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COUNTRY : NORTH VIETNAM (NVN)
SOUTH VIETNAM (SVN)

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SUBJECT : NVN Policy Toward US Prisoners

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S U M M A R Y

All captured US personnel were taken to regiment headquarters, because only regimental cadres had the authority to interrogate US captives. The capturing unit had full responsibility for the lives of US personnel until they were delivered to a higher authority. Generally, captives did not remain for a long time with a battalion or regiment. Eventually all POWs, were taken to HANOI, both for their own safety and so that they could get enough food. Source heard that the prisoners were never beaten and generally received good treatment. While Source was being detained, he met other VC prisoners who claimed that a US pilot, a former POW, had said that NVN had a good POW policy and that some US captives did not want to leave NVN.

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None

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1. According to NVN policy for the treatment of POWs, all captured US personnel had to be taken to regimental headquarters. Only regimental cadres had the authority to interrogate US captives. The unit which captured US personnel had full responsibility for their lives from the time they were captured until they were delivered to a superior authority. The unit concerned usually assigned LABOR YOUTH GROUP members to accompany the captives and to prevent the people, militia or guerrillas from approaching them, because in certain areas the people would beat the AMERICANS. The command sections of battalions and regiments took care of feeding US captives. Usually, AMERICANS were fed with canned food seized in battle. Generally, the captives did not remain for a long time with a battalion or regiment. Source had heard that all US POWs were eventually taken to HANOI, so that they could have enough food and to ensure their safety. If the AMERICANS were captured in SVN, they had to go part of the way on foot, but if captured in NVN, they could go to HANOI by train or truck.
2. Source heard that US pilots, as well as other POWs, received good treatment and were never beaten. They might be taught the VIETNAMESE language and have political discussions, if they wished. They had a special diet, clean living quarters, and a restricted recreational area. Source commented that while he was being detained in PLEIKU Province, SVN, he met some VC prisoners who knew a US pilot who had been picked up in QUANG BINH Province, NVN, and later released. The pilot told the VC prisoners that NVN had a good POW policy and that some US captives did not want to leave NVN and seemed very much attached to HANOI.