

9 November 1972

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Reported Death of a U. S. Pilot in Thai Nguyen City,
Bac Thai Province, North Vietnam

SOURCE: An experienced Vietnamese interrogator
at the National Interrogation Center, from [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Although [REDACTED] was
cooperative during interrogation and appeared to be
of above-average intelligence, his reporting reli-
ability has not been established. He obtained the
information from personal observation and conver-
sations with staff members at the Dong Hy District
dispensary.

1. At about 1400 hours on 3 May 1967, [REDACTED] saw an F105
aircraft hit by North Vietnamese anti-aircraft fire during a bombing
raid on the Thai Nguyen Steel Complex in Thai Nguyen City, Bac Thai
Province, North Vietnam. The pilot bailed out in a red and white
parachute and landed near WJ870838 in Lang Luot Hamlet, Thinh Dan
Village, Dong Hy District, Bac Thai Province. He was found two hours
later with both his legs severed above the knees. [REDACTED] believed
he lost his legs in the aircraft during ejection. He was still wearing
his grey flight suit and white helmet when he was found.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

2. The pilot was evacuated to the Dong Hy District dispensary where he was treated for his wounds. Despite the doctor's efforts and a blood transfusion, he died at about 1730 hours. The doctor spoke to him in broken English before he died and learned that he was an Air Force Major of Australian origin. Dispensary officials confiscated his belongings, except for a gold ring and silver wrist watch on his left hand and wrist and a gold chain and cross around his neck. His body was placed in a large wooden coffin and buried near the dispensary on a hill (WJ863847). The grave, marked with a wooden cross, was the only one in the area. The dispensary was subsequently moved because of the bombings in the area, but the grave was still there as of about June 1970 and the mound appeared to have been enlarged.

3. The pilot was a Caucasian. He was about 30 years old, heavy set, weighed about 120 kilos, and was probably an estimated 1.90 meters tall. He had a long, straight nose and short, curly blond hair. His face was slightly round and clean shaven and he had a short, thick neck. During the twenty minutes [REDACTED] observed the pilot in the dispensary, he appeared pale and exhausted as a result of the bleeding from his wounds. /1/ and /2/

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/1/ [REDACTED] was shown the album of photographs of personnel captured and missing in SEA and identified Photo LO11 on Page I-A-212 as closely resembling the dead pilot, although he said that the dead pilot looked older than he did in the photo. The Joint Personnel Recovery Center (JPRC) has seen the information in this report and has evaluated it as follows: "The correlation of this report with JPRC records revealed that during the time frame mentioned, one V105 aircraft was downed in the location given by source. The aircraft was piloted by Captain Joseph J. Karins, Jr., USAF, and was downed by a surface-to-air missile (SAM) at approximately 1430 hours local time. Captain Karins was seen ejecting from his craft and the deployment of his chute was observed. The color of his chute was red and white. He seemed to be unconscious during his descent because he did not hold on to the risers of his chute as is normal during descent. The three main points of interest are A) the time of day mentioned by source is very close to the time of the incident; B) source stated that the color of the chute was red and white, which correlates with the statement of Captain Karin's wingman; and C) the subject did not establish voice contact during descent and seemed to be unconscious, which is indicative of injury. Currently, Captain Karins is carried as Missing in Action by his service."



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GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE OF E. O. 11652. EXEMPTION
CATEGORY 5B (1) (2). IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE DATE OF AUTO-
MATIC DECLASSIFICATION.

