

Laos POW List Includes Only 7 GIs

By Michael Getler

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North Vietnamese officials in Paris yesterday provided the United States with a list of American military men captured in Laos, but the list that had been anxiously awaited contained the names of only seven men.

The State Department said it had also received the names of three civilians—two Americans and a Canadian—captured in Laos.

U.S. officials expressed disappointment with the size of the list. Presidential adviser Henry A. Kissinger said in a television interview that the United States would seek clarification from North Vietnam.

Reaction to the accounting contrasted markedly with reaction to two earlier lists of 555 U.S. prisoners captured in North and South Vietnam which were viewed as at least providing more substantial information.

The Pentagon had previously listed only six military men as known captives in Laos, and two of those showed up on the earlier lists provided by Hanoi in Paris last Saturday of those held captive in Vietnam.

But the Defense Department had also listed 311 other military men as missing in action in Laos—including many airmen lost over the Ho Chi Minh supply trails in nine years of bombing—and it was hoped and expected in some quarters that the POW list for Laos would have been considerably longer and thus account for some of those previously listed as missing.

Unlike the earlier lists provided by Hanoi, the Laotian accounting failed to contain names of any men who may have died in captivity. On those earlier lists, Hanoi had accounted for another 55 U.S. POWs who had died in captivity in Vietnam.

Pentagon spokesman Jerry W. Friedheim, in releasing the names to newsmen yesterday reflected disappointment in the small size of the Laos list and read a statement that "the U.S. government will continue its efforts to account for all U.S. military personnel who have been carried by the

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Chief Vietcong delegate on the Joint Military Commission arrives in Saigon.

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United States as captured and missing."

Friedheim refused to go beyond that statement and say whether the North Vietnamese had claimed that the seven-man list accounted for all the men held in Laos.

Other U.S. officials said yesterday that there was clearly more uncertainty on the completeness of the Laos list than on those covering North and South Vietnam, though they also stressed that they were not characterizing those earlier lists as complete.

On the other hand, there has been no indication from

the North Vietnamese that the lists of POWs in Vietnam were not complete.

Friedheim also refused to speculate on whether the North Vietnamese or their Pathet Lao allies might be holding back on additional names while the U.S. bombing in Laos continues, as does Communist military activity.

Three of the seven military men whose names were received yesterday previously had been listed as known prisoners by the Pentagon, while four had been carried as missing in action.

The State Department said it would also seek

"clarification and information" on four other American civilians believed held captive in Laos but missing from the new lists.

Both military and civilian lists were provided to U.S. authorities in Paris by the North Vietnamese, who stated that they were informed "by the Lao Patriotic Front that these personnel had been captured in Laos."

The seven military men held in Laos raise to 562 the total of U.S. POWs acknowledged by Hanoi to be alive in Communist prison camps in North Vietnam, South Vietnam and Laos and who presumably will be returned before the end of March under terms of the cease-fire accords.

Still unaccounted for, however, are about 54 men previously listed by the Pentagon as known POWs who have not shown up on any Communist list thus far, and roughly 1,265 other men who had been previously listed as missing by the Pentagon—including those in Laos—and who have also not been accounted for by the

Communists.

The seven POWs captured in Laos and now in prison camps somewhere include six Air Force officers—Lt. Col. Walter M. Stischer, Maj. Edward W. Leonard Jr., Maj. Norbert A. Gotner, Capt. Stephen G. Long, Capt. Jack M. Butcher and Capt. Charles F. Riess—and Navy Lt. Henry J. Bedinger.

The three civilians are Ernest Cary Brace, 41, an American pilot for a charter airline named Bird & Son; Samuel Allen Mattix, 20, an American missionary identified as working for the Christian Missions in Many Lands, and Lloyd Dudley Opper, 20, a Canadian identified with the same mission group.

In a related matter, it was also reported yesterday by Soviet journalist Victor Louis that some U.S. POWs were actually held prisoner in the southern Chinese province of Yunnan near the North Vietnamese border, under elaborate schemes to make the Americans believe they were still in North Vietnam.

Friedheim said that type of claim has been heard before but that the United States "never had any evidence to make us think it was true."

Aside from demands for more information on men missing from the north, the United States will attempt to carry out its own searches under terms of the cease-fire accords and also hopes to learn more about the fate of men still missing from debriefing of returning prisoners.

Pentagon Lists POWs

First Thought Missing

The following men, previously listed in Pentagon records as missing, have been named on lists received in Paris as prisoners of war:

- ARMY**
 Astorga, Jose M., Sp.5.
 Brande, Harvey G., Sp.5.
 Drabic, Peter E., Sgt.
 Flora, Carroll E., Jr., Sgt. 1C
 Frank, Martin S., S. Sgt.
 Kerns, Gall M., M. Sgt.
 Malo, Issail F., Pfc.
 McMurry, William G. Jr., S. Sgt.
 Miller, Roger A., Chief Warrant Officer.
 Reegar, William S., S. Sgt.
 Tabb, Robert E., S. Sgt.
 Thompson, Dennis L., Sgt. 1C.
- NAVY**
 Agnew, Alfred H., Lt. Cdr.
 Paige, George C., Lt. Cdr.

AIR FORCE

- Acosta, Hector W., 1st Lt.
 Alpers, John H. Jr., Capt.
 Baker, David E., Capt.
 Bates, Richard L., 1st Lt.
 Brunson, Cecil H., Lt.
 Camerota, Peter P., Capt.
 Cook, James R., T. Sgt.
 Cusimano, Samuel B., Capt.
 Gauntt, William A., Capt.
 Giroux, Peter J., Capt.
 Henderson, William J., Capt.
 Klomann, Thomas J., Capt.
 Labeau, Michael H., Capt.
 Lafelle, George F., Lt.
 Latham, James O., Capt.
 Lewis, Keith H., Capt.
 Lollar, James L., S. Sgt.
 McMurray, Frederick C., Capt.
 Morgan, Gary L., S. Sgt.
 Mott, David P., Capt.
 Murphy, John S. Jr., Capt.
 Nagahiro, James Y., Lt. Col.
 Ratzlaff, Brian M., Capt.
 Shingaki, Tamotsy, Maj.
 Sponevberger, R. D., Capt.
 Wilson, William W., Lt.
 Young, Myron A., Capt.
 Zuberbuehler, Rudolph U., Capt.

MARINE CORPS

- Chus, Frank E. Jr., S. Sgt.
 Helle, Robert R., Sgt.
 Kroboth, Alan J., 1st Lt.
 Thomas, William E. Jr., Ch. War. Officer.

The following men, previously listed on Pentagon records as missing, have been identified as having died while in captivity:

ARMY

- Shark, Earl E., S. Sgt.
 Smith, William M., Sgt.
 Varnado, Michael B., Ch. War. Officer.

AIR FORCE

- Diehl, William C., Maj.
 Dodge, Ward K., Col.
 Heesen, Keith R., Lt. Col.
 Newsom, Benjamin B., Col.
 Pemberton, Gene T., Col.
 Schmidt, Norman, Col.
 Sijan, Lance P., Capt.
 Weskamp, Robert L., Capt.

The following men, previously listed on Pentagon records as having been killed in action, have been identified as having died while in captivity:

ARMY

- Bennett, Harold G., Sgt.
 Cannon, Francis E., Cpl.
 Eisenbraun, William F., Capt.
 Knight, Billy, Sgt.
 Parks, Joe, Sgt. 1C.
 Port, William D., Sgt.
 Roraback, Kenneth M., M.-Sgt.
 Schuman, John R., Maj.
 Soultier, James J., S. Sgt.
 Tadio, Leonard M., S. Sgt.
 Versace, Humbert R., Capt.
 Walker, Grier J., Maj.
 Williams, Richard F., 1st Sgt.
- MARINE CORPS**
 Burns, Frederick J., Sgt.
 Grislett, Edwin R., Sgt.
 Sherman, Robert C., Sgt.