

Widow Paid \$6,473 By U.S. in Beret Case

By Michael Neal

Reuters

SAIGON, Oct. 5 — The United States has paid \$6,473 in compensation to the wife of the alleged murder victim of the Green Berets, the U.S. Command announced today.

Pham Kim Lien, wife of Thai Khac Chuyen, accepted the money from U.S. officials today in the form of a "missing person gratuity" of 763,800 South Vietnamese piastres, the command said.

The money, described as "full settlement" for the "disappearance" of her husband, was equivalent to about 40 months of Chuyen's salary. Mrs. Chuyen had asked for an indemnity worth 20 years of his salary.

A command statement said Chuyen, 31, who had worked as an interpreter for the U.S. Special Forces (the Green Berets) had been missing since June 20 — the day eight Green Beret soldiers allegedly killed him.

After the charges were dropped and the eight left for the United States Wednesday, the distraught Mrs. Chuyen, 30, petitioned the U.S. Em-

bassy for compensation and threatened to commit suicide by fire with her two children, aged 14 months and 31 months.

The compensation announcement simply said that Chuyen had "been missing since June 20, 1969, while on duty with the first Special Forces, Detachment B-41, Mochoa, Republic of Vietnam."

Mrs. Chuyen said she last saw her husband June 13, after he returned to his home in Saigon for two days from Mochoa, in the Mekong Delta province of Kientuong.

'In the Missing Category'

Sources close to the case, who alleged Chuyen was a dangerous double-agent in the pay of Hanoi, said his body was tied in a bag, weighted and dumped into the South China Sea near the Vietnam Special Forces headquarters at Nhatrang.

A U.S. military spokesman, while admitting Chuyen was the same man the Green Berets were charged with killing, said, "We have no evidence

that Mr. Chuyen is dead. He is in the missing category."

The U.S. Command's statement said the settlement, handed over in the presence of her attorney, "was mutually agreed upon and represents what was determined to be adequate compensation to Mrs. Chuyen."

Asked how the precise figure of 763,800 piastres was reached, the spokesman said each claim was considered individually on its merits.

"The amount of compensation is arrived at taking into account an untold number of factors," he said.

The compensation paid to Mrs. Chuyen could set a precedent for further claims. But an American Embassy spokesman said tonight he did not regard it as a precedent. Previous payments had been made to the families of South Vietnamese missing in action while serving with Americans, he said, although the sums had been lower.

"A Few Lousy Bucks"

"By Vietnamese standards Mrs. Chuyen's compensation was very high, but by our standards it was very low," he said.

"We're dodging the issue of what happened to Chuyen, and for a few lousy bucks it will help to sooth any ruffled feelings among the Vietnamese."

However, the spokesman conceded that Mrs. Chuyen's case may lead to a series of claims, both fraudulent and legitimate.

The English-language Saigon Post said today that a Vietnamese man, Ngo Huong, had accused the Special Forces of having killed his

son, also an interpreter with the Green Berets, in the Central Highlands on Jan. 2, 1967.

The Post said he had refused an offer from the Americans of 80,376 piastres (about \$685), the equivalent of one year's salary, because the compensation was "too small for the life of a human being."

The address of Huong given in the Saigon Post does not exist and reporters were unable to contact him to verify his statements.



United Press International

Green Beret Capt. Leland Brumley Jr. and family at Oklahoma City news conference. He said he was "shocked and disbelieving" when arrested in Vietnam.

Rivers Said To Force Beret Halt

NEW YORK, Oct. 3 (AP)—Murder charges against eight Green Berets were dropped after Rep. Mendel Rivers (D-S.C.) threatened to have three of the men testify publicly before his House Armed Services Committee, Time magazine reported today.

The magazine said in its current issue that Rivers brought pressure on Secretary of the Army Stanley Resor, Deputy Defense Secretary David Packard and Defense Secretary Melvin Laird in an attempt to have the men freed.

Finally, according to the account, Rivers told President Nixon's congressional aide Bryce Harlow that he would "give three of the Berets a chance to rebut all charges in public hearings before his committee."

Time said Rivers also "reminded" Harlow that he was "a chief advocate" of the president's ABM authorization bill, then before the House.

Time also reported that Rivers quarreled "sharply" with Resor over the matter. It said that both Packard and Laird "seemed unhappy with Resor's stand," but did not want to overrule him. Resor himself finally announced the dropping of charges, saying the CIA refused to allow its agents to testify. Time called this "only a pretext, and a transparently clumsy one at that."