

31

Page 1  
Denied

Page 1  
Denied

Approved for Release  
Date  NOV 1988

4

**CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY**  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

8 JAN 1963

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** Assistant Vice Director for Collection Management  
Department of Defense  
Director, Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea  
Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs  
Department of State

**SUBJECT:** Sightings of Six Alleged U.S. Prisoners-of-War  
in a Detention Camp Near Thao La Hamlet in  
Northern Laos

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

1. Attached as of possible interest to you is report about the sightings of a total of six alleged U.S. prisoners-of-war at a detention camp in a small valley of Thao La Hamlet, Xous Phan Province, in northern Laos.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Deputy Director for Operations

cc: DCI  
DDCI  
EXEC DIR  
STATE/EAP  
DIA  
NIO/EAP  
NSA

Attachment: Report as stated

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**SUBJECT:** Sightings of Six Alleged U.S. Prisoners-of-War in a Detention Camp Near Thao La Hamlet in Northern Laos

**TEXT:** 1. In late April 1982, a [redacted] saw a total of six alleged U.S. prisoners-of-war (POW's) at a detention camp in a small valley of Thao La Hamlet, Boua Phan province, in northern Laos (grid coordinates 20 degrees north latitude, 104 degrees east meridian). On 26 April [redacted] saw four tall Caucasian men who were said to be U.S. POW's being escorted by two small Asian guards from the prisoners' house of detention to the camp office. On 27 April the same [redacted] saw two blacks who were also said to be U.S. POW's carrying bamboo baskets on their back being escorted up a hill by a guard to carry out their labor duties. [redacted] made the observations from a steep hill at the edge of the Thao La Valley where the detention camp was located.

[redacted] commented that the men they had seen were U.S. POW's. [redacted] said the camp held about 50 such POW's who had recently been transferred to the camp from an unknown location. (Headquarters Comments: Presumably the guards were Lao People's Democratic Republic (LPDR) personnel.)

2. The camp was located across the valley to the southeast of Thao La Hamlet. The house of detention was a long, thatched house with a small front yard. It stood between two smaller houses with walls made of timber, apparently the camp office and guards' quarters. The camp was surrounded by a trench and a fence of closely posted, pointed wood poles. Thao La Hamlet had about 50 small houses located next to a creek.

[redacted] moved along National Route 2-A (sic), or the old Ho Chi Minh Trail, northward to the Luang Prabang Plateau, at about the same parallel as Nam Binh Town in northern SVN. They then moved northeastward for two more days along the T-42 road built by the Pathet Lao circa 1974. [redacted] reached the That Luang River at a point about six kilometers south of the location of the 320th Division. After crossing the river, [redacted] moved northward following the river bank for two days and arrived at a grove of young "Samou" trees, each about three meters high; between them were small bare hills of gypsum. This area was about 50 kilometers southwest of Dien Bien Phu Town in the DRV. After walking about two kilometers through the Samou trees, [redacted] walked one more kilometer through a forest of big trees, reaching a steep hill. Beyond this hill was the Thao La Valley.

