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COUNTRY : NORTH VIETNAM (NVN)
SUBJECT : U.S. Pilot Captured near HON GAI
DATE OF INFO : August 1964 - October 1967
DATE AND PLACE OF ACQUISITION : 24 December 1968 (Z - U) SAIGON, Vietnam

DATE OF REPORT : 2/1/69
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S U M M A R Y

On 5 August 1964, two aircraft were observed going down, burning, in the vicinity of HON GAI City (YJ 165178), QUANG NINH Province, NVN. One captured pilot was held in a building in HON GAI City after being picked up from the sea, and was photographed by press representatives. A few days later, his photograph appeared in the newspapers, and he was identified as AN-VO-REST (phonetic). In October 1967 a military reporter for the NHAN DAN Newspaper, LUU THANH, commented that a POW by the same name was kept in HANOI at an old Chinese school (WJ 26958824) transformed into a POW facility. BUI A (Source), who had taken photographs of AN-VO-REST in HON GAI, went to see this POW, but could not be sure it was the same man.

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MAP REFERENCES:

AMS Series L7014; Sheet 6450 IV; Scale 1/50,000; Edition 1.

AMS Series L909; HANOI, Stock No. L909X HANOI; Scale 1/12,500; Edition 2.

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1. On 5 August 1965, three journalists were on a bicycle tour through the forests surrounding HON GAI City (YJ 165178). QUANG NINH Province, when at 1000 hours, they noticed many aircraft in the sky. This was the first time that aircraft had overflown the area. The aircraft were attacking an unknown area in the vicinity of the city, and at least two aircraft were observed going down, burning. After 1 hour, when the attack seemed to be over, the men returned to the city.
2. On the way back to the city, the journalists heard several rumors about the attack. People said that at least 10 jet aircraft had participated, and that one pilot had been captured. When they returned to the office, the journalists were told by local personnel that some journalists had set out in a boat to witness the rescue and capture of one pilot, who had landed in the sea.
3. At about 1700 hours one journalist [] went to the building where the pilot was held. The pilot was kept in a room, about 15 by 15 meters in size, and was sitting in a chair, with his arms folded and his legs crossed, guarded by two armed soldiers. The pilot was dressed in white underwear, and, because he was sitting down, it was impossible to estimate his height and weight. The journalist took pictures for about 15 minutes, but could not talk to the prisoner because no one present spoke English.
4. During the week 7 or 8 to 15 August 1964, pictures of the pilot were published in various newspapers. The pictures were identified as AN-VO-REST (Phonetic), and was part of an article that contained the statement of the NVN government protesting the attack. The pictures taken by the journalist were not published, possibly because he had submitted them too late. However, the published photographs were virtually the same as the ones taken by him.
5. In October 1967, the same journalist was informed by Major LUU THANH, reporter at the NHAN DAN Newspaper, that a prisoner named AN-VO-REST was held at a POW Facility located in an old Chinese school on YEN PHU Street, HANOI (WJ 26958824). The journalist expressed his interest in seeing this man and LUU THANH, after pointing out to him the difficulties involved because it was not on official business, told him that he would see what could be arranged.
6. Some days later, the journalist and LUU THANH went to the POW facility. Rumors had been circulating through HANOI that the POW's received a much better ration than the NVA soldier, and they intended to see for themselves the meals the POW's received and also to have a talk to the man called AN-VO-REST. The gate guard had to ask the permission of the chief of the installation to admit the journalist, and after waiting for 5 minutes, both were admitted. They were led by two guards and an interpreter inside the

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compound, and LQU THANH pointed to a POW in a far corner, and said that it was AN-VO-REST, at the same time asking the journalist if that was correct. The journalist asked the guard to lead him to the man, who was sitting with his back against a column of the main building. The man was wearing black pajamas and was gazing at the sky. The journalist asked the man what he was doing, and received the reply that the OW was communicating with his family through the clouds. The journalist then asked him if he received any letters, and the reply was affirmative, however this means of communication was much quicker. The journalist, with the aid of the interpreter, had the above discussion with the POW for less than 5 minutes because the interpreter had to get back to his other duties, and therefore did not have time to ask the POW for his name. [] could not be sure that the POW he saw in October 1967 was the same as the man he took pictures of in August 1964. In his opinion, all Europeans look somewhat alike, but if anything, the first man he saw had a pointed face, while this man's face looked rounder).

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7. The departure of the interpreter terminated the conversation. The journalist stayed in the compound for a total of about 15 minutes, and spent the remainder of the time watching about 20 other POW's at play in the center of the compound. He was unable to check out the POW's rations, because meals were not served at that time.

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