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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
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NSC: CHLD COBB KELL PAAL SOMM
<DIST>SIT: EOB VAX

<PREC> ROUTINE <CLAS> SECRET <OSRI> RUEA11A <DTG> 232136Z JUN 87
FM CIA
TO RUEA11A/DIRNSA
RUEHC/DEPT OF STATE
RUEKJCS/DIA
RUEADWW/WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM
ZEM/CIA OFFICE OF CURRENT OPERATIONS

<SUBJ>SUBJ: POW/MIA: LPDR POSITION THAT SUBSTANTIAL UNITED STATES
ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE COULD LEAD TO PROGRESS IN MIA
DISCUSSIONS

~~SECRET~~ SPECAT NOFORN NOCONTRACT ORCON WMINTEL
SECTION 1 OF 2

(b)(3)

CITE
SERIAL

PASS: EXCLUSIVE FOR THE DIRECTOR, WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM;
NSA FOR ZKZK OO ZRL DE (EXCLUSIVE FOR THE DIRECTOR, NSA);
STATE EXCLUSIVE FOR THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY, INR; DIA
EXCLUSIVE FOR THE DIRECTOR, DIA AND PASS TO NWS (DIRECTOR
ONLY).

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WARNING: INFORMATION REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE.
REPORT CLASS ~~SECRET~~--WMINTEL--NOFORN--NOCONTRACT--ORCON
DIST: 23 JUNE 1987

EXCLUSIVE DISSEMINATION TO ADDRESSEES LISTED AT END OF REPORT

COUNTRY: [REDACTED] VIETNAM/INTERNATIONAL

SUBJ: POW/MIA: LPDR POSITION THAT SUBSTANTIAL UNITED STATES
ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE COULD LEAD TO PROGRESS IN MIA
DISCUSSIONS

DOI: SPRING 1987

SOURCE: [REDACTED]

TEXT: 1. IN EARLY SPRING 1987, A SENIOR OFFICIAL [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] OF THE LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
(LPDR) COMMENTED PRIVATELY THAT SUBSTANTIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FROM
THE UNITED STATES (U.S.) WOULD BE A KEY FACTOR FOR FUTURE PROGRESS IN
THE U.S. SERVICEMEN MISSING IN ACTION (MIA) DISCUSSIONS. THE
OFFICIAL STATED THAT THE LPDR WAS PLEASED BY THE FACT THAT IT WAS NO
LONGER ON THE U.S. EMBARGO LIST, BUT HE ADDED THAT LAOS HAD LITTLE OF
SUBSTANCE TO SHOW FROM THAT GESTURE. RECENT U.S. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE
THROUGH THE CONTRIBUTION OF FIVE THOUSAND TONS OF RICE WAS
APPRECIATED, BUT THIS WAS INSIGNIFICANT IN TERMS OF LAOS' OVERALL
ECONOMIC NEEDS.

2. ECHOING THE ABOVE COMMENTS, A SECOND [REDACTED]
ASSOCIATED WITH THE MIA DISCUSSIONS NOTED IN A SEPARATE PRIVATE
DISCUSSION THAT THE U.S. FAILURE TO PROFFER MEANINGFUL AID TO LAOS
WAS PARTICULARLY PIQUING. THE OFFICIAL POINTED OUT THAT SWEDEN,
JAPAN AND AUSTRALIA, COUNTRIES WHICH HAD NOT INFLICTED ANY WAR DAMAGE
ON LAOS, WERE ENGAGED IN POSITIVE PROGRAMS OF HELP WHILE THE U.S.

REMAINED CONCERNED ONLY ABOUT RESOLVING THE MIA ISSUE. [REDACTED]
COMMENT: NEITHER OF THE TWO MFA OFFICIALS MENTIONED A SPECIFIC
BOTTOM-LINE FIGURE WHICH THE LPDR GOVERNMENT WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE
U.S. CONTRIBUTE, BUT IT WAS CLEAR FROM THEIR COMMENTS THAT THEY
DESIRED AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. IT WAS ALSO CLEAR FROM THEIR COMMENTS
THAT ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE WAS THE FUNDAMENTAL SINE QUA NON FOR LAOS IN
THE MIA DISCUSSIONS. CESSATION OF U.S. SUPPORT
TO LAO OPPOSITION GROUPS WAS NEVER BROACHED DURING THE OFFICIALS'
PRIVATE COMMENTS.)

3. A THIRD [REDACTED] OFFICIAL NOTED IN THE LATE SPRING OF
1987 THAT LAOS PRESENTLY PLACED LITTLE IMPORTANCE ON THE MIA

DISCUSSIONS. MORE IMPORTANT IN THE LPDR'S MIND WAS IMPLEMENTING THE
REFORMS AND CHANGES WHICH HAVE BEEN MANDATED BY THE NOVEMBER 1986
FOURTH PARTY CONGRESS. THE OFFICIAL POINTED OUT THAT THIS WAS
PROBABLY ONE OF THE UNDERLYING REASONS THAT THE VISIT OF A U.S.
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL OFFICIAL IN LATE MAY 1987 HAD NOT BEEN
APPROVED. THE LAO WERE NOT AGAINST THE VISIT, BUT THEY SIMPLY FOUND
THE VISIT REQUEST TO BE ILL-TIMED AND OF LITTLE IMPORTANCE GIVEN
OTHER GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES. (SOURCE COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE U.S.
DELEGATIONS VISIT WAS NOT APPROVED, THE DOOR FOR FUTURE VISITS AND
DISCUSSIONS IS CERTAINLY NOT CLOSED. FUTURE CONTACT WITH THE LPDR
WOULD TAKE ON MORE MEANING, HOWEVER, IF THE U.S. ENTERED THE
DISCUSSIONS READY TO OFFER SPECIFIC FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.)

4. COMMENTING ON THE PRACTICAL SIDE OF THE MIA ISSUE, AN LDR
MFA OFFICIAL FAMILIAR WITH LPDR STATISTICS STATED THAT LAOS BELIEVED
THAT THERE MIGHT BE REMAINS OF ALMOST 600 U.S. SERVICEMEN LEFT IN
LAOS. THIS COMPARED TO OVER 400 IN CAMBODIA AND MORE THAN 1,900 IN
VIETNAM. THE OFFICIAL ADDED THAT LAOS HAD AN APPROXIMATE IDEA OF
WHERE THE U.S. REMAINS WERE IN LAOS BUT THE GOVERNMENT BELIEVED THE
U.S. COULD SPECIFICALLY PINPOINT THE ACTUAL LOCATIONS. (HEADQUARTERS
COMMENT: THE ACTUAL NUMBER OF MIA IS AS FOLLOWS: 1,777 IN VIETNAM,
552 IN LAOS AND 82 IN CAMBODIA.)

5. IN A PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH ANOTHER LPDR OFFICIAL AN MFA
OFFICIAL WHO HAS OCCASIONAL CONTACT WITH U.S. GOVERNMENT
REPRESENTATIVES SAID THAT TO HIS KNOWLEDGE THERE WERE NO MIA REMAINS
OR LIVING POW'S TURNED OVER TO THE NORTH VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT. IN
HIS OPINION HAD THE LPDR GOVERNMENT BEEN IN POSSESSION OF EITHER, IT
WOULD HAVE TURNED THEM OVER DIRECTLY TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT.

ACO: (MID-JUNE 1987)

DISSEM: FIELD: NONE.

WASHINGTON DISSEM:

TO WHSITRM: EXCLUSIVE FOR THE DIRECTOR, WHITE HOUSE
SITUATION ROOM

TO STATE: EXCLUSIVE FOR THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY, INR

TO NSA: EXCLUSIVE FOR THE DIRECTOR, NSA

TO DIA: EXCLUSIVE FOR THE DIRECTOR, DIA

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DECL: OADR DRV [REDACTED] BY RECORDED REPORTING OFFICER. ALL PORTIONS
CARRY CLASSIFICATION AND CONTROLS OF OVERALL DOCUMENT. (b)(3)

SECTION: 01 OF 02 <SSN: 4100 <TOR> 870623180158 MSG00017278518
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DATE: JUL 2000

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