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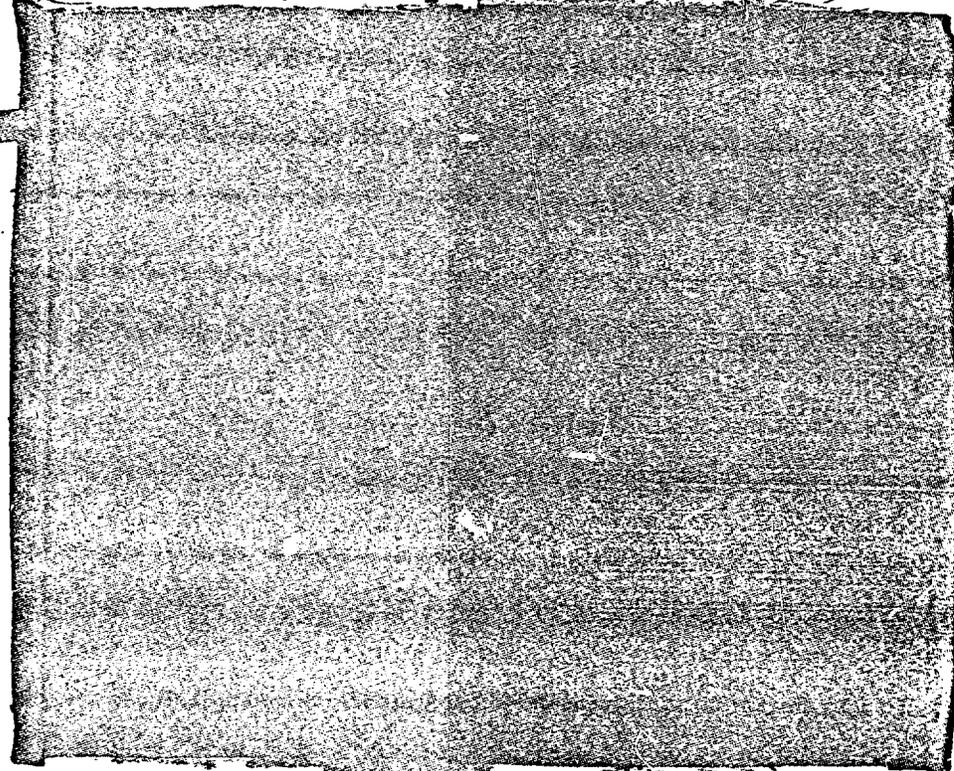
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- SUBJECT
1. Neo Lao Hak Sat Weekly Bulletin Containing Photographs and Details of American Prisoners Captured by the Pathet Lao
  2. Location and Details of a PL Prison Near the NLHS Supreme Headquarters in Sam Neua Province, Laos

ACQ: Laos, Vientiane (22 October 1971)

SOURCE



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[REDACTED]

**Summary.** The Neo Lao Hak Sat (NLHS) Headquarters published a weekly bulletin which contained photographs and resumes of Americans captured by the Pathet Lao (PL). Such prisoners were allegedly turned over to the North Vietnamese and sent to Hanoi. As of early 1971 a PL prison was allegedly still located at Ban (village) Peum, about six kilometers east of the NLHS Supreme Headquarters at Ban Nakay Neua, Sam Neua Province, Laos. As of April 1969 the prison held approximately 800 prisoners. They were all Lao or Thai and no Americans were known to be incarcerated there.

End Summary.

1. A weekly bulletin prepared by the office of Neo Lao Hak Sat (NLHS) official K a y s e a Phouviang contained photographs of American prisoners who had been captured by the Pathet Lao (PL) and a brief resume listing each prisoner's name, rank, date and place of capture as well as photographs of all documentation found on his person. [REDACTED] said he saw copies of the bulletins during the course of his daily work. He estimated that between 1966 and late 1969 he saw photographs of some 30 American prisoners in the bulletins. In late 1969 his section was reorganized and he no longer received copies of the bulletin. He could not recall names or details of the American prisoners. He did not personally see or hear of any Americans at the PL prison located at Ban Peum (VI 247584) but had heard that all Americans captured by the PL were turned over to the North Vietnamese and sent to Hanoi.

2. During a meeting between senior NLHS and North Vietnamese officials, including Hoang Van Th a i and Supreme Commander of North Vietnamese Army (NVA) forces in Laos Major General Tran D o, at Neo Lao Hak Sat (NLHS) Supreme Headquarters in mid-1969, the North Vietnamese were shown copies of the bulletins on the American prisoners captured by the PL. Such high-level meetings of NLHS and North Vietnamese officials were held about once every three months. [REDACTED] Comment. [REDACTED] was not knowledgeable of the meeting agendas or whether the officials were specifically interested in the American prisoners.)

3. As of April 1969 a prison camp containing about 800 prisoners was located at Ban Peum, about six kilometers (kms) east of the NLHS Supreme Headquarters at Ban Nakay Neua (VI 1956), in Sam Neua Province, Laos. The camp, which was about 1,000 meters long and 800 meters wide, was located in dense jungle and could not be seen from the air. In early 1971 NLHS Headquarters officials said that the prison was still in existence.

4. [REDACTED] Comment. Current [REDACTED] holdings contain no information on a camp located at Ban Peum. Analysis of [REDACTED] 12 October 1971 [REDACTED] could not confirm a prison camp or a village at VI 247584. The reported area is within an area which once was cultivated but which has been covered by secondary growth vegetation. Other villages in the area, as depicted on map sheet 5549-1 at VI 241587, VI 243578 and VI 231578, were abandoned. However, scattered huts were located in nearby rice paddies. Several buildings were located [REDACTED] at VI 246377. The [REDACTED] precluded a more accurate determination of the number of buildings or their function.)

[REDACTED]

5. A 200-man PL security force armed with pistols, AK-47 rifles and B-40 rocket grenade launchers guarded the prison. Small patrols checked a four to five km area surrounding the prison between 0400-0600 hours each morning and 1500-1800 hours each afternoon. Four gates led into the prison, each of which was manned by one guard during the day and two guards at night. The guard force changed hourly during the day and every two hours during the night. An estimated eight to twelve 37mm antiaircraft guns were also located around the prison complex. An alarm bell was sounded whenever aircraft approached the area. Comment. According to analysis (of [redacted] 1971 [redacted]) the nearest antiaircraft artillery(AAA) positions included five 37mm AAA sites in the general vicinity of VII 1957.)

6. Two unidentified NVA volunteer battalions(bns) were located at Pha (mountain) Dang(VH 2255) and were capable of acting as a reaction force if the camp were attacked. The 613th PL Mobile Infantry Bn was located in the Huonghien(UH 3021) area, about 100 kms west-southwest of the prison, but on occasion it operated in the general proximity of the prison. The prison was commanded by PL Major B o u n Phomahaxai, a former PL general who had been Supreme Commander of PL forces and a deputy to Kaysone Phomvihane. Boun had been demoted because of adulterous behavior. His deputy was S i a x a i Mahoseuk.

7. The approximately 800 prisoners in the camp in 1969 were composed of Lao and Thai nationals and were divided into four categories. There were no known American prisoners incarcerated in the camp.

a. Category I prisoners consisted of captured Royal Lao Government (RLG) irregular forces trained to operate as small teams in the rear areas of PL-controlled territory, captured Thai soldiers who refused to cooperate with the PL, and persons suspected of being RLG intelligence agents. These maximum security prisoners were held in underground cells, were fed a small portion of rice once daily, were not allowed to bathe and were not provided medical care. They were kept chained at all times.

b. Category II was composed of those prisoners from Category I who had repented and who cooperated with the PL. They were held separately in the rear section of a cave located on the prison grounds. They were fed a moderate amount of rice twice daily which was sometimes supplemented with locally grown vegetables and canned meat obtained from North Vietnam.

c. Category III consisted of persons arrested for minor crimes and those prisoners from Category II who the PL felt had been rehabilitated. They were kept in the forward section of the same cave which held Category II prisoners. The treatment of Category II and III prisoners was very similar.

d. Category IV was the largest category, consisting of about 600 RLG soldiers who were captured on the Nam Bac(TM 3582) battlefield in 1968. They were quartered in small Lao-style buildings scattered about the prison grounds and were allowed to leave the camp perimeter on work details. They were treated otherwise much the same as those in Categories II and III.

Comment. There have been many reports that prisoners taken at Nam Bac were taken to the Sam Neua area. These prisoners were used on road construction and as coolies, and some were incorporated into Deunanist battalions. Most of the reporting, however, indicated that these prisoners were kept in the Nam Long(VH 1262) vicinity.)

6. Field Dissem. State Army Air CINCPAC ARPAC PACAF PACFLT MACV 7th AF 7/13th AF TTA/XP 7th ARFS [redacted]