

INTERVIEW WITH VIETNAM WAR PARTICIPANT

W FILE / SUBJ. W/
DATE / SUB-CAT.

Circa Spring 1966

NAME DOS-93 (PAVN)

BACKGROUND Member of Duc Long II Battalion, 250th NVA Regiment

(Phuoc Long province)

SOURCE US Department of State

HISTORY OF THE VIETNAM WAR ON MICROFILM

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FILE	SUBJECT
DATE	SUB-CAT.
3/66	

U.S. Department of State: 1968

Working Paper on the North Vietnamese Role in the War
in South Vietnam

Paper No. 93

Interrogation of a member of the DUC
Long 2 Battalion, 250th Regiment of the North
Vietnamese Army. He deserted and turned him-
self in to South Vietnamese forces in Phuoc
Long Province in the spring of 1966.

I - Biographical data:

- Date and Place of Birth: 1940 at HANOI.
- Education: VC 6th grade.
- Political affiliation: None
- Ethnic: Vietnamese
- Combat achievements: None
- Marital status: SINGLE
- Brothers & sisters: 3 persons.

II - Past activities:

- 21.- 1940 - 1954
1948: Spent childhood with parents at HANOI and attended school.
- 22.- 1955 - 1966
1956: Worked
Late in 1958: Employed by a company at HANOI.
Early in 1960: Selected by the Commerce agency to attend a 6 month Primary Business Course.
In July 1960: After Graduating from the Primary Trading course, Source was employed by an Agency in HANOI.
In April 1965: Drafted into military service for the purpose of liberating South Vietnam (1) Source and 500 other people gathered at NHAN DAN theater.

Later they moved to HANG CO railroad station where a train took them to the 312th Division's cantonment area. Here everyone was issued: pack, mosquito net, blanket, cup, mat and hat. These draftees later moved by foot to TAN TIE Hamlet, CAP TIEN Village, PHU BINH District (THAI NGUYEN) where they lived with the local people and received training on infiltration tactics.

Note: After their arrival at DAI BINH Hamlet² (called by VC TAN TIEN Hamlet) Senior Capt CHUC announced the activation of the 602nd Battalion.

On 9 July 1965: Upon completion of a 3-month training period, the 602nd Battalion departed for SVN under the designation of BA DINH/Group 250A.
The Group was composed of 500 men (including source) and was headed by Sr Capt. CHUC, Group leader.

In Oct 1965: The Battalion arrived in South Vietnam and settled at BUI CI, MAP forest, in PHUOC LONG Province.
Source contracted malaria and stayed behind for treatment. He joined his unit 2-months later.

January 1966: The 602nd Bn, cover designation BA DINH/Group 250A was redesignated DUC LONG 2nd Battalion, subordinate to Military Region 6.

23.- Reason and Circumstance for returning

231.- Reason for returning
Source realized that the VC cadre in NVN made false statements by saying that 3/4 of SVN had been liberated.

(1) Source stated that in addition to the normal military draft, North Vietnam had also enforced the enrollment for SVN liberation and the International enrollment.

In truth during 5-months of travelling, he had not seen any South Vietnamese. Source lived under hardship and difficulties in the forest, not having enough rice to eat or even corn or manioc. Because of these hardships decided to leave the VC ranks.

232.- Circumstance for Returning:

During a trip made to purchase food, Source took advantage of the absence of a guerrilla security guard cell to sneak away. When he reached the road he encountered a Special Forces convoy. He laid down his weapon and raised his hands signaling the convoy to stop. He was then brought to HO BON (PHUOC LONG) at 1000 hrs, where he requested to return to the Government.

24.- Source's desire

Source wished to be employed by the Government in some factory or in a Communist counter-propaganda mission. He promised to actively carry out any mission assigned.

III - INFORMATION OBTAINED

31.- The Infiltration Group 250A

311.- Group 250A

General:

Source heard the designation Group 250A late in June 1965 when he filled out a biographical card before leaving for South Vietnam. At that time the Company cadre instructed that Group 250A be put on the card as the unit's identification. "602nd Battalion/Group 250A/VIET BAC Military Region." Source had no information concerning Group 250A except that the Political Officer was Major BINH TRONG (1).

In April 1965, a number of military men living in HANOI, and a few young men, were called to join the military service for the purpose of liberating SVN. The above people, totalling about 500 persons gathered at the NHAN DAN theater. Later they moved to HANG CO railroad station where a train took them to the 312th Division's cantonment area at THAI NGUYEN Province. They received necessary military equipment before moving by foot to TAN TIEN Hamlet, CAP TIEN Village, PHU BINH District (THAI NGUYEN). Here Senior Captain CHUC, the Battalion Commander, announced the activation of the 602nd Battalion, and that a training course was to be given in infiltrating SVN.

(1) A check with interrogation report of another member of Group 250A who returned in Oct 1965 at DUC LAP District revealed that Major NGUYEN DUC LAU alias TRONG was the Assistant Leader to Group 250A. Source (NGUYEN VAN NHU) stated that Major BINH TRONG infiltrated South with the 602nd Battalion. Major TRONG is a North Vietnamese, 40 years old, 1.62m tall, handsome, base, fair complexion, he had a slow speaking manner.

Cadre: (2)

Battalion Commander: Senior Captain CHUC
 Battalion Executive Officer: Captain DOA
 Political Officer: VU THI LOAN (3)
 Assistant to Military Staff: Lt. HONG
 Adjutant: Sergeant LUY (4)

Troop strength: 500 men

Weapons:

- 3 75mm RRs
- 3 81mm mortars
- 3 60mm mortars
- 12.7mm MFs (quantity unknown)
- A quantity of RPD AR's, AK SMG'S and CKC rifles

Composition:

- Infantry Company
- 1 Combat Support Company
- 1 Battalion Headquarters composed of specialized elements, such as: 1 Signal Platoon and 2 Recon. Squads.

3121.- 1st Co./602 Letter box number 6622BK

Cadre:

- Company commander: Captain HUNG alias HAI
- Company Political Officer: Captain LUNG alias LEO

Troop strength: 100 men

Weapons:

- 1 81mm mortar
- 1 60mm mortar
- 4 B.40
- 3 RFD AR's
- unknown number of AK SMG's and CKC rifles

Composition: 3 Platoons

NOTE: All heavy guns such as mortars and B.40's are assigned to the 1st Platoon

3122.- Signal Platoon/Bn Hqs

Platoon Leader: CHAU (rank unknown)

Equipment: 1 15watt radio
 (details unknown)

- (2) The cadre names corroborate with what was stated by Returnee LE VAN TAN, PFC, member of the 2nd Squad/1 Platoon/3 Company/ D.I Bn/Group 250A.
- (3) This man replaced GIANG in Dec 1965. GIANG was believed to be the Chief of Rear Service Staff, Mil. Region VI.
- (4) This man replaced Lt. HONG who joined with 400 men of the 602nd Bn to carry out combat activities in Region VI (?)

313.- Training period and duration

The training period lasted more than 2 months (from 20 April to 7 July 1965) with a program consisting of the following subjects:

Weapons: Training was given on the weapon to be used by a soldier.

Tactics: Attack - Ambush and counter operation.
 Source was of the opinion that none of the above training subjects were of particular importance. Normally the training was conducted at company level and sometimes at Battalion level.

Political training:
- Situation in SVN
- Balance of forces
(details in following report)

- 3124.- Training location
During Infiltration training the 602nd Bn was quartered in local houses at DAI DINH Hamlet (called TAN TIEN Hamlet by VC) in PHU BINH District (THAI NGUYEN Province). The Battalion usually conducted the training near a pine hill.
- 3125.- Description of DAI DINH Hamlet
Most of the houses in DAI DINH Hamlet were of a thatch roofed construction, 15m apart. The size of the house was the determining factor in billeting the Battalion but no house held more than one squad.
- 3131.- Instructors
The 602nd Battalion was given infiltration training by the personnel of the Army Officer's School.
Cadre of personnel being trained were also given the opportunity to assist in training their units.

W. J. S. V. M. L. S. J. R.
it was recommended that it should be designated after the BAC SON triumph during the Resistance. It was agreed that Group 250A be called BAC SON Group.

Due to the fact that the 602nd Bn was composed of individuals living in HANOI city, this unit was also designated after BA DINH, therefore the 602nd Battalion was called the BA DINH Battalion.

Before leaving Senior Colonel TRUNG wished all members good health and successful completion of the assigned mission.

315.- Route of Infiltration

On 9 July 1965: at 1300 hours, the 602nd Bn alias BA DINH Battalion/Group 250A composed of 500 men headed by Senior Captain CHUC, departed from the Military Political School/VIET BAC Military Region. They boarded a special train and headed South, passing HANG CO railroad station (in HANOI), HA NAM Station, NAM DINH and Stations. At this point the bridge had collapsed and the infiltrators crossed the river by ferryboat, before taking another train. They arrived at CAU CU station (THANH HO Province). Here they travelled by foot through and arrived at Station #20. They stopped at this station for 2 days and left all equipment of NVN Origin. The Battalion continued to move South, passing over mountain 1001, route #9, through Laotian territory and the VC region in KONTUH Province.

In mid-Oct 1965: The Battalion arrived in SVN and set up its cantonment near BUI GLA HAP forest, at YU.280430, in PHUOC LONG Province, 3 Kms from the CAMBODIAN-VIETNAMESE border.
Source developed malaria and stomach trouble. He stayed behind for treatment until Dec 1965 then rejoined his unit.

3151.- Results of US and RVNAF bombings on the route

On 20 Aug 1965 while Source's 602nd Bn was moving on a strategic road in LAOS, US and RVNAF aircraft conducted a bombing (location unknown). The Battalion was camouflaged well enough to pass through a clearing, longer than 1 kilometer, when the bombing suddenly occurred

Results Known:

- 7 men killed (4 soldiers of the 1st Company/602nd Bn and 3 engineer soldiers working on a bridge)
 - 3 men wounded (members of the 1st Company/602nd)
- These soldiers were returned to NVN.

316.- Activities of the 602nd Bn

The Battalion stayed for 2 months at YU.280430, near BUI GIA MAP forest for recuperation, awaiting the sick members to catch up.

On 15 Jan 1966, about 200 healthy cadre and soldiers commanded by Senior Captain CHUC moved to another location, reported by Source's companies as Region 7 (?) Late in Jan 1966, another group (strength unknown) left for an unknown destination, under the direction of LUNG cover name LEO, the Company Political Officer.

NOTE: Any changes to the Battalion during this period was unknown to Source because he busied himself with the purchase of vegetables and seldom stayed in the unit.

317.- Plan of Operation of the 602nd Battalion

While in North Vietnam, this Battalion formulated the plan of liberating the remaining territories and population of Vietnam. Its main intention consisted of carrying out combat actions in SVN, however, the Battalion had not participated in any battles.

As yet no information was obtained concerning the 602nd Bn's healthy soldiers assigned to other units (destination unknown).

318.- Supply of weapons and provisions3181.- Weapons

The quantity of weapons brought from NVN was not expended and so the Battalion had not been resupplied.

3182.- Provisions

- Along the route of infiltration rice was furnished by the Commo-liaison stations, sometimes after having passed 3 stations and at times 7 stations. It seemed that the supply element was calculated in advance and an additional quantity was given before the rice supply became exhausted.

NOTE: On one section of the infiltration route located within QUANG DUC Province, the 602nd Battalion was not given rice, corn, or manioc and as a result many soldiers died of starvation.

- In South Vietnam, when the cantonment was constructed at BUI GIA MAP forest, in BO DUC District (PHUOC LONG) and again when it was at SUOI KAT, in PHUOC BINH District (PHUOC LONG) the 602nd Battalion had its men purchase food at the Montagnard villages near the cantonment area.

NOTE: As a result of Source's illness, he could only rejoin his unit in Dec '65 at BUI GIA MAP forest. His mission was to purchase vegetables. He did not know where the rice was purchased. However, Source was informed that the rice was procured at the nearby Montagnard villages and also near the Cambodian border, 3 Kms from the unit's cantonment area.

When the unit was located at SUOI KAT, near THUAN KIEM land development area (PHUOC BINH - PHUOC LONG) Source had to purchase salt, fish sauce and dry fish from a commercial bus coming to BUDOP from PHUOC BINH District. Whenever he stopped a bus, 3 local guerrillas assumed protection.

Another man of the 607th Bn, named PHEP was in charge of buying pork from THUAN KIEM land development area.

32.- Other infiltration groups

321.- 603rd Battalion

When Source attended the Infiltration training course at PHU BINH District (THAI NGUYEN) he met some soldiers of the 603rd Battalion during the mail runs made to the District.

Because many members of the 602nd Battalion became sick, the Battalion arrived late at QUANG DUC and the 603rd Battalion had overtaken his unit during the infiltration trip.

(other details unknown)

322.- 605th Battalion

In January 1966, some sick companions left on the route had rejoined the unit and reported that the 605th Battalion was in KONTUM Province.

(other details unknown)

323.- The 607th and 609th Battalions (1)

When Source's unit was located at SUOI KAT in PHUOC BINH District (PHUOC LONG), he had met about 100 men and they said they were the sick members of the 607th and 609th Bns on recuperation. They also disclosed that they would return to QUANG DUC upon recovery.

During the distribution of food, Source often heard LONG (2) mentioning the designations of DUC LONG 7 and DUC-LONG 9.

Therefore Source thought that DUC LONG 7 was the cover designation of the 607th Bn and DUC LONG 9 was the cover designation of the 609th Bn.

33.- VC units in South Vietnam

331.- LIEN DAI 10 (?)

During infiltration, when Source arrived at KONTUM, QUANG DUC he came across a VC unit (company size) which was reportedly subordinate to LIEN DAI 10 (*)

About 2 Battalions of this unit were in QUANG DUC to carry out combat actions, coordinated with the 603rd Battalion.

Source had himself seen the above unit twice near the edge of BUI GIA MAP in Dec. 1965, at YU.300450.

- (1) DANG TRONG, leader of the 6th Squad/2 Platoon/3 Company/607th Bn returned on 24 Sept. 65 to KIEN DUC Sub Sector (QUANG DUC), stated that the 607th Battalion cover designation NCO QUYEN Group infiltrated on 20 June 1965.

- (2) This man was the Chief of the Receiving Station located BUI GIA MAP forest. He was responsible for issuing money and distributing provisions to various groups on recuperation.

- (*) Source recollected having heard the LIEN DAI 10's soldiers say that their unit was the NVN 555th Division infiltrated at the end of Dec 1964 to KONTUM.

The OB records do not have the 555th Division but only the 325th Division, NGUYEN VAN DONG cover name THOY, member of the 4th Sqd/2 Platoon/23rd Transport Co./95th Regt/325th Div. He returned to

- LUON HC () on July 65, made a statement showing the same period of infiltration and area of activity in SVN: from that we may deduce Source's mistake in hearing 325th and 555th. However as said, returned DUNG from the 95th Regt/325 knew only the cover designation LIEN TINH 10 in June 1965 but there was no LIEN DAI 10.

332.- UNIT 840

It was unknown to which Hqs UNIT 840 belonged. However, when Source was at SUOI KAT (PHUOC BINH District, PHUOC LONG Province) he was informed by the 603rd Battalion's soldiers that this unit belonged to the District Force. (Which District was unknown).

UNIT 840 was composed of local people who were familiar with all geographical features, and would guide the way for the Main Force unit. (details unknown).

34.- Information on North Vietnam.341.- VC units in North Vietnam3411.- City Security Guard Division

HANOI City had a Security Guard Division commanded by Senior Colonel LE HIEN.

Early in 1965, this Division was called the City Headquarters.

(details unknown).

342.- Damages Caused by Bombardment in NVN

Before July 1965, when Source was still in NVN, he was informed as follows concerning damages caused in NVN by US and RVNAF bombings:

- Phosphate factory at PHU THO Province, completely destroyed.

343.- RA Gun positions:

On the outskirts of HANOI City there were 2 RA gun positions. They were medium sized RA and heavy RA weapons.

(Source had not come close to the emplacements and cannot give a detailed description)

- 1st location: On both sides of the road between HANOI and THAI NGUYEN, at WJ.880370, there were a total of 12 RA guns.
- 2nd location: at CHAU TUY (VC name), WJ.970250 there were 4 light and medium gun emplacements.

NOTE: -Light RA gun had a barrel 3m long.
 -Medium RA gun had a barrel 4m long.
 -Heavy RA gun had a barrel 5m long.

