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HQ. OFFICE

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COUNTRY : NORTH VIETNAM (NVN)

SUBJECT : NVN Policy on Prisoners of War and the Draft

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S U M M A R Y

In January 1965 the NVN draft policy was changed to include the 17-35 year olds. Married men were also to be drafted as well as all those without a chronic disease. Prisoners of war (POWs) were all to be given the same treatment, except that the Allied prisoners were supplied with Western food. All prisoners were to be treated well, and if they were molested in any way the offenders name would be forwarded to the HANOI National Defense Center.

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1. Effective January 1965, all youth between the ages of 17-35 were eligible for the draft. Previously those called were only in the 17-25 age bracket. A man with a family was not exempt, nor those with bodily defects not classified as a chronic disease.
2. The village unit cadre disseminated this new policy in his native village of DONG PHONG, in HA BAC Province. The cadre explained that the NVA had suffered many casualties and there was now a shortage of manpower in the liberation forces of SVN and more men were needed.
3. In November 1966, and once every two to three months thereafter, Source received indoctrination on the treatment of POWs by his political officer, KHANH. If any POWs were taken they were to be given good treatment, and their personal items were not to be touched. The wounded POWs were to be immediately treated and evacuated to the rear area. If the POWs were hungry they were to be provided with food. In this aspect, treatment of Allied POWs differed with that of the GVN POWs. Allied POWs were to be given Western food which was kept in supply by the rear service and included such items as rice chicken soup, sugar, and milk, while GVN POWs received the same rations as the capturing unit.
4. No violations of the above policy were seen, since Engineering Company 19 took no POWs. If this POW policy was violated by anyone, the act would be noted in his personnel record which would be sent to the HANOI National Defense Department. He would also be criticized by his comrades.