

CONTROLLED AMERICAN SOURCE

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Classified CONFIDENTIAL
Review on 4 DEC 1991

REPORT CLASS C O N F I D E N T I A L

COUNTRY : LAOS
DOI : 4 MAY 1965
SUBJECT : SIGHTINGS OF TWO U.S. PILOTS CAPTURED BY PATHET LAO FORCES IN SAM NEUA PROVINCE
ACQ : LAOS, VIENTIANE (26 NOVEMBER 1971) ~~FILED~~ NO. FOV-24,535
SOURCE : A RELIABLE SOURCE FROM THE DEBRIEFING OF PATHET LAO (PL) RALLIER (NANG) SOURCE FROM 1961 TO JANUARY 1970 SOURCE DATA

SHE OBSERVED THE U.S. PILOT WHEN HE WAS BROUGHT TO THE CAVE. SC RALLIED TO A ROYAL LAO GOVERNMENT INFANTRY BATTALION ON 5 OCTOBER 1971. (SEE PARAGRAPH 6 FOR ADDITIONAL BIOGRAPHIC DETAILS.) SHE WAS VERY COOPERATIVE THROUGHOUT HER DEBRIEFING. SHE IS INTELLIGENT AND HAS GOOD RECALL OF DATES AND EVENTS. SHE WAS NOT A MEMBER OF THE LAO PEOPLE'S PARTY. HER REPORTING RELIABILITY HAS NOT BEEN ESTABLISHED.

SUMMARY. ON OR ABOUT 4 MAY 1965 A U.S. PILOT WAS CAPTURED BY PATHET LAO (PL) TROOPS NEAR THE PL SUPREME COMMAND HEADQUARTERS CAVE. HE WAS INTERROGATED AND THEN DETAINED AT UNKNOWN LOCATIONS IN SAM NEUA PROVINCE. ANOTHER U.S. PILOT WAS LATER CAPTURED IN THE VICINITY OF MUONG POUA AND BROUGHT TO THE SAME DETENTION AREA. END SUMMARY.

1. ON OR ABOUT 4 MAY 1965 A U.S. PILOT WAS CAPTURED BY PATHET LAO (PL) TROOPS ON THE THIRD DAY OF A BOMBING ATTACK IN AN AREA APPROXIMATELY ONE KILOMETER NORTH OF THE PL SUPREME COMMAND HEADQUARTERS (HQS) CAVE. WHILE APPROXIMATELY TEN U.S. JET AIRCRAFT CIRCLED OVER THE AREA WHERE THE PILOT HAD LANDED AFTER PARACHUTING FROM HIS BURNING AIRCRAFT, A U.S. HELICOPTER ATTEMPTED TO RESCUE HIM. PL SOLDIERS, HOWEVER, CAPTURED THE PILOT BEFORE THE HELICOPTER ARRIVED. THE PILOT WAS OVER 68 INCHES TALL, MEDIUM BUILD, AND CLEAN SHAVEN. HE HAD A LONG FACE AND SHORT, LIGHT COLORED HAIR. HE WAS BROUGHT TO THE PL SUPREME COMMAND HQS CAVE AND THEN TAKEN TO AN UNKNOWN LOCATION FOR INTERROGATION. THE INTERROGATION WAS

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CONDUCTED BY A LAO WHO USED AS AN INTERPRETER A FOREIGN STUDENT WHO SPOKE ENGLISH AND WHO WAS BORROWED FROM THE NLHS CENTER. AFTER THE INTERROGATION THE PILOT WAS DETAINED AT AN UNKNOWN LOCATION IN SAM NEUA PROVINCE.

2. (FIELD COMMENT: RALLIER

SUBSOURCE

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^{SSD} ~~PL SUPREME COMMAND GAVE PHOTO~~ ^{SUBSOURCE DATA} IDENTIFIED THE LOCATION OF THE CAVE LOCATED AT ~~VH 194565~~ THIS CAVE HAS BEEN PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED AS THE HEADQUARTERS.)

VH 194565

3. COLONEL C H A N H - K O R, AT THAT TIME DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE POLITICAL OFFICE OF THE SUPREME COMMAND HQS AND CHIEF OF THAT OFFICE'S PERSONNEL SECTION, SAID IN A CASUAL CONVERSATION THAT WHEN THE PILOT WAS ASKED ABOUT TACTICAL MILITARY INFORMATION, HE SAID HE KNEW NOTHING. HE TOLD THE INTERROGATOR TO ASK THE U.S. GOVERNMENT FOR THE ANSWERS TO THOSE QUESTIONS. WHEN ASKED WHAT HE WAS THINKING ABOUT WITH REGARD TO HIS CAPTURE, THE PILOT SAID THAT HE THOUGHT MOSTLY ABOUT HIS WIFE AND SON. HE GAVE HIS AGE AS 36 AND SAID THAT HIS SON WAS 15 YEARS OLD. (FIELD COMMENT: CHAN KOR IS PROBABLY IDENTIFIABLE WITH MAJOR (CHAN) KOR WHO WAS IDENTIFIED BY A RALLIER IN SEPTEMBER 1968 AS THE THIRD DEPUTY IN CHARGE OF PERSONNEL OF THE POLITICAL DIVISION AT SAM NEUA.)

4. TWO OR THREE MONTHS LATER ANOTHER U.S. PILOT WAS CAPTURED IN THE VICINITY OF MUONG POUA. (FIELD COMMENT: A MUONG POUA IS LOCATED AT VH 2264.) COLONEL CHANH-KOR SAID THAT THIS PILOT HAD BEEN BROUGHT TO THE SAME DETENTION AREA AS THE FIRST PILOT. (FIELD COMMENT: SC WAS SHOWN PHOTOGRAPHS OF APPROXIMATELY 30 AMERICANS IN THE OFFICIAL POW PHOTOGRAPH BOOK, INCLUDING CAPTIAN DAVID LOUIS HRDLICKA WHO CRASHED IN AN F105 ON 18 MAY 1965 IN THE VICINITY OF VH 200539 AND CAPTIAN CHARLES E. SHELTON WHO CRASHED IN AN RF101C AT UG 991632 ON 29 MAY 1965. SHE COULD IDENTIFY NO PHOTOGRAPH AS THE PILOT SHE SAW IN 1965. WHEN ASKED IF ANY OF THE FOUR PHOTOGRAPHS ON THE PAGE WITH HRDLICKA'S PHOTOGRAPH LOOKED SIMILAR TO THE PILOT SHE SAW, SHE GAVE A NEGATIVE REPLY. WHEN ASKED IF ANY PHOTOGRAPHS ON THE PAGE WITH SHELTON'S PHOTOGRAPH RESEMBLED THE PILOT, SHE POINTED TO SHELTON BUT SAID THAT THE MAN SHE SAW HAD A VERY FLAT NOSE BRIDGE AND THAT WHILE SHELTON'S HAIR AND FACE SHAPE WERE SIMILAR, HE WAS NOT THE PILOT SHE REMEMBERED.)

VH 2264

5. ABOUT ONE MONTH AFTER THE SECOND PILOT WAS CAPTURED, PL CAPTAIN KU - T H O N G, WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE IMPRISONED PILOTS, CAME TO THE SUPREME COMMAND HQS CAVE AND WAS OVERHEARD TO TELL S A M A N, WHO AT THAT TIME WAS 1ST DEPUTY SUPREME COMMANDER OF PL FORCES AND CHIEF OF THE SUPREME COMMAND POLITICAL OFFICER, THAT THE PILOTS WERE HAVING DIFFICULTY ADJUSTING TO A DIET OF LAO FOOD. SAMAN TOLD KU-THONG TO TRY DIFFERENT FOODS IN ORDER TO FIND OUT WHAT THE PILOTS COULD EAT. HE SUGGESTED CHICKEN, SUGAR AND MILK. HE TOLD KU-THONG TO ASK THE PILOTS WHAT THEY WOULD LIKE TO EAT AND THEN TO REQUISITION THE FOOD FROM THE QUARTERMASTER OFFICE. (SOURCE COMMENT: SC HAD NO FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE PILOTS.) (FIELD COMMENT: KU-THONG MAY BE IDENTICAL

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WITH THONGKHAK WHO IS REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN POLICE CHIEF IN XIENG KHOUANG PROVINCE AND WHO WAS TRANSFERRED TO HOUA PHAN PROVINCE IN LATE 1968. IN LATE 1971 THONGKHAM REPORTEDLY WAS CHIEF OF THE SECURITY OFFICE IN THE NAKAY AREA (VH 1865). SAMAN MAY BE SAMAN VIRAKHET WHO IS CONFIRMED AS SUPREME COMMANDER OF THE SOUTH LAOS REGION (SLR) HQS AND WHO SUCCEEDED GENERAL P H O M M A DOUANGMALA IN PROBABLY MAY 1971. SAMAN VIRAKHET FORMERLY WAS DEPUTY COMMANDER OF THE HQS OF THE LAO PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY AND CHIEF OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS OF THE XIENG KHOUANG REGIONAL HQS.)

6. (FIELD COMMENT:

SOURCE DATA

IN SEPTEMBER 1953 SHE WAS SENT TO A SCHOOL AT THANH HOA CITY, NORTH VIETNAM (NVN), WHERE SHE STUDIED NURSING AND THE LAO AND VIETNAMESE LANGUAGES. SHE ATTENDED THIS SCHOOL FROM JANUARY 1954 UNTIL JUNE 1955. SHE REMAINED UNASSIGNED AT THANH HOA UNTIL DECEMBER 1955 WHEN SHE WAS TRANSFERRED TO A PL HOSPITAL IN SAM NEUA PROVINCE, LAOS. IN JANUARY 1958 SHE WAS REASSIGNED AS A NURSE WITH THE PL 2ND BATTALION IN XIENG KHOUANG PROVINCE. IN MAY 1959 SHE ACCOMPANIED THE PL 2ND BATTALION TO NGHE AN PROVINCE, NVN, WHEN IT WITHDREW FROM XIENG KHOUANG.

SOURCE

DATA

REGION. FROM JUNE UNTIL THE END OF SEPTEMBER 1970 SHE TRAVELED AS A MEDIC WITH C H A N S A P H I L O M (ALSO KNOWN AS K A S E N), DEPUTY COMMANDER OF THE SOUTH LAOS REGION. AFTER CHANSAPHILOM WAS KILLED BY A BOOBYTRAP NEAR BAN SOT (XA 2252), SHE TRAVELED TO THE PL PROVINCE HQS IN SITHANDONE TO REPORT TO PHOMMA, WHO HAD LEFT THE SLR HQS AT THE SAME TIME AS CHANSAPHILOM. UPON ARRIVING THERE SHE LEARNED THAT PHOMMA HAD BEEN KILLED BY A NORTH VIETNAMESE ARMY (NVA) MEDIC. SHE THEN RETURNED TO SARAVANE PROVINCE, ARRIVING THERE IN NOVEMBER 1970. IN JUNE 1971 SHE WAS WARNED BY K H A M C H A N H, STAFF MEMBER OF THE SLR HQS, THAT THE NVA INTENDED TO KILL HER AND OTHERS, APPARENTLY BECAUSE OF THEIR PREVIOUS ASSOCIATION WITH PHOMMA.

SOURCE DATA

PHOM SAID SHE RALLIED BECAUSE OF HER FEAR OF THE NVA AND BECAUSE SHE WAS TIRED OF THE CONTINUING SHORTAGE OF FOOD AND THE RIGORS OF LIFE WITH THE PL.)

7. FIELD DISSEM: STATE ARMY AIR CINCPAC ARPAC PACAF PACFLT MACV 7TH AF 7/13TH AF TFA/NKP (ALSO SENT BANGKOK SAIGON PHNOM PENH PARIS).

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