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Report Number: FBIS-EAS-91-142   UDC Number:

Headline: Radio Comments on Photograph of U.S. MIAs

Source Line: BK2307120391 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam in English 1000 GMT
              23 Jul 91

FULL TEXT OF ARTICLE:
1. [Station commentary]

2. [Text] Controversy has been raised by the U.S. press around a
photograph showing three American pilots missing in the Indochinese
war said to be alive. Our radio gives the following views on the
issue:

3. The photograph showing three American pilots missing in the
Indochina war is being much publicized in the United States, causing
controversy among the press on the fate of these American servicemen.
Some say that they are still alive. The producer of this photograph,
still unidentified, affirmed that those servicemen are still alive
and are being detained by the Vietnamese side.

4. These opinions force us to go back to files on this issue.
According to files given to Hanoi by Washington, Air Force Major
Albro Lundy and Navy Lieutenant Larry Stevens were shot down over
Laos in 1966 and 1969 and had been listed as killed in action. Air
Force Colonel John Robertson identified by relatives in the United
States as the third man in the photograph was killed when his F4C
crashed in Hai Hung Province in North Vietnam on September 16, 1966.
A joint Vietnamese-American search in February and March last year
determined that Robertson had been killed and his remains had mostly
been destroyed in the crash. Some of his remains collected at the
place where his aircraft crashed were returned to the United States
October 1 last year. Meanwhile, Robertson's co-pilot Robert Buchanan
had parachuted to the ground and had been captured and later released
to the United States.

5. Evidently, the news about the three American pilots shown in the
photograph much publicized in the United States saying that they are
still alive is groundless.

6. Vietnam has reiterated that all American prisoners of war
captured in the Vietnam war were returned to the U.S. Government
after the Paris Agreement on Vietnam. At present, some figures in
the American political circles have agreed with these conclusions
made by Vietnam.

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7. In its July 21 evening broadcast, the Voice of America quoted
Congressman Stephen Solarz as affirming that the photograph is faked.
He also said that those pilots shot down either in Vietnam or Laos
are no longer alive. Mr. Solarz drew American public attention on
the fact that the photograph made public last week was just an
attempt of the opportunists who were misusing the worriness and
sorrow of American personnel's families.

8. In his visit to Vietnam in May this year, American Senator John
Kerry said that he did not believe the opinion saying the Vietnamese
Government still detains American servicemen from the Vietnam war.

9. Those are crystal facts. As this is a humanitarian question,
Vietnam is ready to cooperate with the United States to make clear
the matter relating to that photograph. Vietnam urges the United
States to ensure that whoever made public the photograph cooperate
with the United States and the Vietnamese Government to clear up the
question.

10. As pointed out by a letter sent to the U.S. by the Vietnamese
Foreign Ministry on July 20, if they refuse to cooperate in the
investigation of this, it would be clear evidence of their
money-making intention in producing the faked photograph and should
be punished and condemned before public opinion for intentional
prolongation of the MIA families' sufferings.

11. Though in the process of settling the MIA question, there has
been many ill-intentioned news reports about Vietnam, Vietnam still
persists in its effort to positively solve the issue. At present,
Vietnam is carrying out joint searches with the United States for
Americans missing in the Vietnam war. So far, Vietnam has on 34
occasions returned to the U.S. 452 sets of remains.