



Associated Press

FEARS HUSBAND WAS VICTIM: Mrs. Phan Kim Lien with 13-month-old son, Thai Quoc Viet, during interview Thursday in Saigon. She said husband, Thai Khac Chuyen, who had worked for Special Services, was missing since he was called to Green Beret office June 13.

Wife Tells of Last Hours Of Reported Beret Victim

By JAMES B. STERBA
Special to The New York Times

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Aug. 22—An American official was reported to have paid a visit today to a woman who fears that her husband was the victim of the slaying in which eight United States soldiers have been detained.

The official, who did not identify himself, went to the Saigon home of Mrs. Phan Kim Lien, who appeared yesterday at the United States Embassy with a four-page letter seeking information on the whereabouts of her husband, Thai Khac Chuyen, and the circumstances in the case of the eight Special Forces soldiers. The visit was reported by Mrs. Lien.

Mr. Chuyen, who had worked since 1965 for the Special Forces, or Green Berets, was summoned to a Special Forces liaison office in Saigon on June 13, and has not been seen since, according to Mrs. Lien and Mr. Chuyen's brother, Thai Khac Chuong.

Mr. Chuong said that the American visitor had told them to address their query about the missing man to the top legal officers of the Military Assistance Command in South Vietnam.

Mr. Chuong, who thinks his 31-year-old brother was the victim of the reported slaying, said the family would seek the help of the South Vietnamese Government in bringing the eight Special Forces soldiers to trial before a Vietnamese court if the Army drops the charges against them.

Mr. Chuong and Mrs. Lien said that their attention was drawn to the Special Forces case last week by a Vietnamese language newspaper's account of a news conference held by George W. Gregory, a civilian attorney for one of the Special Forces officers. Mr. Gregory identified the reported victim as a Chu Ven Thai Khac.

Since Americans often erroneously scramble family and given names, Mr. Chuong visited several newspapers to find out whether Mr. Gregory had been talking about his brother, whose disappearance seemed to fit closely some of the circumstances reported in the Special Forces case.

In an interview at her brother-in-law's home in Saigon today, Mrs. Lien said she did not think her husband was a double agent, as the reported

* See SFChronicle/UPI
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victim in the Special Forces case was said by Mr. Gregory to have been.

Not the Type for Secrets

"I am sure my husband could never make a good agent because he was so hot-headed, so straight-forward, and he would lose his temper easily," she said in Vietnamese to a translator.

"He is not the type of man who can keep secrets or get secrets," she added.

Mrs. Lien, who was married to Mr. Chuyen in 1966, said her husband began working for the Special Forces in 1965. He went on several missions with the Special Forces along the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos.

After his marriage he was assigned a unit in the city of Tayninh, about 60 miles northwest of Saigon near the Cambodian border. Later he quit the Tayninh unit and joined another in the Mekong River Delta, she said.

On June, she went on, Mr. Chuyen received an order from the Special Forces to appear at the liaison office called Camp Goodman, in Saigon, the next day. She said her husband returned to Saigon, went to Camp Goodman June 12 and returned home that night at about 7 P.M. with two Americans and a Vietnamese. The four stayed for about five minutes and then left for Camp Goodman, she said.

Recommendations Due

An Army investigation into the case closed with a final hearing yesterday. Recommendations on whether to proceed with a court-martial are being drafted, the Army says.

Regardless of the outcome, legal officers said, the South Vietnamese Government has no jurisdiction because of an agreement signed in 1950 by both Governments. *

An American Embassy spokesman said today that he expected no comment from American officials on Mrs. Lien's letter. She also presented copies to South Vietnamese officials.

After the American official's visit today, Mr. Chuong said that he and Mrs. Lien would lodge a protest against the United States Embassy for having asked them to write another letter to Army legal officers.

Mr. Chuyen returned home

alone, tired and angry, at about 11 P.M., she said. "I am worrying why I am required to pass another polygraph test," his wife reported him as having said. "They asked me questions like I was a VC."

Mr. Chuyen told his wife that one question his interrogators kept repeating was: "Have you gone to North Vietnam any time in 1964 or 1965?"

The next morning, June 13, Mr. Chuyen went to Camp Goodman again. A note written by him was delivered to his wife that afternoon.

It read in part: "Saigon, June 13. To my darling and my two cherished children, I have to go on a mission for a few days. Don't worry. I want to wish all of you good health and happiness. Kisses."

Mrs. Lien said she had not seen or heard from him since.

Army spokesmen have reported that the victim in the Special Forces case was fatally shot and dropped in the South China Sea on June 20. No body has been found despite an extensive underwater search.

Release of Captain Asked

ATHENS, Ga., Aug. 22 (UPI)—A petition was filed today in behalf of Capt. Budge E. Williams, one of the eight detained Special Forces soldiers, demanding his release from custody.

The petition asserted that the Army had failed to prove any wrongdoing in an investigation just concluded in South Vietnam. It was filed by Guy B. Scott, a lawyer, and sent to Maj. Gen. G. L. Mabry Jr., Commander of American Support Troops in South Vietnam, under whose jurisdiction the investigation was conducted.