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FUGAZI

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AUG 2 1975

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
MILITARY LIAISON COMMITTEE
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Washington 13, D. C.

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ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
MILITARY LIAISON COMMITTEE
P. O. Box 1814 Washington 13, D. C.

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Serial: F 0762
2 August 1975

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MEMORANDUM FOR OFFICE OF INFORMATION ASSURANCE

SUBJECT: FUGAZI

C446

PURPOSE:

1) To advise you of the details concerning a report made by Lt. James Morris to the Chairman of the Military Liaison Committee for the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense. 2) To incorporate pertinent information concerning an attack on US soldiers engaged by unknown entities into the FUGAZI case file. 3) To share the transcript of the detailed account to further a potential investigation.

BACKGROUND:

On July 12th, 1975, an after action report was received, detailing a failed mission that led to an encounter with unknown entities after a helicopter crash on Nui Ba Den (Black Virgin) Mountain in Vietnam. The report details the entities with which the squad engaged, led by Lt. James Morris and the subsequent KIA's of Pvt. Derek Leemon, Cpl. Jerome Distrito, Ssg. Harrison Grant, Pvt. Lamarr Bridges, Pvt. Jacob Dahl, and Pvt. David Perez. They were not engaged in conventional combat and were killed by these alleged entities. We could not recover their bodies for further confirmation.

OBSERVATION:

Lt. James Morris is credible and does not seem to be under any sort of psychological distress that would impair his judgement. He remains one of the most respected and decorated soldiers the United States has to offer, serving in every major conflict since WWII, with multiple tours and commendations.

Even with limited evidence, this corroborates testimonies by other soldiers. This could be a new biological threat on the battlefield, using citizens as weapons; a method we saw the Nazis try to employ, years ago.

RECOMMENDATION:

A disinformation campaign is recommended among the ranks of soldiers recently deployed to the region detailed in this report and returning soldiers in the US. With our withdrawal from Vietnam imminent we suggest swift and quiet action from your unit.

We do not suggest actively discrediting Lt. James Morris. We do not foresee security issues arising in his promising military career, as we do with other soldiers who have been deployed in this region.

If you approve, it is recommended that we cite this report alongside others of tiger attacks, and wildlife sightings, citing fatigue and distress as a determining factor in the misidentification of threats.

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TRANSCRIPT

Interviewee: Lt. James Morris

Interviewers: Dr. Carl Walske, Dr. James R. Cowan, Dr. Steve J. Lukasik

Date: 1 August 1975

WALSKE: For the record this is DR. CARL WALSKE, Chairman of the Military Liaison Committee for the Assistant Secretary of Defense, DR. JAMES R. COWAN Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health and Environment) and DR. STEVE J. LUKASIK, Director of Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. Can you state your name for the record?

MORRIS: Lieutenant James Morris.

WALSKE: Thank you, Lieutenant and for making the time. I know you've already been given a debrief, but the initial report made its rounds and well...

LUKASIK: We're very interested.

MORRIS: Where do you want me to start? When I saw...

COWAN: Whatever you're comfortable with...

WALSKE: Your character or your credibility isn't under review, Lieutenant. You've fought in every major war since World War II. You're an exceptional American and a hero.

MORRIS: You believe me.

LUKASIK: You're not the only one who's seen it.

WALSKE: Let's take it from... the crash. We'll give a brief description of the mission in the report.

MORRIS: According to our intelligence, there hadn't been patrols on the mountain for weeks. Did someone explain to you about the mountain?

WALSKE: Yes, to me. But not Steve and James. The top of the mountain is controlled by the United States where we installed a radio tower and the rest of the mountain is controlled by the NVA.

MORRIS: Yes, that's right, sir. As soon as we exfilled the radio station we were struck by small arms fire and then what I believe was a Dshk 12.7mm MG that finished the job.

COWAN: How'd you discern that?

MORRIS: I've been shot at a lot sir, this was my first time getting shot down. It had to have been a large caliber and you can't mistake the sound. It's been around since the thirties, even when I was in WWII. On the way down I managed to keep us level and not spin. The trees slowed us on our way down and we crashed with no serious injuries.

WALSKE: And can you point to on the map the whereabouts you crashed?

MORRIS: Q27, sir.

WALSKE: And you made contact here?

MORRIS: With a group of female fighters, yes.

LUKASIK: Not the NVA?

MORRIS: No. They were dressed in a uniform I'd never seen.

WALSKE: And their description matches the reports given to you before this debrief, correct?

MORRIS: I hadn't heard about this--

LUKASIK: It's not widely known among the ranks.

MORRIS: Soldiers talk a lot, so I hear a lot.

LUKASIK: Not when we want to keep it quiet.

WALSKE: Can you state their description for the report?

MORRIS: They didn't wear any concealment. They dressed like the women in the villages we'd seen daily, but they wore a white hood on their heads that also concealed their faces. Like if a nun's hood had a mask attached to it and holes cut out for the eyes.

WALSKE: Were they armed?

MORRIS: Yes... they had our weapons. M16, .45s, M1 Carbine, and one had a hand grenade that went off during the firefight.

WALSKE: How many were there?

MORRIS: Seven. And one child.

WALSKE: A child?

LUKASIK: There's nothing in here about a child.

MORRIS: No, I left her out of my initial report.

WALSKE: Why is that?

COWAN: Lieutenant?

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MORRIS: Sorry - I didn't include her because I didn't think she was important.

WALSKE: But now you do?

MORRIS: Yes sir.

COWAN: Was she killed in the firefight?

MORRIS: No, after the hand grenade went off and the tree fell, it was quiet until we heard her crying. She was next to the fallen tree. Couldn't have been more than ten years old. Stood there shaking with an AK in her hands. Next to her was a fighter whose legs were pinned underneath the tree. We didn't know at the time, but that's when we saw... what would be the things that attacked us later on. The little girl seemed

LUKASIK: Describe what you saw pinned under the tree?

MORRIS: That's in my initial report—

LUKASIK: I didn't read it. If you don't mind repeating yourself, Lieutenant... please.

MORRIS: Ok... The trunk of the tree had crushed the fighter's chest, but the head and the entrails were ejected from the cavity in the neck.

LUKASIK: What did the cavity look like? Was it torn? Was there a lot of blood?

MORRIS: No. It was clean, like that's how it was supposed to function, but the tree falling on it kept it from escaping.

LUKASIK: You're saying the entrails were pinned from the weight of the tree?

MORRIS: Yes, keeping it from escaping.

COWAN: Escaping? The force of the tree didn't do that?

MORRIS: That's what we thought. We were wrong.

WALSKE: So you're saying this was one of the creatures?

MORRIS: Yes sir.

WALSKE: And the child? Is she dead at this point?

MORRIS: No sir, we all decided that we were going to take her with us and keep her safe.

LUKASIK: And your squad was okay with you making that decision? There wasn't any pushback?

MORRIS: I'm the leader, and whatever decision I make is everyone's... That's why this is my fault.

WALSKE: Their lives?

MORRIS: Their deaths.

WALSKE: I'm not exactly following. You didn't choose to get shot down.

MORRIS: No sir, I chose to take her with us. That's what got them killed.

COWAN: If we're going to talk about--

WALSKE: Sorry doctor, but I'd like to get back to what you just said after you're done.

COWAN: Of course, as do I... I want to ask about Private Leemon's injuries.

MORRIS: What about them?

COWAN: How did they come about and how did the symptoms manifest?

MORRIS: After the firefight and disarming the girl, we trekked down the mountain without incident for about forty five minutes. But we could tell we were being followed. It was getting dark and there was this vibrating noise, it kinda sounded like a speaker that was on but wasn't playing music. The sound would zip over the top of the trees or alongside us. They were always around us. That's when Leemon got stung. None of us saw it, but he said that it lifted him about five feet off the ground, stung him, dropped him, and took off.

COWAN: Stung?

MORRIS: Yeah, it was a large puncture that had immediately begun to swell and wasn't bleeding. Reminded me of a scorpion sting. I got one in New Mexico during a drill. Looked just like it, but there was a rotten smell to the wound like it was festering, it was already turning black and green.

COWAN: Where did the creature sting him?

MORRIS: Shoulder area near the neck. I'd say about an inch deep.

WALSKE: You didn't see the creature?

MORRIS: Not yet. You want me to--

WALSKE: No no, finish for the doctor.

MORRIS: What else did you want to know, sorry.

COWAN: The symptoms.

MORRIS: Right- just give me a second. It's- Not easy to talk about. He was a kid... eighteen.

COWAN: Take your time. You want a water or coffee?

MORRIS: Is it okay if I smoke?

WALSKE: Go right ahead.

MORRIS: Thank you, just a second... Ok. The Private started to experience a burning sensation.

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COWAN: Where? Around the wound?

MORRIS: No, he said throughout his body. Down to his bone. I thought it was more of him being traumatized than actual pain. Soldiers can sometimes invent injuries in their head after a battle or close call to try and slow things down. So, I elected to keep moving and about twenty minutes later he showed me his arm.

COWAN: Which arm? The same side as the sting?

MORRIS: Yes.

COWAN: And it was swelling?

MORRIS: No, it looked like one big blister and when you moved it, you could feel that it was full of fluid. It felt like a water balloon.

COWAN: What did the medic say?

MORRIS: Our medic, Distrito, went to drain it, but as soon as he did he noticed he couldn't feel the bone in Leemon's arm... Distrito kept asking him to wiggle his fingers but his hand... the best way to describe it is it was like a medical glove filled with water. That's when Leemon took a turn. This is the part I don't like to talk about.

COWAN: Do the best you can? It might save others if this happens.

MORRIS: I don't think you can save anyone from this.

COWAN: What happened?

MORRIS: The puncture the medic made wouldn't stop leaking fluid, and as he kept checking him he started to notice that the bones in Leemon's shoulders were missing. We quickly came to the conclusion that he was dissolving from the inside. That whatever bit him had some kind of venom that could... do this. Leemon died shortly after that. I couldn't give you an exact amount of time... it was minutes. It just tore through him. I've never seen someone in that much pain. We tried to give him morphine but it would just open up another hole in him and he'd start leaking everywhere.

COWAN: Was anyone else bitten?

MORRIS: No.

WALSKE: Then you saw it shortly after?

MORRIS: Yes sir, almost immediately.

WALSKE: Can you describe it?

MORRIS: It was getting dark, everyone was shaken up but we were moving at a good pace. I kept the child near me on my left so I could protect her and raise my rifle. We came across this woman on a walking path we

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had found. We knew it was probably for patrols but at this point, I was fine with shooting at whatever moved. As soon as I put the child behind me... there's this uncorking sound... and her head detached from her body.

WALSKE: The child's?

MORRIS: The woman on the path. Her head detached, and her body dropped to the ground and she was just a floating head with all of her organs exposed. You could smell it... it was metallic vinegar odor. The spinal cord was still attached but it could move independently and it curled up in an attack position. Her teeth were so white... you could see them perfectly in the dark... they looked lit up. That's when I heard the sound that I described in the earlier attack. That speaker sound I was describing... it seemed to be her entrails, vibrating. And that's when I noticed she could also move certain organs independently as well.

LUKASIK: Jesus.

COWAN: What about the body? Was it still intact?

MORRIS: Looked to be. It looked like the skeleton was still intact, but like I said from the firefight before, there wasn't any tearing, it was a clean detachment.

WALSKE: And that's when you were attacked by more?

MORRIS: Yes sir. Again, I heard that uncorking sound about thirty meters away, but it was multiple times. At least a dozen. We tried to shoot them, but they would dive on us from above the trees. They seemed to be able to use their entrails as limbs and their spinal cord as a stinger, exactly like a scorpion... Distrito, our medic, was wrapped up into what I think was intestines. He was taken somewhere else. I heard his screams travel across the treetops southbound, and then kept going until it got quiet... not because he was dead but because of the distance. Then Jacob... well he got... he looked like a shriveled up raisin. I don't know what they did to him. It looked like a bite, or he was gashed or gored by something but if I had to guess? It was a bite. That's when it became clear we couldn't engage them effectively, so I called for my last two soldiers to run.

WALSKE: Where's the little girl during all of this?

MORRIS: In my arms, I had picked her up. I should've realized right then and there.

WALSKE: What?

MORRIS: That's why they weren't attacking me.

WALSKE: Is this when you came upon the village?

MORRIS: Yeah, we thought we were saved. They took us in, fed us, and cleaned up the girl. It didn't strike us as weird at the time but... there were no NVA there. It was all women and this strong smell of vinegar.

LUKASIK: This isn't in the report; it says you fled the village after it was attacked.

MORRIS: I know. Because I didn't have time to think about it.

WALSKE: What's the importance of the village?

MORRIS: That's where they worship these things or keep them or where they live... I'm not entirely sure. The only thing I could think of is what I was told when I had R&R in Malaysia... I doubt this would be pertinent to the report because it's a folktale.

COWAN: I'd be interested, if anyone objects?

WALSKE: Go ahead, Lieutenant.

MORRIS: I was playing poker with some marines and the dealer was an older local. He told us this story. Probably a story they tell kids so they don't run off into the jungle, about this monster... The way he told us, well it scared us half to death... He called it a Penanggalan.

WALSKE: Ok. Satisfied Doctor?

COWAN: Yes, but one question, do you think it was a Penanggalan?

MORRIS: As a member of the United States Military? No.

COWAN: Personally?

MORRIS: Yes.

LUKASIK: Why?

MORRIS: Because everything the dealer described matches what I saw... it just didn't fit the tale... But war changes everything. Every deployment, soldiers talk about seeing or hearing or encountering strange things. It's part of being in a place you don't understand, but... I still don't understand what they were.

LUKASIK: Are they a weapon? Do you think?

MORRIS: No, not at all. For a number of reasons.

LUKASIK: What reasons?

MORRIS: Because of what happened in the village.

WALSKE: Can we get back to the village? Agree?

COWAN: Good for me.

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WALSKE: Continue Lieutenant.

MORRIS: After they fed us, they dropped these walls of a thatched building that looked like an exposed church. There was an altar and rows of baths instead of pews. As soon as the walls came down there was an overwhelming smell of vinegar. Before we could realize what was happening, they had me and my soldiers restrained to stakes that were spaced out in front of the church. It was some sort of ritual... and then the uncorking sound again. The women that had taken care of us started to sing and the... whatever they were... entities came in from around the village out of the jungle. They hovered over to the altar and dipped their organs into the baths. They did it in the way birds bathe. It was quick and splashed everywhere. The singing continued throughout. Then I saw the child. She had symbols on her clothes... she was special to them for some reason. Which... thinking about it now... they didn't come for us after the crash... They were escorting her to the village. They ate my men in front of me and dipped their entrails in these baths of vinegar. They were saving me for the end I think. But that's when I got free and killed one with a knife.

LUKASIK: So they're killable.

MORRIS: Sorta.

WALSKE: That's when you got away?

MORRIS: Yeah. I knocked over some kind lantern that started a fire in their church and... grabbed the girl and headed for the base of the mountain. I fought like hell, signaled for the LZ, and that's when I got picked up. I'm sure the pilots and everybody else saw them chasing after me.

WALSKE: The smoke you laid down helps a bit but there's about ten witnesses that saw. Where's the girl? She was with you? Wasn't she?

MORRIS: Yes, sir. I thought I was protecting her. I thought I was giving her a chance at escaping, maybe finding a better life... I don't know. As soon as I stepped onto the chopper and looked back, I could tell... She didn't want to go with me. She didn't want anything to do with me... she wanted to stay with the monsters. I was saving someone who didn't need to be saved.

WALSKE: I want to thank you for your amended statements here today Lieutenant. Let's stop the--

END OF RECORDING.

Ấp Kha Dol
(Destroyed)

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Núi Cầu

Núi Đất
(Núi Hòn)

Núi Bà Đen

Điện Bà

Xóm Bãi Trại
(Destroyed)

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FIGURE 1