

July 22, 1975

MEMORANDUM

TO: EA/VN, Mr. Robert H. Wenzel
/s/ Charles L. Gladson
FROM: GC, Charles L. Gladson
SUBJECT: Air Vietnam Flight 499, March 12, 1975 Incident

The law firm representing the family of AID employee George C. Miller has written the attached letter to Secretary Kissinger regarding subject aircraft incident. This letter was referred to GC for response by Administrator Parker.

In discussions with various Air America, Inc. personnel here in Washington, we have learned the following with respect to this incident.

1. On the morning following the incident, Captain E.G. Adams, the then Air America, Inc. station manager at Nha Trang, was requested by the Consul General there to make a low level observation flight of the crash site.
2. According to Captain Adams, the location of the crash site indicated AVN Flight 499's route was such as to bring the plane within the range of a PRG 57MM anti-aircraft facility. By flying at treetop level, Captain Adams was able to observe the crash site without subjecting his observation craft to anti-aircraft fire. Captain Adams concluded from his airborne observation of the wreckage that the plane crashed from a steep rather than a level descent with no hope for survivors under such circumstances.
3. Captain Adams' current address is: 61B Vas Pavlou, Tourkiliman, Greece.
4. Similar information to that set forth above has been furnished by Air America, Inc. to Col. Geoffrey Hitchings,

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the Army Attache at the New Zealand Defense Staff here in Washington, in response to his requests concerning the incident, as a New Zealand national was also a passenger on this ill-fated flight. It is possible that the New Zealand Government may be able to secure additional information as to this crash, as we have been advised that that Government has recently granted diplomatic recognition to the PRG.

Since the GC office is not in the position to make the foreign policy judgments required by paragraph three of the law firm's letter, we would suggest that the VA Desk either use the information contained in this memo to draft an appropriate response to the letter, or that you furnish us with the information required to respond to paragraph three of the attached letter.

Attachment

GC/P&C:GBisson