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COUNTRY : SOUTH VIETNAM (SVN)
SUBJECT : Capture of Four U.S. Soldiers
of the First Air Cavalry/Division
in BINH DINH Province; Policy
Regarding U.S. POWs

DATE OF REPORT : 22/12/67

1.3(a)(4)

DATE OF INFO : 27 December 1966

NO. OF PAGES : 2

DATE AND PLACE OF ACQUISITION : November 1967 (N)
SAIGON, Vietnam

REF: []

SOURCE: []

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S U M M A R Y

On 27 December 1966, VC Regiment 22, SAO VANG Division shelled, attacked and dislodged two U.S. battalions garrisoned on XUAN SON strategic hill, HOAI AN District, BINH DINH Province, SVN. Four U.S. soldiers were taken prisoner and taken to LONG HOA Village, AN LOA District, BINH DINH Province, where they were detained in people's houses. Later they were sent to the SAO VANG Division, then to Military Region 5 and finally to NVN where they would be detained for possible exchange after the armistice. The VC policy regarding POWs stated that one U.S. soldier could be exchanged for ten VC soldiers; and for one returned U.S. officer pilot, the U.S. had to compensate NVN with a factory.

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Date September 1993

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1. On 27 December 1966, VC Regiment 22, SAO VANG ("Yellow Star") Division shelled and attacked XUAN SON strategic hill (approximate coordinates BR 7328h5), HOAI AN District BINH DINH Province. The U.S. forces on this hill were comprised of one infantry battalion of the U.S. First Air Cavalry Division and one 105mm and 155mm artillery battalion. After 20 minutes of fierce fighting (from 0100 to 0120 hours), VC Regiment 22 dislodged the two U.S. battalions and captured XUAN SON Hill.
2. During the battle, Regiment 22 captured four U.S. soldiers of the U.S. First Air Cavalry Division; none of the prisoners were wounded. Later, the four prisoners were conducted to LONG HOA Village (coordinates BS 746117), AN LAO District, BINH DINH Province, to be temporarily detained for four days in the people's houses.
3. Since this was the first time Regiment 22 had captured four U.S. soldiers, the Regiment's field grade Political Officer, Major LOC, ordered his subordinate units to study the proselyting policy regarding POWs. This policy mentioned that one U.S. soldier could be exchanged for ten VC soldiers; and that for one returned officer pilot, the U.S. had to compensate NVN with a factory. Therefore, the VC treated the U.S. POWs better than SVN army prisoners. Each day, they were given the equivalent of SVN\$15 worth of food and one kilogram of rice. They were occasionally given one pack of "Ruby" cigarettes. The VC also lent them a transistor radio (standard type, two bands) for entertainment.
4. The four U.S. prisoners were conducted from Regiment 22 to the SAO VANG Division, then to Military Region 5 and finally to NVN. This system was adopted because the VC wanted to detain the U.S. prisoners for possible exchange after the armistice. NVN was a more secure area and had adequate facilities to billet U.S. prisoners.

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