SECRET

RESTRICTED

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Excised Under the Provisions of (The Freedom of Information Act) 5USC552 (b) 1 & 6

FOI CASE NO. 86-FOI-72

Document 1 of 1 Documents

#368

SECRET

TO MG LEUER ONLY

SUBJECT: Possible American/Allied POWs in South East Asia

1. (S) Since July of 1982 it has become increasingly evident that there are westerners living in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

2. (S) Though this particular issue has been clouded, by numerous misguided "experts" attempting "private" rescue attempts, the basic facts remain the same.

3. (S) [redacted]

4. (S) [redacted]

5. (S) [redacted]

6. (S) [redacted]

7. (S) [redacted]

CLASSIFIED BY: AC of S J3

DECLASSIFIED: OADR

~~NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION~~

SUBJECT: Possible American/Allied POWs in South East Asia.

[redacted]

8. (S) [redacted]

9. (S) [redacted]

10. (S) [redacted]

11. (S) [redacted]

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3.

SUBJECT: Possible American/Allied POWs in South East Asia

[redacted]

12. (S) [redacted]

13. (S) [redacted]

14. (S) [redacted]

15. (S) Lastly, I desire to state, emphatically, that there never has been any type of unilateral operation planned by the US SFD-K. This type of rumor is based strictly on wrong assumptions or pure rumor. MAJ Mark A. Smith and all members of the Special Forces Detachment-Korea, know who they work for, The US Army.

Mark A. Smith
MARK A. SMITH
MAJ, IN
Commanding

NO FOREIGN DISSEM

SUBJECT: US POW/MIA

Source has in his possession the following:

a. Partial Parachute harness with pack/delivery date of 1970 stenciled inside.

b. Small bag of bones (Human/Animal?)

c. ID Tag; [redacted]

Incl #1

FOREIGN DI

SUBJECT: US MIA/Laos

1. The attached provides information on AC-130 crash site near Phine Laos. Unlike the report filed by JCRC Bangkok, there is no mixing of crash sites.

2. Wedding band offered to JCRC Bangkok for amount paid by informant; $350.00 US dollars. Offer refused by JCRC Bangkok.

1 Incl
as

Incl #2

NO FOREIGN

[redacted] In the one case, a wedding ring, inscribed with the alledged MIA's [redacted] name, was found. At the same crash site, near Phine, Laos, asset reports [redacted] (5) bodies in cockpit of AC-130 Spectre Gunship. The prop# 71170, matches [redacted] of AC-130 Spectre, shot down in Dec 1972. Inscription on wedding band, [redacted] Love Forever [redacted] matches name of crew members wife.

SUBJECT: US POWs in Laos

1. The attached is a lift from an intelligence report filed with [redacted] in Dec 1983.

2. [redacted]

1 Incl
as

Incl #3

NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION

SECRET

Incl 1 to Memorandum for Record POW/MIA Southeast Asia (S)

SUBJECT: [redacted] (S)

1. (S)

2. (S)

3. (S)

4. (S)

5. (S)

6. (S)

[redacted]

NO FOREIGN

SUBJECT: US POW

1. This individual filled out and signed this biographical sketch. It was signed after the US government determined KIA.

2. This individual is described as over 60 years old and alive in Laos. The amount of information provided on Biographical sketch indicates an adherence to the Code of Conduct.

3. It is believed that [redacted] is named after this individual.

1 Incl
as

Incl #5

NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION

property of prisoner

[redacted]

SUBJECT: US POW

The below named individual is said to be a POW in Laos;

NAME

[redacted]

NUMBER	SERVICE	BLOOD TYPE
[redacted]	USMC	B

Source:
SMITH/McINTIRE FILE

Incl #4

[redacted]

SUBJECT: [redacted]

1. The attached report was filed with the [redacted] in late September 1983.

2. Paragraph 7 again asks that MAJ Smith, SFC McIntire be the only individuals involved.

1 Incl
as

Incl #6

NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION

SUBJECT: [redacted]

1. (S) [redacted]

2. (S) [redacted]

3. (S) [redacted]

4. (S) [redacted]

5. (S) [redacted]

6. (S) [redacted]

7. (S) The sources of the above information are considered to be high level and reliable. They insisted that ONLY Maj Smith and SFC McIntire be involved in these discussions.

SECRET

SUBJECT: [redacted]

The attached is an intelligence summary on an AC-130 crash site in Laos. It is self explanatory and was filed in late 1983, [redacted]

1 Incl
as

Incl #7

NO FOREIGN DISSEMINAT

~~SECRET~~

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, EIGHTH UNITED STATES ARMY
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96301

CJ-SWC-SF

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: (S) AC 130 Crash Site in Laos

1. (S) [redacted]

2. (S) This information was bought by two (2) magazine reporters for a sum of $400.00 dollars. They, without releasing the story, took these items to LTC Mather, US Embassy Bangkok. LTC Mather said that it was not a high priority crash site and that US Government policy was to not pay for information. He, further recommended that the two reporters go to the LAO Embassy and ask the communists for permission to visit the crash site. "If they were that interested." He also recommended that the agent be encouraged to gain more information on the crash site.

3. (S) [redacted]

4. (S) It is obvious that the data obtained from this crash site was valuable to the identification of and possible recovery of US personnel missing in Laos. Further, the name of the one airmans wife, inscribed inside the wedding ring, is conclusive as to the identity of the flier, when coupled with the data plates etc..

CLASSIFIED BY: ACofS, J3

DECLASSIFIED ON: OADR

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NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION

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SUBJECT: Chronology on POW/MIA from Various Sources.

The attached is self explanatory.

1 Incl
as

Incl #8

SECRET

12 JAN 81: Variety of sound report USG possession of Fort Apache, "B-52" ELINT, and SATINT of POW compound near MAHAXAY, LAOS.

1 MAR 81: "Bo" Gritz and "Operation Velvet Hammer" begin training in Leesburg, FL.

26 MAR 81: "Velvet Hammer" story breaks in Chicago Tribune. Op aborted.

1 APR 81: Alienated "Velvet Hammer" team members brief SOF on Gritz INT and approach. SOF agrees to "long-term investigative analysis and action."

1 JUN 81: SOF team arrives in Thailand; preliminary in place investigations begin.

AUG 81: George Brooks (Pres. Natl. League Of Families) visits JCRC/BKK re: POW/MIA. CBS coverage.

JAN 82: Former Lao Gen. Phoumi turns over remains of LTCMDR Nick Brooks to JCRC. CBS

FEB 82: Richard Armitage (DoD) visits Hanoi. NBC, TIME, AP, UPI

MAR 82: Live POW scare (Phoumi Adelia Bernard & others) liaise w/JCRC & Phoumi. (This development monitored closely by DIA, CIA, DoD and State--Armitage et al. Expensive preps to recieve in place near MEKONG, SKN and NKP.

APR 82: POW scare dissipates: Aussie TV buys bogus CBW from Phoumi.

APR 82: CBS confirms two U.S. Congressmen (LeBoutiller & Hindon) were in BKK re: POW/MIA matters--returned to Washington.

SEP 82: NLF visits VIANTIANE and C-130 crashsite near PAKSE, LAOS. NLF travels to HANOI, DRVN. (ABC) State hails trip as "major breakthrough" for MIA progress. NLF reiterates they are convinced DRVN "withholding" evidence and info.

OCT 82: DRVN returns four sets of remains to JCRC.

NOV 82: 1st Gritz raid into LAOS from THAT PHANOM, THAILAND after months of preps in NKP, BKK and CONUS. US EMB/BKK aware of Gritz et al., as were RTA and Thai BPP. Must assume USG aware at all levels, including White House. Must assume RTA, Thai BPP confused and/or misled.
Gritz mission late November a fiasco: firefight and m. [illegible] Zappone temporarily MIA in LAOS.

DEC 82: SOF informed from THAILAND of Gritz raid and aborted mission.

DEC 82: US EMB/BKK, DIA, JCRC, et al. fully aware of Gritz mission. SOF informs US EMB and RTA. SOF is not involved in any way.

31 JAN 83: Gritz story breaks in the Bangkok Post. (Zappone returned to Thailand late DEC or early JAN, was present at NKP when story broke.)
(Gritz later claims "2nd mission" launched 30 JAN 83 from THAT PHANOM, one day before the story broke.)

[illegible] Reagan speech to NLF Convention: "Your long vigil is over. [illegible] matter of highest national priority." He states US intel assets are focused on the issue.

NO FOREIGN DISSEM

16 FEB 83:	After "2nd mission" blown Trimmer and Tandelick are arrested at NKP with illegal radio equipment. Freed on bond posted by Loh Tharaphant.
MAR 83:	Gritz, Goldman and Weekly surrender to police at NKP. Trial. 2 years suspended sentence. Gritz et al. depart Thailand.
MAR 83:	"Routine" JCRC visit to VIANTIANE, LAOS turns into a "lecture on Gritz."
22 MAR 83:	Gritz Hearing/HR Foriegn Relations Sub-Committee on Asian and Pacific Affairs. Steven J. Solarz, (D-NY). No evidence produced.
13 MAY 83:	Gritz, Goldman and Trimmer return to Thailand to "scout movie locations." (Assume mission was to liaise with Lao to recover Classified Litton DCT radio equipment: indications this was accomplished.)
31 MAY 83:	Trimmer delivers tape from Gritz to Bangkok Post and Nation stating "evil forces at work." BKK PST reports "Gritz Back." Gritz leaves Thailand.
3 JUN 83:	Gritz holds press conferance in HK.
5 JUN 83:	SOF recieves "Gritz Letter" addressed to Lao, dated 28 DEC 82, requesting return of Zappone and "Critical Equipment List."
24 JUN 83:	Two UNK caucasians and "Thai woman" reported by reliable private asset to have crossed into Laos 8 JUN with a large quantity of medical supplies, 26 hand-radios, two PRC-25's, money and uniforms for a "troop" of 100 Lao to "standby" near PHINE, LAOS, for further instructions and/or to recieve US team in that area. This group met with Lao Gen. Khambou 11 JUN and returned to Thailand 15 JUN. (Must assume Gritz connection as UNK group used Gritz agent net and assets.)
24 JUN 83:	Also reported by same source that Thai General Pachum (RTA 33) delivered quantity of wpns to Lao guerrilas south of That Phanom.
29 JUN 83:	Reliable SOF asset reports from NKP re: possible crashsite near PHINE, LAOS. Asset sends written info to BKK: Xsite coord, five bodies intact in forward (cockpit) section, #71170, and an inscription on a gold wedding ring "B14K Love Forever [redacted]" Lao agent sent back to site for more info, but not to recover bones.
JUN 83:	Above information turned over to JCRC/BKK immediately. Within four days JCRC indicates "extreme interest" and asks for more info. A/C confirmed by JCRC as AC-130 "Spectre" shot down in Dec, 1972. #71170 matches prop #. Inscription matches crewmans wife's name. "14-15 people on board...a real crowd-burner." We suggest no action be officialy initiated until the safe return of the Lao agent. ETR three-four weeks.
JUN 83:	DRUN returns 11 remains to JCRC.
28 JUN 83:	Sec. of State Geo. Schultz in BKK states "USG would support [illegible] efforts with a good chance of being effective (re: MIA).

O FOREIGN DISSEMINATION

CHRONOLOGY: Page Three)

16 JUL 83: BKK PST rpts "MIA Theory Gets A Boost." Testimony by LTG James Williams, Dir. DIA, (before HR FA A&PA SC--Solarz) "A sighting by an indochinese refugee...passed lie detector... firmest evidence yet." (POW/MIA)

21 JUL 83: Hatcher (CBS), Mather and Bell (JCRC) and myself meet at Neil's Tavern to discuss guidance and advice now that the La agent is overdue and presumed lost. JCRC/Mather suggests we SOF&CBS) "might do better, as journalists, if we approach LPDR directly with the info, because JCRC cannot initiate a sudden change in crashsite visit requests already pending."

AUG-OCT HATCHER (CBS) IN EUROPE, MATHER (JCRC) IN D.C., AND I'M IN U.S. NO ACTIONS INITIATED BY CBS OR SOF DURING THAT TIME.

SEP 83: Independent, non-productive meeting with Lane and Chuck Towbridge (DIA) at Pentagon re: above.

19 OCT 83: Gold ring, and two data plates from the AC-130 site were turned over to SOF for $475. Lao assets also report a new crashsite of a "jet."

21 OCT 83: Gold US-style florentined ring inscribed as above are shown t JCRC/BKK.
New xsite info is: "Bloodchit" #418038, recovered from a "jet Other items from the new xsite include: Pilot's pistol, log-book, high-school ring, watch and dataplates.
Lao want 5,000 Baht for recovery attempt-win or lose; and 35,000 Baht upon recovery. SOF/CBS decision is to wait for guidance and advice.

11 NOV 83: SOF letter to NSC/Childress.

25 NOV 83: USAF BG Aderholt (Ret.) and Hatcher (CBS) meet with Mather (JCRC). "Bloodchit" confirmed as "backseater" from an F-4. No identity provided by JCRC, no guidance re: AC-130 site actior

NOV 83: Word reaches BKK via reliable Lao assets that "someone" is is trying to get our people." One asset is arrested inside Lo but is released after three weeks at THAKHEK, LAOS.

DEC 83: CBS & SOF formally apply for LPDR visa.

23 DEC 83: C-130 xsite near PAKSE, LAOS, is visited by Harvey (CO JCRC), Mather, Bell and others. (Same site as NLF SEP 82 visit.)

26 DEC 83: LPDR states JCRC recieved bodies from xsite. JCRC "Mum."

~~SECRET~~

SUBJECT: POW/MIA Incursion by James "BO" Gritz (S)

1. The Incl was filed with [redacted] in 1983.

2. There is also a general scenario of how [redacted] was looking for POW/MIA.

3. The guidance to pursue this area came from [redacted]

4. Information; numerous sources.

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Incl #10

ANNEX D

SUBJECT: POW/MIA Incursion by James "Bo" Gritz in Laos (S)

REFERENCE: Gritz OPLAN/Intelligence Summary, "Operation Lazarus". (S)

1. (S) A number of sources provided information on the attempts by retired Special Forces LTC Gritz to obtain, through direct action, the release of alledged POWs in Laos.

2. (S) All Thai military personnel who are familiar with the operations of Gritz assumed that he was representing the US Government. This was based on his continuing statements that he had been sent by the President of the United States.

3. (S) The first indication that something was amiss was the fact that Gritz's team had only semi-automatic weapons. Scott Weekly, the so called "Dr Death" on the operation was said to have modified the UZI's to fire automatic. This was stated by some as fact and discounted by others. In any event the communications equipment possessed by the team gave them credibility. It was sophisticated and generally would only be available to US government agencies.

4. (S) The Gritz OPLAN and intelligence summary are poorly written and full of "Jingoisms". They are not of sufficient detail to launch a "Strike" operation into a denied area. Gritz continuously alludes to Thai/US government support for his operations. His stated intention was to get on the ground in Laos, locate and rescue live US POWs and then notify the US Fleet that he desired to be picked up. The problem was that at the time of Gritz's incursion, the fleet was seven days sailing time away from his operational area.

5. (S) [redacted]

6. (S) Major Smith was approached on this matter because of his background as a POW. The Thais may have felt that his presence was an indication that the US government was serious about POWs/MIAs.

7. (S) [redacted]

8. (S) [redacted]

CLASSIFIED BY: ACofS J-3
5 Aug 83
DECLASSIFIED ON: 5 Aug 89

9. (S) It should be understood that MAJ Smith made no commitments or comments on what he was told. He only agreed to pass on the information he was given.

Mark A. Smith
MARK A. SMITH
MAJ, IN
Commanding

Incl
Intel Report (Laos)
Intel Summary and Situation
Report: Opn LAZARUS
Map Sheet (Gritz overlay)
NE 48-1 IndoChina and Thailand
1:250,000, Series L50.

SECRET

SUBJECT: [redacted]

1. The information attached is a direct lift from SFD-K intelligence report provided to [redacted] on 1 Feb 1984, SUBJECT: US POM/MIA in South East Asia (S).

1 Incl
as

NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION

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Incl #11

4. (b)

[redacted]

SECRET

SUBJECT: Pathet Laos Military SITREP as of 19 Aug 83.

1. The attached is not translated and has been provided to no one.

2. [redacted]

1 Incl
as

Incl #12

NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION

SECRET

SUBJECT: Intelligence Summary/Situation Report/MAP: James "Bo" Gritz Original

The attached is the plan for the ill conceived/planned operation by one James "Bo" Gritz.

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Incl #14

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY AND SITUATION REPORT:

OPE...TION LAZARUS

From James 'Bo' Gritz

27 November 1982

A. INTRODUCTION: This summary is compiled with the expressed intent of providing those persons with a need-to-know an overview of the personalities, places, and events within Southeast Asia comprising the current effort to resolve the POW/MIA issue evolving from the Vietnam War. OPERATION LAZARUS is designed specifically to liberate U.S. POWs being held captive against their will by communist forces in Southeast Asia and to return remains of those MIAs that become available for identification. This multifaceted mosaic, when collectively pieced together, knits a coherent blueprint for accomplishing this bold and ambitious plan.

Intelligence has been gathered which pinpoints POW locations; targets have been selected based upon vulnerability, accessibility, and chance of success; the U.S. team selection was based upon availability, willingness to commit, and experience; indigenous assets were filtered through a maze of test-challenges to weed out those with low potential. The results focus upon three distinct areas of effort: [redacted] The third effort seeks identifiable U.S. MIA remains from all sources.

This summary shall explore each of the areas identified so the reader may understand who, what, where, when, why, and most importantly <u>how</u> OPERATION LAZARUS <u>can</u> succeed.

B. ASSUMPTIONS: [redacted] Careful planning has blended high technology, special operations experience and audacity with existing unconventional warfare potential in the local area into a precision intensive mission that can succeed if properly supported.

Finally, it is assumed that once liberation has been accomplished the U.S.G. will follow up with strong, positive initiatives that will resolve the POW/MIA issue with a final and accurate accounting. [redacted]

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5 Aug 83
DECLASSIFY ON: 5 Aug 89

28.

C. U.S. POW SITUATION:

[redacted]

D. KEY INDIGENOUS PERSONALITIES

[redacted]

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NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION

[redacted]

(cont'd)

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[redacted]

E. CONCEPT OF OPERATION:

1. RECOVERY AND IDENTIFICATION OF REMAINS: Receive from any source remains that have supporting information; such as dog tags, ID cards, tail numbers, crash sights, etc., for shipment to the JCRC ID lab in Hawaii. Initial expenses will be paid up to a maximum of 2,000 ฿ Thai, until positive ID established. Then a bonus of 8,000 ฿ Thai, for a total of 10,000 ฿ Thai ($444.00 U.S.). This program to be worked concurrently with the two POW liberation plans. [redacted] While distasteful to buy back our dead and in many cases the remains of Asians, $444.00 U.S. is a small price to pay to resolve an MIA family's anguish regarding the fate of their loved one.

2. [redacted]

(Cont'd)

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All avenues of finesse should be explored and worked in conjunction with the forced liberation. Failing actual freeing of U.S. POWs through finesse, the ID and intelligence on numbers and locations can be used later in negotiations to resolve the POW issue.

3. [redacted]

4. ALTERNATIVES: If the Executive Branch has a better plan for liberating U.S. POWs that plan should be made known ASAP to the field team so proper support may be rendered. The team can provide photogrpahs, locations, numbers, enemy, weather, terrain data, LZ-DZ information; pathfinder operation in support of U.S. ground effort, route control, diversion, stay behind, auxiliary, underground operations, attack and control of limited objective hard points; guides, infiltration-exfiltration overland; target assessment and other on-order type missions.

The purpose of OPERATION LAZARUS is to liberate U.S. personnel being held against their will by the communists, not to add to the population of POWs. While bold, the plan of attack has been carefully balanced around the calculated risk. The risk is high, but if success was not equally high we would not risk our freedom and embarrassment to our country. OPERATION LAZARUS will succeed if the U.S. government will commit itself to getting these warriors out with the same zeal it committed them during the Vietnam War. Facing truth and reality will find the U.S. emerging a stronger nation while showing our military they are part of our society, not apart from it. The POWs went and did what others

(Cont'd)

NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION

feared and fled from. We have embraced those who failed to go—let us now provide a final embrace for those we left behind and save them from the despicable fate of dying alone and in the hands of our enemies.

F. SUMMARY: This overview should be combined with all of the intelligence reports and situation summaries generated during the past three months of operation. OPERATION LAZARUS is not simplistic in its approach to freeing U.S. POWs and should not be lightly dismissed as an amateur effort to do what is best left to professionals. The author has extensive experience planning and conducting unconventional operations of this nature and has served in key positions on both the Army General Staff and Office of the Secretary of Defense. There is an acute appreciation for both the political and public sensitivity as well as the international ramifications involved. Having considered the entire scheme of players and possible results, it was decided to do whatever was required to bring an honorable and timely end to an issue that has dragged on without measurable progress for 10 years. Obviously, there must be a change in dynamics. Certain high level intelligence officials were concerned enough about the issue to allow unofficial efforts through the private sector. General Tighe sawed the limb off behind him at retirement by stating, in his personal assessment, we had left POWs behind. Now the President, NSC Advisor, and Secretary of Defense have all lamented that there are servicemen alive and in captivity.

It was not my intention, originally, to involve myself with something I had put behind me, but I was commissioned to verify the existence of U.S. POWs. I preferred to believe that there were none, as it would have been convenient and I could have resumed my military career. Unfortunately, there are U.S. POWs still alive and although fired from from my position as private sector rep', as a human being I cannot quit my comrades. Like it or not the U.S.A. is going to have to deal with the adversity, no matter how inconvenient it may prove to be. I have total faith in President Reagan, but I also know that legions of faint hearts separate him from difficult issues. Careful steps have been taken to insure the gate-keepers do not shut this out and that those self-centered cynics do not get a chance to vote.

I and those who join me are betting our lives that America will measure up to its responsibility. It is time the POWs came home. I intend to do everything within my power to accomplish that end by the close of this year. I do not believe the United States is my enemy. I intend to do everything I can to cooperate and coordinate this effort with Executive desires. It just needs to be finished and if I and my people don't do it, I don't know anyone in Washington who will. It takes action and both Teddy Roosevelt and John Wayne are dead. Hopefully, like the name of this operation, their spirit and resolve lives today in the heart of our President, resurrected as those declared dead by our system soon will be.

JAMES G. 'BO' GRITZ
COMMANDER
OPERATION LAZARUS

[redacted]

(Cont'd)

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[redacted]

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5 Aug 89

39.

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Incl #16

NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION

-EKK FRI 17 JUN 83

[redacted]

POSSIBILITY THAT SERIAL NUMBERS WERE REMOVED LEAVING ONLY MODEL NUMBER.

SECRET
NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION

[redacted]

QUESTIONS:

1. If the USG is concerned about these forays of Gritz why has nothing been done to curtail his activities?

2. [redacted]

3.

4.

5.

NOTE:

1. [redacted]

2. SECRETARY OF STATE GEORGE SHULTZ WAS QUESTIONED IN BANGKOK TUE 28 [illegible] SAID THE US "WOULD SUPPORT ANY EFFORTS HAVING A GOOD CHANCE OF BEING EFFECTIVE." HE LATER CLARIFIED THE STATEMENT BY SAYING THE USG DOES NOT "CONDONE CROSS-BORDER FORAYS (alà Gritz), AND THINKS SUCH FORAYS ARE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE."

3. [redacted]

4. SHULTZ ALSO STATED THAT DRUN "HAD MIA REMAINS WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN RETURNED."

REVIEW OF INFORMATION:

1. [redacted]

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