

Ministry of National Defense Group 776
Reeducation Camp Complex (Northern SRV)
(1976-1978)

1. In a coordinated action, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV) Ministries of Interior (MOI) and National Defense (MND) transferred large numbers of former ARVN/GVN personnel in 1976 from its reeducation camp systems in the southern SRV to central-level camp systems in the northern SRV. The MND camp system in the north for ARVN/GVN inmates was administered by People's Armed Forces of Vietnam (PAVN) Group 776. The MND parent agency for Group 776 has not been definitively identified by [REDACTED]

2. [REDACTED] Group 776 should have had some affiliation with the Military Justice Department (Cuc Quan Phap/MJD) and/or the Military Security Department (Cuc Bao Ve Quan Doi/MSD) of the MND's General Political Department. PAVN Colonel Pham Thai was reported to be responsible for ARVN detention facilities in the northern SRV after the communist takeover of South Vietnam in April 1975. Colonel Pham Thai may or may not be identical with Senior Colonel Pham Thai, a Deputy MSD Director (1969-1977), who had unspecified responsibilities up to 1973 for the administration of U.S./ARVN POW detention facilities and for the release of U.S./ARVN POW's. The MSD was also known as the K-32 Department of the MOI and its predecessor Ministry of Public Security. Colonel Thai may also be identical with the Colonel Thai who was described by former USMC Private [REDACTED] in his book "Conversations with the Enemy" as in charge of Group 776 and as "the security chief of the DRV."

3. [REDACTED] between April 1975 and June 1977, the MND General Political Department's Military Justice Department (Cuc Quan Phap/MJD) had responsibility for the arrest of former ARVN personnel and provided external guard force personnel for reeducation camps that held ARVN inmates. The MJD, however, was not responsible for maintaining camp records and was not responsible for the interrogation and indoctrination (i.e., education management) of ARVN inmates. During this period, the MOI was responsible for maintaining inmate name lists and records, interrogations, indoctrination,

and the administration of the ARVN reeducation camp system. In June 1977, MJD responsibilities for the ARVN reeducation camp system were turned over to the MOI People's Police Bloc's KH-6 Prisons Management Police Department.

4. PAVN Group 776 was headquartered near Yen Bai City and its subordinate Inter-Camp 1 in Hoang Lien Son Province. Group 776 directed six large reeducation camp complexes (Inter-Camps 1 through 6) in Hoang Lien Son, Ha Tuyen, and Son La Provinces which were established in June-July 1976 and held an estimated 16,000 to 20,000 ARVN/GVN officers and equivalent ranking civil servants. During the period July-September 1978, the Group 776 camp system was closed down after all ARVN/GVN inmates were transferred to central-level reeducation camps administered by the Ministry of Interior (MOI) in the northern SRV.

5. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] they had seen or heard information about a Caucasian male who worked in a support capacity in the Group 776 Headquarters support area. The Caucasian male was reported to be an American who had deserted and chose to remain in Vietnam. He had adopted a Vietnamese name, and lived in a small hut near the Group 776 Headquarters cadre quarters and wore a Group 776 uniform. He had a pet monkey, rode a bicycle or walked unescorted, drove a Group 776 truck, and was in charge of electrical generator maintenance and repair at various Group 776 detention camps. This Caucasian male fits the description of former U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) Private First Class (E-1) [REDACTED] who recounted and described his activities with Group 776 during the period June 1975-March 1979 in his book, "Conversations with the Enemy".

6. At least one former ARVN/GVN inmate of Group 776 Inter-Camp 1 provided information about having seen the above noted Caucasian male, as well as one black man (not further identified) at the Group 776 Headquarters. Camp guards [REDACTED] that both the Caucasian male and the black man had volunteered to remain in Vietnam after the war.

7. The Group 776 camp system was a segregated camp system for ARVN/GVN inmates from the southern SRV. It apparently held no other categories of prisoners in any of its subordinate camps described below. If available, UTM map grid coordinates have been provided. The Group 776 camp system consisted of the following camps as provided by former ARVN/GVN inmates:

A. Inter-Camp 1 (Lien Trai 1/LT-1/IC-1) was located in the vicinity of VJ 8594 about six to ten kilometers west or southwest of Yen Bai City at Viet Hong Village and was under the command of PAVN Lieutenant Colonel Doan Hanh. IC-1 was composed of 14 subcamps (Camps 1 through 14 aka T-1 through T-14) and held about 4,000 ARVN officers and GVN civil servants from the rank of lieutenant colonel upwards. IC-1 initially held 25 ARVN generals and 300 ARVN full colonels. Within several months of arrival however, general grade officers were transferred to the MOI's Central Ha Tay aka T-52 Reeducation Camp and full colonels to either the MOI's Central Ha Tay Camp or the MOI's Central Nam Ha Reeducation Camp. Each subcamp had a 70-man staff, including a 50-man guard force, and held about 300 inmates. T-1 was a French-built prison located near VK 8903. It functioned as a logistics-support processing center for new arrivals, departures, and transfers to other camps. As of June 1976 T-1 held about 180 ARVN privates through lieutenant colonel rank who had been captured before 1975. T-2 was about 45 kilometers southeast of Yen Bai City and held about 2,000 ARVN NCO and enlisted personnel between 1972 and June 1976 who had been captured in Central Vietnam during and after the Tet 1968 offensive and during the 1971 ARVN Lam Son-719 operation in lower Laos. T-3 was located about seven kilometers southwest of Yen Bai City near Viet Hong Village and held 300 ARVN majors and lieutenant colonels. T-4 was located within 10 kilometers of Yen Bai City. T-5 was located near Yen Bai City, and held about 300 ARVN junior grade officers, with two-thirds being military intelligence, military security, psychological warfare officers, and national police/special branch personnel. T-6 was located about 25 kilometers north-northwest of Yen Bai City and held about 250 ARVN junior grade officers until June 1977 when the camp was converted into an agricultural worksite (tea plantation). T-7 was about 12 kilometers southeast of Yen Bai City near Viet Cuong Village and was established in 1972 to handle about 300 ARVN officers who had been captured during the 1971 ARVN Lam Son-719 operation in lower Laos and in Quang Tri Province. T-8 was about seven kilometers northwest of Yen Bai City and held 300 majors and lieutenant colonels. T-9 was about four kilometers from the IC-1 Headquarters. T-10 was about five kilometers west of Yen Bai City and held 300 officers. The location of T-11 is not known. T-12 was about 25 kilometers north of Yen Bai City in Tran Yen District and held 350 ARVN/GVN national police junior grade officers. T-13 was located near T-12. T-14 was about 40 kilometers northwest of Yen Bai City with 300 ARVN officers.

B. Inter-Camp 2 (Lien Trai 2/LT-2/IC-2) aka the Son La Reeducation Camp was located about 15 kilometers north of Phu Yen District Town inside Son La Province near the Hoang Lien Son Province border. IC-2 was composed of seven subcamps (T-1 through T-7) and held about 2,000 ARVN officers, including about 1,200 field grade officers. Each subcamp had a 70-man staff, including a 50-man guard force, and held about 300 inmates. T-1 was a French-built prison near Muong Thai Hamlet, Phu Luong Village, about 15 kilometers northwest of Phu Yen District Town. T-1 was built by the French before 1945 to hold Viet Minh prisoners and was administered by the Ministry of Public Security (now known as the MOI) after 1954, and was the only IC-2 subcamp in existence in June 1976. Before 1975, T-1 was used to hold Thai and ARVN POW's. As of June 1976, T-1 held some 30 ARVN officers who had been captured during the 1968 Tet attack in Hue and during the 1971 ARVN Lam Son-719 campaign in lower Laos. In June 1976, IC-2 T-1 received its first group of 600 ARVN officers who had been shipped from camps in the southern SRV and who were used to build Camps T-2 through T-6. By 1978, T-1 held 300 ARVN majors and lieutenant colonels. T-2 was located near Ba Khe Village and held 300 ARVN majors and lieutenant colonels. T-3 through T-7 were located within five kilometers of each other and held 300 ARVN officers each. T-3 and T-5 also held 300 ARVN lieutenant colonels each. By September 1978, all inmates had been transferred to MOI-administered central-level reeducation camps, and IC-2 was dissolved by PAVN Group 776. Other than the Thai prisoners previously mentioned, there were no foreign prisoners or individuals who appeared to be foreign reported in the IC-2 camp area after 1975 by [REDACTED]

C. Inter-Camp 3 (Lien Trai 3/LT-3/IC-3) aka the Tran Phu Reeducation Camp was located near My Village, Van Chan District, Hoang Lien Son Province. IC-3 was composed of five subcamps (T-1 through T-5), and held about 2,000 ARVN officers (including about 300 ARVN field grade officers). Each subcamp had a 70-man staff (including a 50-man guard force), and held about 300 inmates. There were no foreign prisoners or individuals who appeared to be foreign reported in the IC-3 camp area.

D. Inter-Camp 4 (Lien Trai 4/LT-4/IC-4) was located about seven kilometers north-northwest of Ham Yen District Town near Nhan Muc Village, Ha Tuyen Province. IC-4 was composed of nine subcamps (T-1 through T-9) and held about 3,000 ARVN officers, including about 300 ARVN field grade officers. Each subcamp had a 70-man staff, including a 50-man guard force, and held about 300 inmates. T-1 was located near Bang Coc aka Tich Coc Hamlet, Cam Van Village, Ham Yen District. T-2 was at Nhan Muc Village about seven kilometers north-northwest of Ham Yen District Town. T-3 was at Xuong Lai (Xuan Lai) Village, Yen Binh District, Hoang Lien Son Province. T-4 was at Cam Nhan Village, Yen Binh District. T-5 was about two kilometers north of the Cho Ngoc Ferry Landing in Yen Binh District. The location of T-6 is not known. T-7 was about one kilometer north of Xuong Lai (Xuan Lai) Village, Yen Binh District. T-8 was about two kilometers north of Xuong Lai (Xuan Lai) near Cam Nhan Village, Yen Binh District. T-9 was one kilometer from T-5 near the Cho Ngoc Ferry Landing in Yen Binh District.

described a Caucasian male who was reported to be an American working on the IC-4 electrical generator. This Caucasian male is also believed to be identical with former USMC Private . Other than this individual, there were no other individuals who appeared to be foreign reported in the IC-4 camp area

E. Inter-Camp 5 (Lien Trai 5/LT-5/IC-5) was located near Duong Qui Village, Van Ban District, Hoang Lien Son Province, about 75 kilometers northwest of Yen Bai City. IC-5 was composed of 14 subcamps (T-1B through T-14B) and held about 3,000 ARVN lieutenants and captains. Each subcamp had a 70-man staff, including a 50-man guard force, and held about 200 inmates. T-3B was near Duong Qui Village, Van Ban District, and T-14B was near Than Uyen District Township. There were no foreign prisoners, or individuals who appeared to be foreign, reported in the IC-5 camp area by

F. Inter-Camp 6 (Lien Trai 6/LT-6/IC-6) was located about 25 kilometers northwest of Yen Bai City in Hoang Lien Son Province. IC-6 was composed of at least five subcamps (T-1 through T-5) and held about 2,000 ARVN lieutenants and captains. Each subcamp had a 70-man staff, including a 50-man guard force, and held about 400 inmates. There were no foreign prisoners, or individuals who appeared to be foreign, reported in the IC-6 camp area

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G. The Song Muc Reeducation Camp was located in a remote area of Nhu Xuan District, Thanh Hoa Province, where it was reportedly established in June or September 1977 by PAVN Group 76 (sic) to support the adjacent Song Muc Hydroelectric Plant. During the period June 1977-May 1978 it held some 1,000 ARVN inmates who had been transferred from the Ai Tu Reeducation Camp in Binh Tri Thien Province. Inmates cleared land for the construction of a dam and fish farm. The camp was closed down in May 1978 and the camp site was turned over to the Song Muc Hydroelectric Plant. All ARVN inmates were transferred back to the Ai Tu Reeducation Camp. There were no foreign prisoners, or individuals who appeared to be foreign, reported in the camp area by [REDACTED]

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