeast Asian countries. He speaks fluent French and English and can understand Russian. He resided (1964) at Room 19 in the Officer Quarters located near the Paul Doumer Bridge. He has a younger brother named Nguyen Tuong Triet, who has a Soviet Masters of Arts degree.

13. Senior Captain Le Ba Khoa: member of the Foreign Countries Research Section, RD Office 70. Khoa is a native of Nghe An Province and is about 45 years old. In 1945 he joined the resistance in Viet Minh Region 4; graduated from the Son Tay Officer School in Thanh Hoa Province in 1949; and was assigned to the Thanh Hoa Province military unit. In 1951 he was assigned to the General Situation Cell of the MID Research Section. He speaks fluent French, English and Russian. In 1957 he was assigned to the Foreign Countries Research Section of RD Research Office 70. He is considered to be the best English translator in the CNC and specializes on U.S. political documents. In 1964 he was working on a Master of Philosophy at Hanoi University. He resided (1964) at his wife's house at Quan Thanh Street, Hanoi.

14. Senior Captain Mac Lam: member of the Tactical and Technical Research Section, RD Office 70. Lam is a native of Nghe An Province and is about 45 years old. In 1945 he joined the resistance in Region 4; graduated from the Son Tay Officer School in 1949; and was assigned to Division 304. In 1951 he was transferred to the Research Section Enemy Logistics Situation Cell of the Military Intelligence Department as a part-time interrogator. Between late 1954 and 1956, he remained in this position and was assigned to the Tactical and Technical Research Section of RD Office 70 in 1957. During this same period of time, he was a part-time student at the University of Hanoi School of Engineering, specializing in electronics and radar. He has also taken several courses on logistics and base development. He is fluent in French and English; single; and resided (1964) inside the Hanoi Citadel.
15. Senior Captain Le Ngoc Bao: member of the Tactical and Technical Research Section, RD Office 70. Bao is a native of Hanoi and is about 50 years old. He is a holder of a French Baccalaureate in Mathematics (1944) and was a student of the Hanoi University Faculty of Science (1944-1945). In August 1945 he joined the Viet Minh Capital Regiment which was later redesignated Division 308. He was later transferred as a staff officer to the MID's Reconnaissance and Special Operations Battalion 426 which was later redesignated Battalion 468. In 1957 he was reassigned to the Tactical and Technical Research Section of RD Office 70 and took several logistics courses and was a part-time student at the University of Hanoi School of Science. He is a research specialist on U.S. weapons and materiel. He speaks fluent French, English and Russian. He resided (1964) with his wife who is a military doctor with the rank of Senior Captain at the Bach Ninh Military Hospital and commuted daily to

Hanoi. He is about 1.62 meters tall, pale complexion, flat-shaped face, medium-shaped mouth, and is described as an overall handsome male.

16. Lieutenant Colonel Nguyen Viet: Director of RD Reconnaissance Office 71. Viet is a native of Bac Ninh Province and is about 52 years old. Prior to 1945 he was a medical student at the Hanoi University School of Medicine. In 1945 he joined the Viet Minh Capital Regiment and between 1950 and 1957 was the political officer of Reconnaissance and Special Operations Battalion 422, and concurrently Chief of the Reconnaissance Section, MID. In 1957 he was assigned to the RD as Chief of Reconnaissance Office 71. Between 1960 and 1963 he studied at the Frunze Military Academy in the USSR and returned to his former position. He speaks fluent French and Russian and a little Chinese and English. He is married and resided (1964) at No. 2 Hoang Dieu Street, Hanoi.
17. Lieutenant Colonel Nghiem Xuan Hieu: Director of RD Foreign Countries Intelligence Office 76. Hieu is a native of either Hanoi or Bac Ninh and is about 55 years old. He holds a French Baccalaureate in Philosophy and taught literature in Hanoi between 1943 and 1945. In 1945 he joined the Viet Minh Capital Regiment and was the Regiment Chief of Staff in 1947/48. In 1949 he was transferred to the Enemy Proselyting Department of the General Staff. In late 1950 he was appointed the Deputy Chief of the MID Research Section; concurrently Chief of the Section's General Situation Cell. In 1957 he became the Chief of the Foreign Countries Section, RD Office 70. Between 1957 and 1958 he was instructed by General Vo Nguyen Giap to write a history of the Dien Bien Phu Battle. In mid-1958 he was appointed the Deputy Chief of Office 70. He probably received intelligence training in the USSR in 1960 or 1961.

Upon returning to Hanoi, he assumed the position of Chief of the Foreign Intelligence Office 76. Between 1951 and 1954 he was involved in the interrogation of General DeCastries, Colonel Le Page, Colonel Charton, and others. He speaks fluent French, English and Russian. His wife is a native of Hanoi and a graduate of the Hanoi University School of Economics and Finance, majoring in business management. He lived (1964) with her on the second floor of a state operated store on Tran Tien Street, Hanoi. He has blue eyes.

18. Major Chu Mong: member of RD Foreign Countries Intelligence Office 76. Mong is a native of Quang Nam Province and is about 52 years old. He attended the Khai Dinh High School in Hue and joined the resistance in 1945 as a reporter in the Propaganda Section of Region 5. In 1954 he was an interpreter for the Viet Minh International Control Commission (ICC) liaison delegation on Chi Lang Street, Phu Nhuan, Gia Dinh Province. In 1958 he was assigned to RD Foreign Countries Intelligence Office 76 and has since served in Paris and Hong Kong. He speaks fluent French, English and Chinese. He is married with an unknown number of children and resided (1964) in Hanoi.
19. Major Hong Chau: member of RD Foreign Countries Intelligence Office 76. Chau is a native of Hanoi and is about 50 years old. He was a student of the French Albert Sarrant High School and completed two years at the Hanoi University School of Law. In 1945 he joined the resistance with the Capital Regiment. In 1947 he became a personal secretary of General Vo Nguyen Giap and was reassigned to the MID as the personal secretary of its Director Le Trong Nghia. In 1958 he became a member of RD Foreign Countries Intelligence Office 76 and has been in several foreign countries assigned to North Vietnamese embassies,

such as India (1958), Hong Kong (1958). In 1960 he was sent to the USSR as a student of international law for an unspecified period of time. During the resistance he served as an interpreter with French POWs. He speaks fluent French, English, German and Russian. He lived (1964) with his wife and four children at No. 75 Pasteur Street, Hanoi.

20. Captain Nguyen Thanh Linh: EPD Interrogator. In August 1965 Linh was recalled to the NVA and was assigned to the EPD of the MND General Political Department. He attended a three-month enemy-proselyting course at Station 66A inside the Hanoi Citadel and received practical training at the Central Hoa Lo Prison in the handling of U.S. POWs. The EPD was located on the right side of the Hanoi Citadel east gate. Linh was acting chief of the Enemy Proselyting Section of the Political Office of Communist Subregion 1 before his capture on 7 April 1970. Linh was born 15 October 1935 at My Cam Village, Cang Long District, Vinh Binh Province, South Vietnam. He joined the Viet Minh in November 1947, regrouped to North Vietnam in December 1954, and arrived in South Vietnam in April 1966. He became a probationary Lao Dong Party member in July 1954 and a full member in February 1957.

APPENDIX 2

STANDARDIZED INTERROGATION QUESTIONNAIRE

The POW questionnaire asked for the following:

a. Personal information

1. Name
2. Date and place of birth
3. Occupation before entering the military
4. Civilian and military schools attended
5. Ranks and positions held throughout military career
6. If enlisted, whether draftee or volunteer
7. If officer, whether sponsored by Congressman (Comment: This no doubt refers to Congressional appointments to the Service Academies.) If so, the Congressman's attitude toward the war and his address. If the Congressman appeared susceptible, he would be contacted and informed that one of the men he had sponsored was now a POW; from the Congressman's correspondence it was further to be determined how he could be exploited.
8. Language capability, where he studied the language and for what purpose. This information was used to determine if the POW was ever in intelligence and to point out other areas in which the U.S. Government might have planned to use him.

9. Non-military areas of familiarity (e.g., TV repair, photography, rocketry)
 10. Previous countries to which assigned
 11. Date of arrival in Vietnam
 12. Unit to which assigned: its location, mission and morale (including desertion rate); Subject's function in unit
 13. Battles fought
 14. Military and political training received in preparation for Vietnam assignment
 15. Sworn to Code of Conduct
 16. Political affiliations
 17. Detailed data on wife, children, parents, other relatives, and friends including names, addresses, occupations, current activities, political affiliations, and socio-economic living standard. Particular emphasis was placed on the details of this portion of the questionnaire.
 18. Emotions of mother/wife when POW departed for Vietnam (did she cry?)
- b. Attitudes (both personal and that of fellow military and commanding officers)
1. Vietnam war, destruction and casualties wrought by U.S. bombing
 2. Thieu/Ky government
 3. Desertion
 4. Participation in demonstrations (names of soldiers, dates of demonstrations, types of

demonstration -- racial, anti-poverty,

(reaction)

1. Bertram Russell trial organized to oppose American participation in Vietnam and knowledge of Russell's trial speech

2. Criticism or punishment from superiors.

Information on this attitude was to be used to incite the POW against his superiors and to decrease his morale by showing him that he lost his status as a free and equal citizen when he entered the military

3. Race riots in the U.S.; attitude of white soldiers toward Negro soldiers

4. Vietnamese wives of American military personnel

5. Laborers in the U.S. toward their government

General and specific details regarding:

1. Who read VC propaganda leaflets and what types were read

2. Books read by officers and enlisted men and reasons they liked these books

3. Conflicts between U.S. Army and ARVN

4. Dissension between officers and enlisted men

5. Deserters in the unit: names, dates, locations, causes

6. Morale, topics of discussion, and factors affecting the military most when serving in remote areas of Vietnam

7. Names, ranks and home states of American soldiers who killed or raped Vietnamese civilians
8. What goods POW's intended to buy and bring back to the U.S. with them when they were transferred. In this way, the VC could determine when a unit was pulling out and could levy the appropriate propaganda at the unit in the hopes that some of it will seep back to the friends and families of the soldiers involved
9. Names and dates of people who had committed self-immolation for anti-war purposes
10. General sentiment/attitudes which the POW's felt were peculiar to the VC
11. Promises made by U.S. Government to the military prior to sending them to Vietnam
12. Number of members of the POW's unit belonging to the labor class. The Military Proselyting Section explained to the Americans the senselessness of going to a foreign country to fight when there were so many things, such as unemployment, in their own country which needed to be taken care of. In addition, desired statistics and other information on conditions in the U.S. were sought.
13. Awareness of unemployment and misery experienced by Americans in the U.S.
14. Desire of POW's to write letters to their families in the U.S. The VC/NVA would see that the friends and families of the POW got these letters in the hopes that the letters would cause them to agitate for peace and the resultant return of their loved ones
15. Characteristics and morale of minority groups in the U.S.

During the interrogation, the following questions and arguments were posed to determine the sophistication of the POW:

- a. Why did the U.S. fail at the Bay of Pigs?
- b. Why was President Kennedy assassinated?
- c. Why was Martin Luther King assassinated?
- d. Why was Cuba allowed to become a communist country? Cuba is a small country with little population located near the mighty U.S. Vietnam is a small country with few people, so why should the U.S. bother with Vietnam?
- e. Why did the Americans fight the British in the American Revolution? Is not the Vietnamese war analogous to the American Revolution?

At the end of the interrogation, each POW was asked if he had any questions or needed anything. The POW could thereby express his personal feelings. The effect of the interrogation would thus be indicated, and the way the POW was treated en route from capture could be determined.