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Evidence of S. Viet
tiger cages

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WASHINGTON — Newly declassified Red Cross reports contain evidence of brutality against prisoners held by the South Vietnamese government during the war, and supports allegations made in 1970, that the captors used "tiger cages" as punishment, the Washington Post reported in its Sunday editions.

The U.S. government knew at the time of the brutality, which was sometimes fatal, the Post said, because the State Department routinely got copies of the reports. The reports backed up by interviews with Red Cross and U.S. officials, were made available to the Post under terms of the Freedom of Information Act.

In general, the Post said, most facilities were given satisfactory to good grades by Red Cross observers. It also said no facility run entirely by Americans ever was given a wholly unfavorable grade.

The worst conditions found by the Red Cross, which was not allowed to visit North Vietnamese camps holding American prisoners, were found at Phu Quoc, the Post said.