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SRV: DIPLOMATS COMMENT ON PHOTO OF LIVING AMERICAN MIA'S *

BK2CC7115691 HANOI VOICE OF VIETNAM NETWORK IN VIETNAMESE 11CC

GMT 20 JUL 91

TEXT IN VIEW OF THE DEEP CONCERN OF U.S. OPINION OVER THE APPEARANCE OF A MYSTERIOUS PHOTO SHOWING THAT THREE AMERICAN * SOLDIERS PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED AS MISSING IN ACTION DURING THE WAR ARE STILL ALIVE IN INDOCHINA, OVER THE PAST FEW DAYS VIETNAMESE DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES AT THE UNITED NATIONS MET WITH AND ANSWERED QUESTIONS FROM AMERICAN MASS MEDIA, REITERATING OUR * GOVERNMENT'S VIEWPOINT ON THIS ISSUE.

IN THEIR MEETINGS WITH CORRESPONDENTS OF THE ABC, CBS, NBC, AND VISNEWS TELEVISION COMPANIES AND OF THE NEWSPAPER USA TODAY, AMBASSADOR TRAN XUAN BANG, HEAD OF OUR REPRESENTATION TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AND HIS DEPUTY, AMBASSADOR NGUYEN DINH, REAFFIRMED THAT AS PREVIOUSLY STATED TIME AND AGAIN BY THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT, THERE ARE NO PRISONERS OF WAR STILL DETAINED IN VIETNAM. HOWEVER, OUR REPRESENTATIVES ALSO SAID: IN FACE OF THE APPEARANCE OF SUCH INFORMATION, THE VIETNAMESE SIDE IS PREPARED TO COOPERATE IN ORDER TO CONDUCT FURTHER INVESTIGATION AND EXAMINATION. CONCERNING THE CASE OF PILOT COLONEL ROBERTSON, WHO WAS SHOT DOWN IN NORTH VIETNAM IN SEPTEMBER 1966 AND WHO WAS SHOWED IN THE PHOTO, OUR REPRESENTATIVES POINTED OUT: ROBERTSON DIED AFTER HIS PLANE CRASHED AND HIS REMAINS WERE HANDED OVER TO THE UNITED STATES IN APRIL 1990.

OVER THE PAST FEW DAYS, THE PRESS HAS EXPRESSED KEEN INTEREST IN THE PHOTO AND IN THE POSSIBILITY OF AMERICAN SOLDIERS STILL LIVING * IN VIETNAM, LAOS, OR CAMBODIA. HOWEVER, SEVERAL COMMENTATORS, * INCLUDING SOME MEMBERS OF THE U.S. POLITICAL CIRCLES, HAVE EXPRESSED SKEPTICISM OVER THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE PHOTO, SAYING IT MAY BE A FAKE RELEASED TO MAKE MONEY AND INCITE PUBLIC OPINION AT A TIME WHEN THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION ITSELF HAS AFFIRMED THAT NO AMERICAN MIA'S * ARE STILL ALIVE IN VIETNAM.

ACCORDING TO SOME SOURCES, THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY HAS GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE THAT AT LEAST TWO OF THE THREE PERSONS SHOWN IN THE PHOTO ARE DEAD. A PILOT WAS SEEN FALLING FROM HIS PLANE WITH HIS PARACHUTE UNOPEN, AND THE OTHER WAS OBSERVED BY HIS COMRADES AS HAVING DIED AFTER HIS PLANE WAS SHOT DOWN.

20 JUL 1215Z [redacted]

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