



Intelligence Information Report

[Redacted]

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

COUNTRY USSR/North Vietnam

[Redacted]

SUBJECT Interview of a US Citizen by Two North Vietnamese Representatives in North Vietnamese Embassy, Moscow

DATE DISTR. 26 NOV 1970
NO. PAGES 3

[Redacted]

DATE OF INFO. Jan 70

[Redacted]

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

[Redacted]

1. [Redacted] his experiences with North Vietnamese and Soviet officials in Moscow while attempting to learn the fate [Redacted] who was shot down in Southeast Asia in 1967. To the best of my recollection, the following is a detailed account of an interview that took place [Redacted] Jan 70 in the North Vietnamese Embassy, Moscow.
2. The interview with two North Vietnamese representatives lasted exactly one hour and 50 minutes, beginning at 2:00 PM. The higher ranking of the two was Vu Xuan. He was approximately five feet 10 inches tall, narrow shouldered, thin faced, and had short features. His subordinate, whose name is not recalled, was approximately five feet six inches tall, broad shouldered and weighed approximately 160 pounds. The latter was short, squatty and heavysset and not like any other Vietnamese my friend had ever seen. Both men were very cordial during the introduction and offered cigarettes and condiments to my friend and the Soviet interpreter, [Redacted] [phonetic]. The interview was conducted over a coffee table around which sat the four participants.
3. [Redacted] was a last minute substitute interpreter [Redacted] [Redacted] spoke English fluently. Prior to [Redacted] she was employed in the Soviet diplomatic service as a member of Soviet overseas embassies. [Redacted] proved to be most helpful and was responsible for changing the entire climate of the interview. She was provided as a substitute after the Intourist guide, [Redacted] disclosed that she had been forbidden by her supervisors to act as an interpreter during the interview.
4. The first question asked was why my friend had come to Moscow instead of [Redacted] The reply was that it was hoped a more direct approach might bring about a reply to questions [Redacted] There followed a series of rhetorical questions paralleling the communist propaganda line: for instance, "Why did not Nixon stop the war? Why didn't the American people join the peace movements and stop their warmongering ways? Why

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did not Nixon stop the bombing?" Eventually the conversation worked around to [redacted]

5. They wanted to know where [redacted] was shot down. The reply was that he was shot down over Laos. They answered by saying that then perhaps it would be better if inquiries were made at the Laotian Embassy because Laos is a neutral country and North Vietnam has no influence there at all. As soon as it appeared that my friend would not or could not answer them they would hedge and open the discussion anew. They wanted to know who said [redacted] was shot down over Laos. The reply was that a US Marine Corps casualty officer had given the information, but that he was not there, so really no one knew exactly where [redacted] was shot down. Then they asked that if the US Government knew so much why wasn't it asked instead of my friend coming across the globe personally to inquire about [redacted]. The response was that obviously the US Government was not holding him prisoner and if he did in fact survive then he would be a prisoner in North Vietnam or Laos. Every time Laos was mentioned they became quite disturbed. They then asked if it were not possible that the US Government had made a mistake and that [redacted] might not have known where the border was located. It was replied that it was very possible, but it was believed he was shot down over Laos. They then reiterated the question that wasn't it possible the US Government could have been wrong. It was agreed that it was possible, but doubtful.
6. At this point all were at loggerheads and so a list of US MIA's was presented to them for their verification. The list had been obtained from families of MIA's in the US. Their response was one of immediate anger and they indicated that my friend had come to discuss [redacted] they had agreed to discuss him, and they would not discuss anything else.
7. Then they asked if my friend would say [redacted] was shot down over North Vietnam and the reply was that it could not be stated definitely. It was indicated the US Government could have been wrong, but if it was said he was shot down over North Vietnam the statement would not be a truthful one. Xuan then said he could understand the concern of a [redacted] and he realized my friend's family did not start the war and perhaps he should go back home and discuss the problem with Nixon. It was pointed out that the North Vietnamese had seriously hurt their position by their poor treatment of US PW's. At one time many people in the US and elsewhere were against the war in Southeast Asia, but because of the poor treatment accorded the US PW's North Vietnam had lost much support. This statement did not exactly endear my friend to Xuan, but he did not reply directly and only alluded to the fact that North Vietnam had not started the war.
8. Suddenly [redacted] without consulting anyone, said something to Xuan. As if by magic a great change came over the two men. My friend was then asked if he would say that [redacted] could have been shot down over North Vietnam. The reply was in the affirmative because the speed of the aircraft in which he was flying was so great it was possible he could have strayed into North Vietnam without knowing it. At that point both men were all smiles. They asked for a photograph of [redacted] his rank, serial number, all the important facts leading up to the event, what kind of plane he was flying and where he was based. The questions were all answered by writing them down on a piece of paper.
9. My friend was then told he would be notified about [redacted] When asked how long it would take, they replied approximately four to six weeks. My friend asked if he should stay in Moscow to await word. They replied that it would be of no use because the information had to be relayed by mail. It was then suggested by my friend that he be allowed to journey to Hanoi to await word. Again they replied that such a plan would be

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impossible because of the danger to his person and the tense political situation. Xuan further explained that communications between the USSR and North Vietnam were less than they should have been, and the information by necessity had to travel via the mail route. The interview then concluded and the interpreter and my friend left the embassy.

10. It was later learned from [Redacted] that she had told them my friend was really lying about [Redacted] dying over North Vietnam because he was afraid of some form of retribution which might be taken against [Redacted]. This statement changed their entire attitude during the interview and from that point they appeared to be most willing to cooperate. As of 18 Nov 70 nothing has been heard from the North Vietnamese regarding the fate of the downed airman.

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