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[redacted]

(U) During the Vietnam war, the typical military tour in country lasted one year. This practice created continuity problems, and many folks counted the days till their time was up. Movies and books frequently portray U. S. military personnel from the Vietnam War era in a less than favorable light, emphasizing drug addiction and other problems. Although such problems existed, there is another side of the story.

(U) Many military and civilian personnel maintained a record of distinguished service during the Vietnam War, many serving multiple tours in South Vietnam. Here are a few examples of outstanding service by cryptologists from among many that could be selected.

(U) Some folks did their first tour in South Vietnam in uniform and later went back as civilians. For instance, [redacted] was a Vietnamese linguist in the Army Security Agency and served as one of the early pioneers at Phu Bai. He joined NSA as a civilian in 1965 and for the next ten years continued to work the Vietnam problem. He had many additional TDYs to Vietnam as well as a PCS assignment in 1974-75.

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(U) [redacted] was an Army Security Agency Vietnamese linguist who served at Pleiku in 1967. He was curious and enjoyed the work, branching into traffic analysis. After Vietnam, he continued his military service at NSA and worked on the same problems. After his time in the military, [redacted] was invited to become an NSA civilian. He took this job so he could go back to South Vietnam. In 1970 he began his second tour, which lasted for two years. This time he was stationed in Saigon as a civilian, but he found the work just as rewarding.

(U) Some military cryptologists did more than one tour in South Vietnam. For instance, [redacted] served in 1966 and 1967 with the 6994th Security Squadron of the Air Force Security Service as part of a detachment from Nha Trang; he flew in the airborne radio direction finding program. He noted that the EC-47 planes, where he sat as a "back ender" doing traffic analysis, were older than the men who worked in them. In September 1969 [redacted] left the Air Force and joined the Army. In a few short weeks, he was back in South Vietnam for his second one-year tour, this time as part of a direct support unit providing SIGINT to the First Cavalry. [redacted] found both tours rewarding, but felt that his services in the second tour were greater because he was closer to combat.

(U) [redacted] was a warrant officer in the Signal Corps, with communications security responsibilities. His first tour in Vietnam was from November 1967 through November 1968. He helped to protect Tan Son Nhut Air Force Base during the Tet offensive. He went back for a

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second tour in 1971 to manage distribution of communications security equipment and manuals to the South Vietnamese. [redacted] found his greatest challenge was to educate both the American and South Vietnamese military on the need to follow communications security practices.

(U [redacted] were civilians who did multiple tours in South Vietnam. [redacted] came to South Vietnam from April 1968 to May 1969, serving with the Cryptologic Support Group for the Military Assistance Command Vietnam; he helped to explain SIGINT to the military commanders. [redacted] also had at least one TDY that lasted several months. His second tour was from January 1973 to January 1974, during Vietnamization. He was the chief operations officer and worked with the South Vietnamese so that they could stand on their own after the withdrawal of U. S. troops.

(U) [redacted] pictured, holds the record for longest service among civilians in South Vietnam. He began his in-country service in 1961 and ended his first tour in 1964. [redacted] did numerous TDYs throughout the country at various intercept sites, and went back for his last full tour in South Vietnam in 1974. As the person in charge of U.S. SIGINT personnel in South Vietnam, he faced numerous challenges. He successfully arranged for evacuation of all U.S. SIGINT personnel, and himself left South Vietnam within hours of the fall of Saigon on April 30, 1975.

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(U) Larger view of photo

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