

CNO ADM RECKTANUS (3) 17-19 CSAF (GEN TRIANTAFELLU)
(5) 20-24 FILE (1) 25

64872 2-1875

DIA NMCC/MC (ARMY NAVY AIR) [REDACTED]
NIC (DAVIS ONLY) [REDACTED]

STATE/DIR
SERVICE

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CITE YDCS DB-315/04435-71

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COUNTRY

NORTH VIETNAM

DCI

1954 - OCTOBER 1969

SUBJECT

HOA LO DETENTION/INTERROGATION CENTER FOR
AMERICAN PRISONERS IN HANOI

15
COPY NO

ACC

VIETNAM (7 JULY 1970) [REDACTED]

SOURCE

TO STATE : NO DISTRIBUTION EXCEPT TO DR. RAY-S. CLINE
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NAVY ACNO. (INTEL), REAR ADMIRAL RECKTANUS
AIR FORCE AF/IN, MAJOR GENERAL TRIANTAFELLU
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SOURCE

1533
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(classification)

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[REDACTED]

SUMMARY: THE HOA LO CENTER WAS AN INSTALLATION OF THE NORTH VIETNAMESE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SECURITY (MPS) FOR THE TEMPORARY DETENTION AND INTERROGATION OF AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR. AS OF OCTOBER 1969 IT WAS LOCATED ON NGUYEN THONG HIEN STREET IN HANOI AND AT THAT TIME ABOUT 50 AMERICAN PRISONERS WERE DETAINED AT THE CENTER. [INTERROGATORS WERE ENGLISH-SPEAKING NORTH VIETNAMESE MPS OFFICERS, AND DIFFERENT GROUPS INTERROGATED IN THE MORNINGS FROM 0700 TO 1100 HOURS AND THE AFTERNOONS FROM 1400 TO 1700 HOURS.] COOPERATIVE PRISONERS WERE GIVEN SPECIAL PRIVILEGES, AND UNCOOPERATIVE ONES WERE BEATEN. THE MPS INTERROGATORS TRIED TO RECRUIT THE MOST COOPERATIVE PRISONERS BY PROMISING THEY WOULD BE RELEASED TO NEUTRAL COUNTRIES IF THEY WOULD AGREE TO REMAIN IN THOSE COUNTRIES AND ACTIVELY OPERATE AMONG ANTI-WAR GROUPS. PRISONERS WHO REMAINED UNCOOPERATIVE WERE SUBJECTED TO PUBLIC EXHIBITION WHEREVER THE NORTH VIETNAMESE ORGANIZED PRISONER PARADES. PRISONERS WERE GIVEN THE SAME

[REDACTED]

(classification)

(dissem controls)

MEALS AS THE CENTER STAFF. SECURITY AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE CENTER WERE HANDLED BY A 36-MAN MPS SECURITY PLATOON. THIRTY-ONE MPS GUARDS MAINTAINED 24-HOUR SECURITY IN AND AROUND THE INSTALLATION. BEFORE 1954, THE COMPOUND OCCUPIED BY THE HOA LO CENTER WAS THE LOCATION OF AN ELEMENT OF THE FRENCH SECURITY SERVICES. THE AREA WAS TAKEN OVER BY THE MPS IN LATE 1963 OR 1964. END SUMMARY.

1. THE HOA LO CENTER (TRUNG TAM HOA LO) OR THE HOA LO BRANCH (NGANH HOA LO) IN HANOI WAS AN MPS INSTALLATION FOR THE TEMPORARY DETENTION AND INTERROGATION OF AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR. AS OF OCTOBER 1969 IT WAS LOCATED AT VJ38132408 ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF NGUYEN THUONG HIEN STREET, APPROXIMATELY FIVE METERS FROM THE INTERSECTION OF NGUYEN THUONG HIEN AND TRAN DINH TRONG STREETS.

COMMENT: [REDACTED] THE HOA LO CENTER SHOULD NOT BE CONFUSED WITH THE HOA LO PRISON LOCATED AT VJ38132408. THE HOA LO CENTER HANDLED ONLY AMERICAN OFFICERS OF COMPANY AND FIELD RANK, ALL THE PRISONERS WERE PILOTS OR AIR CREW MEMBERS SHOT DOWN OVER NORTH VIETNAM. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] THE CENTER DID NOT HANDLE CAPTIVES BROUGHT FROM SOUTH VIETNAM (SVN). SOME PRISONERS WHO HAD BEEN SHOT DOWN IN THE PROVINCES AROUND HANOI WERE [REDACTED]

(classification)

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- BROUGHT DIRECTLY FROM THE LOCATION OF CAPTURE TO THE CENTER.

[IN OCTOBER 1969] [REDACTED] APPROXIMATELY 50 AMERICAN PRISONERS AT THE CENTER AND ESTIMATED THAT THE COMPOUND COULD HOLD FROM 60 TO 70 PRISONERS AT ONE TIME. NONE OF THE PRISONERS [REDACTED] HAD BROKEN OR AMPUTATED LIMBS AND NONE WAS WEARING A CAST OR USING CRUTCHES. HOWEVER, MOST OF THEM WERE THIN, PALE, WEAK AND DEJECTED-LOOKING.

2. INTERROGATORS AT THE CENTER WERE ALL ENGLISH-SPEAKING NORTH VIETNAMESE OFFICERS OF THE MPS WHO WERE NOT PERMANENTLY ASSIGNED TO THE CENTER. INTERROGATIONS TOOK PLACE FROM 0700 TO 1100 IN THE MORNING AND FROM 1400 TO 1700 HOURS IN THE AFTERNOON. A DIFFERENT GROUP OF INTERROGATORS WORKED IN THE MORNINGS FROM THOSE ON DUTY IN THE AFTERNOONS. NO INTERROGATIONS WERE CONDUCTED BETWEEN 1700 AND 0700 HOURS. [REDACTED] ESTIMATED THAT THE INSTALLATION HAD APPROXIMATELY 10 INTERROGATION ROOMS JUDGING BY THE SIZE OF THE BUILDING, [REDACTED]

DURING [REDACTED] TRIPS TO THE CENTER [REDACTED] SAW NO FOREIGN ADVISERS.

3. [REDACTED] THAT COOPERATIVE PRISONERS WERE GIVEN

[REDACTED]

(classification) (dissem controls)

SPECIAL PRIVILEGES AND UNCOOPERATIVE ONES WERE BEATEN. REWARDS FOR COOPERATION INCLUDED EXTRA FOOD RATIONS AND CIGARETTES AS WELL AS TOURS OF HANOI AND SURROUNDING AREA. THE MPS INTERROGATORS ATTEMPTED TO RECRUIT THE MOST COOPERATIVE PRISONERS BY PROMISING THEY WOULD BE RELEASED TO NEUTRAL COUNTRIES IF THEY WOULD AGREE TO REMAIN IN THOSE COUNTRIES AND ACTIVELY OPERATE AMONG ANTI-VIETNAM WAR GROUPS. THEIR MISSION WOULD BE TO DOWNGRADE U.S. PARTICIPATION IN THE VIETNAM WAR AND ATTEMPT TO SWING WORLD OPINION IN FAVOR OF THE NORTH VIETNAMESE CAUSE. [REDACTED] DID NOT TELL [REDACTED] WHETHER ANY AMERICANS HAD ACTUALLY BEEN RELEASED TO ANY NEUTRAL COUNTRY. UNCOOPERATIVE PRISONERS WERE PROMISED FEMALE COMPANIONSHIP IF THEY AGREED TO COOPERATE WITH THEIR INTERROGATORS. [REDACTED] SAID THAT SUCH TACTICS WORKED WITH SOME, BUT NOT ALL THE PRISONERS. PRISONERS WHO REMAINED UNCOOPERATIVE WERE SUBJECTED TO PUBLIC EXHIBITION WHENEVER THE NORTH VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT ORGANIZED PRISONER PARADES. PRISONERS PARADED THROUGH THE STREETS OF HANOI WERE OFTEN CURSED, STONED AND EVEN BEATEN BY Bystanders WHO BROKE THROUGH THE LINES OF SECURITY GUARDS PROTECTING THE PRISONERS.

4. PRISONERS AT THE HOA LO CENTER WERE GIVEN THE SAME

[REDACTED]

(classification) (dissem controls)

(classification)

(dissem controls)

MEALS AS STAFF MEMBERS. DURING THE MORNING THE PRISONERS RECEIVED A HALF LOAF OF BREAD. AT THE NOON AND EVENING MEALS THE PRISONERS WERE GIVEN A MEDIUM-SIZED BOWL OF RICE, A PORTION OF VEGETABLES AND EITHER FRESH OR CANNED MEAT OR FISH. [THE MEALS AT THE CENTER WERE PREPARED BY FOUR INMATES OF CIVIL PRISONS IN HANOI. AT THE END OF THE DAY THE FOUR COOKS WERE DETAINED IN A ROOM ADJACENT TO THE KITCHEN.]

5. [THE SECURITY AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE HOA LO CENTER WERE HANDLED BY A 36-MAN MPS SECURITY PLATOON. AN MPS ASPIRANT, ONE DEPUTY AND THREE ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL OPERATED THE CENTER. THIRTY-ONE MPS GUARDS MAINTAINED 24-HOUR SECURITY IN AND AROUND THE INSTALLATION. GUARDS ON NIGHT DUTY WORKED SHIFTS OF ONE HOUR ON AND ONE HOUR OFF. TWO GUARDS WERE POSTED AT THE ENTRANCE TO EACH OF THE TWO WINGS OF DETENTION CELLS. [REDACTED] COMMENT: [REDACTED] DID NOT KNOW THE DAYTIME GUARD SCHEDULE OR THE TOTAL NUMBER OF GUARDS ON DUTY AT ANY ONE TIME.] THE ADMINISTRATIVE ELEMENT LIVED IN A BARRACKS FOR MPS CADRES LOCATED NEAR THE CENTER. THE 31 MPS GUARDS LIVED AT THE CENTER AND WERE ALLOWED TO SPEND THEIR LEISURE TIME IN HANOI.]

(clear section)

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6. ACCORDING TO [REDACTED] THE HOA LO CENTER COMPOUND WAS FORMERLY THE LOCATION OF AN ELEMENT OF THE FRENCH SECURITY SERVICES. WHEN THE COMMUNIST REGIME TOOK POWER IN 1954, THE COMPOUND BECAME A CIVIL PRISON FOR NORTH VIETNAMESE CRIMINALS.

[REDACTED] WAS NOT CERTAIN WHEN THE MPS TOOK OVER THIS INSTALLATION,

THE

HOA LO CENTER BECAME AN MPS INTERROGATION FACILITY IN LATE 1963 OR 1964.

7. [REDACTED] DISSEM: STATE (AMBASSADOR BUNKER, DEPUTY AMBASSADOR BERGER, MINISTER COUNSELOR POLITICAL) USMACV. (GENERAL ABRAMS, MAJOR GENERAL POTTS) 7TH AIR FORCE (GENERAL CLAY, BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN) [REDACTED] TO CINCPAC ARPAC PACAF PACFLT [REDACTED]

(clear section)

(insert content)