FIR-317/09060-73

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COUNTRY SOUTH VIETNAM

DOI LATE 1966

SUBJECT SIGHTING OF BODIES OF A U.S. AND A VIETNAMESE CREW MEMBER OF AN L-19 RECONNAISSANCE PLANE IN DUC THANH DISTRICT, PHUOC TUY PROVINCE, SOUTH VIETNAM

U/I

AOO

SOURCE

[redacted]

Encl 11 (S-47,607/00[illegible])

[redacted]

[redacted]

1. AT ABOUT 2200 HOURS ONE DAY IN MID-SEPTEMBER OR MID-OCTOBER 1965, THE 1ST AND 3RD BATTALIONS, DONG NAI REGIMENT, VIET CONG (VC) 5TH DIVISION, ARRIVED AT THE CRASH SITE OF AN L-19 RECONNAISSANCE PLANE AT YS464691, DUC THANH DISTRICT, PHUOC TUY PROVINCE, SOUTH VIETNAM. THE CRASH SITE WAS ABOUT NINE KILOMETERS SOUTHWEST OF THE VIETNAMESE ARMY (ARVN) BINH GIA MILITARY BASE IN DUC THANH DISTRICT. THE TWO VC BATTALIONS HAD BEEN SENT THERE TO AMBUSH U.S. AND GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM (GVN) FORCES THAT WERE EXPECTED TO SEARCH THE AREA FOR THE CREW MEMBERS OF THE L-19. [redacted] SAW THE BODY OF A U.S. CREW MEMBER AND ALSO THAT OF A VIETNAMESE AT THE CRASH SITE. BOTH BODIES WERE BADLY BURNED. [redacted] SAID THAT THE U.S. CREW MEMBER WAS A CAUCASIAN.

2. PERSONNEL OF THE VC 84TH REAR SERVICE GROUP, SOUTH VIETNAM LIBERATION ARMY HEADQUARTERS WERE GUARDING A RICE STORAGE AREA ABOUT 30 METERS FROM THE CRASH SITE. THEY STATED THAT ON THE PREVIOUS DAY

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THE L-19 HAD ATTACKED THEIR RICE STORAGE AREA FOR ABOUT 15 MINUTES AND THEN CRASHED. THE STORAGE AREA PERSONNEL DID NOT KNOW WHY THE PLANE CRASHED SINCE NO ONE HAD FIRED ON THE AIRCRAFT. THEY ALSO SAID THE PLANE BURNED WHEN IT HIT THE GROUND. THEY REMOVED THE BODIES FROM THE PLANE WRECK AND PLACED THEM ABOUT THREE METERS AWAY.

3. THE TWO BATTALIONS REMAINED IN THE AREA UNTIL 1600 HOURS THE FOLLOWING DAY AND THEN LEFT SINCE NO U.S. OR GVN FORCES APPEARED IN THE AREA. THE COMMANDER OF THE DONG NAI REGIMENT TOLD THE STORAGE AREA PERSONNEL TO BURY THE BODIES AFTER THE BATTALIONS DEPARTED. [redacted] SAID THAT HE WOULD BE WILLING TO LEAD JOINT CASUALTY RESOLUTION CENTER (JCRC) PERSONNEL TO THE CRASH SITE AND WOULD BE ABLE TO LOCATE IT UNLESS THERE HAD BEEN A MAJOR CHANGE IN THE TERRAIN.

4. [redacted] COMMENT: THE JOINT CASUALTY RESOLUTION CENTER (JCRC) EVALUATED THE REPORT AS FOLLOWS: INFORMATION AS PRESENTED PRECLUDES CORRELATION, SINCE JCRC RECORDS INDICATE THAT DURING THE PERIOD 1 JANUARY 1966 TO 19 DECEMBER 1969 NO FIXED WING TYPE AIRCRAFT (INCLUDING L-19'S) WERE LOST IN GRID SQUARE YS. SOURCE'S INFORMATION SHOULD NOT BE DISCOUNTED, SINCE IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE CREW MEMBERS OF THE L-19 WERE RECOVERED. IF THIS WAS THE CASE,

THEN WHY IS ONE BEING RPTD DEAD

[redacted]

JCRC WOULD NOT HAVE ANY RECORD CONCERNING THE INCIDENT.)

5. FIELD DISSEM: DEFENSE ATTACHE FOR JCRC REPRESENTATIVE IN SAIGON: SENT TO CINCPAC (FOR CINCPAC AND POLAD ONLY) USSAG AND