

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20330



REPLY TO
ATTN OF:

USAFMPC (DEMSC)
RANDOLPH AFB TEXAS 78148

10 August 1970

MRS. SHIRLEY J. JOHNSON

DEAR MRS. JOHNSON

Packages may be mailed again this month, and an authorization card with instructions is attached if you are the primary next of kin of a member who is known to be, or could be, a prisoner in North Vietnam. Those of you who are authorized to send packages but do not wish to do so may provide your authorization card to another close relative so that he or she may have the opportunity of mailing a package. If you prefer, you may advise us to furnish your authorization card to another member of your family. Should you desire to avail yourself of the service offered by the American Red Cross, please send your authorization card to the Missing and Detainee Section, American National Red Cross, 17th and D Streets, Northwest, Washington, D. C. 20006, with a request that a Red Cross parcel be mailed to your relative. Include with your request the member's full name, grade, and service number. Please mail your package as early as possible so as to avoid any last minute problems.

In our 9 June 1970 newsletter, we discussed the Red River Valley Fighter Pilots Association (Red River Rats). We also advised that its members had offered to be of assistance to the families of American service personnel who are missing in action or captured with problems that may be beyond the scope of the assistance provided by the installation casualty assistance offices. In this regard, you may contact one of their coordinators on the attached list.

A fact sheet pertaining to the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia is attached for your information. Should you desire to become a member, please fill out the attached application form, which the Department of Defense has requested that we distribute to the next of kin, and mail it to the address specified. With reference to this organization, we are also attaching a copy of the Commander's Digest, 11 July 1970, which covers the recent opening of their Washington, D. C., office.

On 24 June 1970, the President signed into a law a bill which provides compensation under the War Claims Act of 1948 for prisoners of war captured during the Vietnam Conflict. The Act grants any member of the armed forces of the United States, who was held a prisoner of war for

any period of time between 28 February 1961 and the official ending of the Vietnam Conflict, slightly increased benefits over those granted to prisoners of war during World War II and the Korean Conflict. Specifically, benefits under this Act consist of \$2.00 per day of captivity for inadequate food and \$3.00 per day of captivity for forced labor or inhumane treatment contrary to the Geneva Convention. In the case of death or a determination of death of a person entitled to compensation under this Act, such compensation would be payable to specific survivors, including the widow, children, and parents of the deceased prisoner of war in that order. Claims for payment must be filed within three years of 24 June 1970, or three years from date of the return of the prisoner to the jurisdiction of the United States, or in the event of death claims, three years from the date the determination is made that the prisoner actually died or is presumed to be dead. In signing this measure, President Nixon stated that "there is, of course, no monetary payment that I as President or this government might authorize which would compensate adequately for the sufferings and hardships endured by these men and their families. It can only be my fervent hope that the payments provided in this Act will in a small way serve as a symbolic gesture on the part of the US Government expressing its recognition and appreciation for the sacrifices that these men have made and continue to make in the service of their country."

Effective 25 June 1970, coverage under the Servicemen's Group Life Insurance Program (SGLI) was increased from \$10,000 to \$15,000. The cost of this increased coverage is \$3.00 per month as contrasted with the \$2.00 and \$1.00 per month deductions for \$10,000 and \$5,000, respectively. The \$3.00 will automatically be deducted from the member's pay. Beneficiary designations and mode of payment of insurance proceeds (i.e., lump sum or 36 monthly installments) previously selected for the \$10,000 or \$5,000 coverage, on file in the member's Records Group, will continue in force.

The Florida legislature recently enacted a bill providing, in effect, for the continuation of the effectiveness of a power of attorney properly executed by missing in action and captured personnel prior to the time they are declared missing, interned, captured, beleaguered, besieged, or detained. The bill takes effect on 1 October 1970. It alleviates problems faced by wives and families of downed personnel who find it necessary to buy or sell Florida real or personal property. Prior to the act, they could not do so because the power of attorney was ineffective after the grantor became missing in action. The bill was prompted by problems arising in the MacDill Air Force Base area which were reported to a member of the Florida legislature. On 5 May 1970, a bill (S.3795) was introduced into the Senate which would extend the expiration date specified in a power of attorney executed by a member of the Armed Forces who is missing in action or a prisoner of war. The bill has been referred to the Armed Services Committee. If enacted, it will apply to all 50 states.

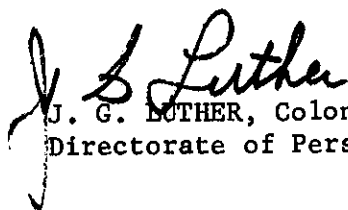
Please add the following name to your list of area contact representatives:

Mrs. Hazel L. Gaddis

Word has been received from a number of our next of kin that their letters, which were handcarried to Hanoi by Mr. Kirkpatrick, American Friends Service Committee, have been returned. According to Mr. Kirkpatrick, only those letters which were addressed to the men named in the list released by the Committee of Liaison with Families of Servicemen Detained in North Vietnam were accepted by the Vietnam Committee for Solidarity with the American Committee, whom he visited. Mr. Kirkpatrick was advised by Mr. Tran Trong Quat, of this committee, that the North Vietnam authorities have no information regarding Americans who have been captured in areas outside North Vietnam. They are not known to them, or held by them, and they therefore cannot deliver letters or packages to them. He would not, however, make any further statement regarding the other Americans missing over North Vietnam whose names are not on the list of 335 names and have not been accounted for. It is not an official list. Neither is it a complete listing of our personnel known to have been held in captivity by the North Vietnamese. While the Committee of Liaison will no doubt start turning back correspondence to members who are not named on their listing, we urge you to continue to write letters and send packages to the addresses we have provided, carefully following our previous instructions. Our government will continue to press for a complete and official accounting of all our downed personnel.

We will continue to keep you posted on new information in forthcoming newsletters.

Sincerely



J. G. LUTHER, Colonel, USAF
Directorate of Personnel Services

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1. Authorization Card (if applicable)
2. Package Instructions (if applicable)
3. List of Area Coordinators
4. Fact Sheet (League of Families)
5. Application (League of Families)
6. Commander's Digest, 11 Jul 70
7. Writing Forms (if applicable)