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Inquiry Said to Be Suspended in Green Beret Case

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Aug. 12 (UPI)—The civilian lawyer for one of the eight accused members of the United States Special Forces said today that the military authorities had temporarily suspended hearings to determine whether the men should be court-martialed on charges of murder in the mysterious case of a missing South Vietnamese.

At the same time the lawyer, George Gregory of Cheraw, S. C., complained about what he described as inhuman conditions at the Longbinh military stockade, where his client, Maj. Thomas E. Middleton Jr. of Jefferson, S. C., has been confined.

Mr. Gregory spent about three hours with Major Middleton at the stockade, about 15 miles north of Saigon. At a news conference yesterday, Mr. Gregory said it was obvious that the alleged murder victim had been a double agent working for the United States Central Intelligence Agency and for the North Vietnamese.

[Reliable Government sources in Washington have insisted the Central Intelligence Agency had no connection with the case.]

Six other Special Forces, or Green Beret officers, including Col. Robert B. Rheault of Vineyard Haven, Mass., former commander of all Special Forces in Vietnam, and a sergeant are being held at Longbinh pending the result of the investigation.

The others are Maj. David E. Crew of Cedar Rapids, Iowa; Capt. Leland J. Brumley of Duncan, Okla.; Capt. Budge E. Williams of Athens, Ga.; Capt. Robert F. Marasco of Bloomfield, N. J.; Chief Warrant Officer Edward M. Boyle of New York City, and Sgt. 1st Cl. Alvin L. Smith Jr. of Naples, Fla.

Mr. Gregory said the investigation is to determine whether the Army would hold a general or special court-martial or dismiss the case.

"I suppose this suspension is to work out the attorney thing," said the 31-year-old lawyer who was a boyhood chum of Major Middleton. "I don't know how long the sus-

pension will be for, but the pretrial investigation is about half finished."

Mr. Gregory said he was more interested right now in the condition of Major Middleton and refused to comment about the other accused men.

"I measured my client's cell very carefully today," he said. "It's 7 by 5, with a tin roof and hot as hell. The metal cot leaves only a foot between it and the wall and there's a foot-square peephole. He has to bang on the door if he wants to go to the lavatory."

Saigon Sees Link to Spy Net

SAIGON, Aug. 12 (Reuters)—Reliable sources today said that there was a link between the Green Beret case and the recent report that a spy ring had been discovered by the South Vietnamese police in the presidential palace.

The sources said the victim had been an agent paid by the Central Intelligence Agency who also worked for Hanoi as head of an international espionage cell in the office of President Nguyen Van Thieu.

The Vietnam Commander of the United States Special Forces Col. Robert B. Rheault, has been relieved of his command and faces possible charges of premeditated murder and conspiracy to commit murder. Six of his officers and a sergeant face the same possible charges.

The United States Army has refused to go into details, other than to say the charges arose out of the alleged shooting of a Vietnamese near the coastal town of Nhatrangon, June 20.

Huynhvan Trong, a political adviser to President Thieu, was reported arrested this month on charges of having associated with a Vietcong spy ring that had contacts in Hong Kong, Laos, Cambodia and France.

He was jailed with 65 other persons. Police sources said they believe the leader of the spy ring was an official of higher rank than Trong.

Reliable sources said they believed this official was an agent employed both by the Central Intelligence Agency and by the South Vietnamese intelligence service and had access to the highest level of information.

*see this file
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