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COUNTRY : SOUTH VIETNAM (SVN) [redacted] 1.3(a)(4)  
SUBJECT : VC Policy On Treatment Of Allied POW's, Punishment For Violators, Medical Treatment Available to POW's  
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S U M M A R Y

VC were told to treat prisoners of war (POW's) well and to give them sufficient food; soldiers could not beat or insult prisoners. NVA units upheld these regulations, but local VC militia and guerrillas committed numerous violations. Cadres who violated orders were first demoted and then transferred; soldiers were first criticised and then sent for re-education. ARMY OF VIETNAM (ARVN) POW's were subjected to "thought return" and were released when they were believed to be converted to the VC mode of thinking. Medical treatment for Allied POW's on the battlefield consisted of bandaging, injections of Vitamin K to stop bleeding, penicillin injections and blood transfusions.

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ATTACHMENTS:  
None 1.3(a)(4)

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1.3(a)(4)

1. VC units in VC Military Region IV were told, as of January 1967, to treat U.S. POW's well, and to provide them with sufficient food (quantities unknown). The VC had the right to confiscate a prisoner's weapon, but not his personal belongings unless a list was made in order to ensure that the items were returned when the prisoner was released. The VC were not permitted to beat or insult the POW's, and they were to give them the same amount of food as was given the VC soldiers. There was to be strict enforcement of the policies; however, the NVA units upheld them, but the local VC militia and guerrillas [ ] committed numerous violations of the rules. These reports of ill-treatment by others were used to teach the men how to act properly towards POW's. 1.3(a)(4)
  
2. If a cadre beat a POW or instructed another man to beat or shoot a prisoner, or if a soldier beat a POW and the cadre did not punish him for the ill-treatment, the cadre was demoted for the first offense and transferred if he committed a second offense. When a soldier stole from a POW or beat him, the first time he was criticized in front of the unit; for the second offense he was sent to be re-educated. After two occurrences, the man was transferred to a Rear Services unit and not allowed to be in combat. The offense was also noted in his records, and his case was publicized as an example for others. [ ]  
 [ ] In one case, a soldier had beaten a GVN POW because he had not raised his hands when ordered. The soldier was subsequently criticized at company and battalion levels and sent for a one-week re-education course at company level. The duration of the course depended on the seriousness of the violation, but the usual length was one-week at the company, and was conducted by the political officer. In another case, when a soldier was not polite to a U.S. prisoner and complained about having to care for him during evacuation from the battlefield, he was sent for similar re-training. 1.3(a)(4)
  
3. ARVN POW's underwent a two-week to three-month thought reform course after which they were released if it was felt that they were convinced of their mistake in following the GVN. If, during the re-education, they attempted to escape, the process was begun again, until the individual was persuaded to believe in the VC line of thinking. After that they were free to choose whether to go to GVN, or VC, controlled areas. However, if U.S., Korean, or other Allied troops tried to escape, they were sent to higher headquarters in SVN [ ] for thought reform and interrogation [ ]  
 [ ] The U.S. and other POW's were shot while escaping only if they did not heed the warning of the VC to stop. 1.3(a)(4)
  
4. Medical treatment on the battlefield for Allied POW's consisted of bandaging, injections of Vitamin K to stop the bleeding, penicillin injections and blood transfusions, if necessary. The blood plasma was obtained from the medical organization of the Military Region concerned; it was purchased in Saigon [ ] and was of French origin. The Vitamin K and penicillin were also bought in Saigon and were of French origin. The process of buying these medical supplies took 15 to 20 days, and it was a difficult procedure due to the problems the traders had in concealing the items while transporting them. As of January 1967 MR IV had a shortage of penicillin, vitamins and the other more expensive drugs; reserves were low, because the items were difficult to obtain. A medic of the MR IV Political and Military Training School said that the labels of some drugs were in English, and that these had been bought in Saigon and supplied to the unit by MR IV headquarters. 1.3(a)(4)

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