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REPORT NO. CS- 311/04126-72

DATE DISTR. 16 August 1972

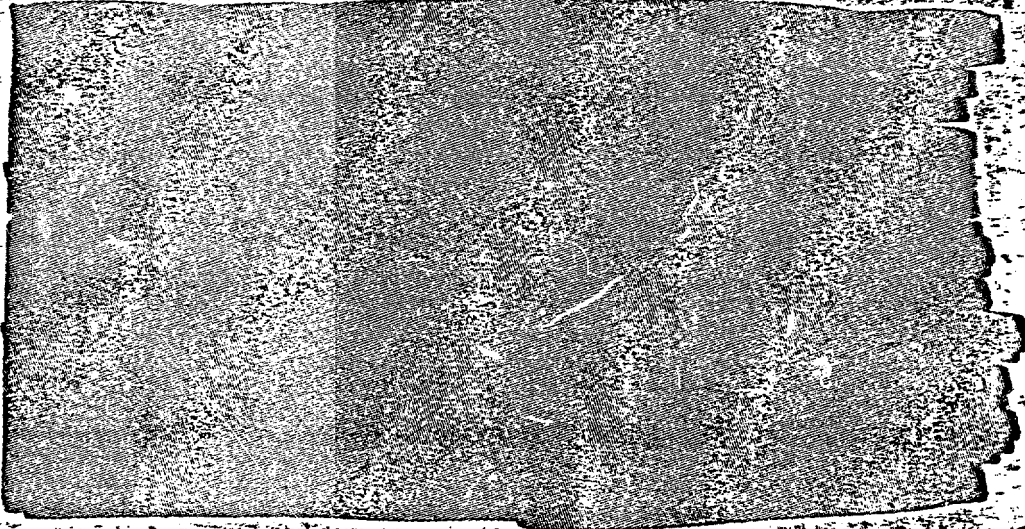
COUNTRY Laos/North Vietnam

DOI December 1971

SUBJECT Sighting of Two Captured American Pilots Northwest of Tchepone, Laos

ACQ Laos, Vientiane (7-9 August 1972)

SOURCE



1. In mid-December 1971 two captured American prisoners of war (POW's) were brought to the Savannakhet Provincial Military Headquarters (Hqs) of the Pathet Lao (PL) in the vicinity of WD 9082, about 60 kilometers northwest of Tchepone (WD 3244). The POW's were guarded by the four PL policemen who were assigned to the Provincial Hqs and worked in the Tchepone area. About 50 villagers from Ban Dongbang (WD 8580) and Ban Nam Maeng (WD 8878) were assembled at the Hqs at 1200 hours where they viewed the POW's and heard a short speech from L i n t h o n g, the commander of the Provincial Military Hqs. [REDACTED] stated

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ENCLOSURE 74 4-56142/DB-4H

that the POW's were American pilots who had been captured by the PL after they had parachuted from their jet aircraft which had been shot down in the Tchepone area. Linthong stated that the Americans were committing acts of aggression against the Lao people, and the proof of this was the presence of the American POW's.

2. The POW's remained in the area for one hour and were observed from a distance of ten yards. No one in the assembled group was allowed to speak with the POW's. They were closely guarded by the PL policemen but were not tied or restrained in any manner. Linthong said that the POW's were to be taken by vehicle to Binh Tram 32 at 1500 hours on the same day from where they were to be taken to North Vietnam. Ng a r n, the Savannakhet Provincial Hqs Chief of Police, said that the POW's had been in the Provincial Hqs area for one day after their arrival from Tchepone and had been fed rice and canned meat while there.

3. Both POW's were dressed in green PL uniforms which Ngarn said were provided by the policemen in Tchepone. The uniforms were the largest size available to the PL and appeared to fit fairly well. The POW's were not wearing shoes, eyeglasses, hats or jewelry of any type. Both were Caucasians. One was about 30 years old and had a heavy build. He weighed about 80 kilograms and was about 1.70 meters tall. He had short light brown hair, light complexion with a round face and a pointed nose. He did not have a beard or mustache. The second POW was about 35 years old and had a thin build. He weighed about 65 kilograms and was about 1.70 meters tall. He had light brown hair, a ruddy complexion, a narrow face with a sharp nose which was slightly bent. His hair was about six centimeters long, and he wore a mustache and a beard, which was about two and one-half centimeters long. It appeared that he had not shaven for a few days although his mustache and beard appeared well trimmed. Both POW's were in good physical condition.

4. Field Dissem. Embassy, ARMATT, AIRATT at Vientiane. Sent to CINCPAC, ARPAC, PACAF, PACFLT, MACV, 7TH AF, 7/13th AF, TFA/NKP,

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~~declassification.~~

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