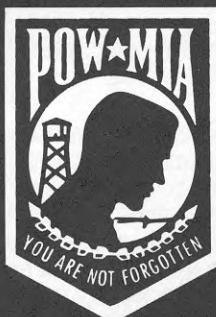


# SEEKING ANSWERS



NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES  
OF AMERICAN PRISONERS AND  
MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

# WHAT IS BEING DONE?

Since 1982, the U.S. Government has pursued the fullest possible accounting of Americans still missing in Southeast Asia as a matter of the highest national priority:

- All efforts are pursued under the assumption that some Americans are still held in captivity.
- Full-time POW/MIA personnel increased: from 12 to 38 in the Defense Intelligence Agency; from 14 to 30 in the Joint Casualty Resolution Center; and from 12 to 42 in the Central Identification Laboratory.
- Collection capability and coordination between intelligence agencies has dramatically improved.
- Strong bipartisan Congressional support has been achieved.
- In Vietnam, a year-round schedule of joint activities - including site surveys, field investigations and joint excavations - began in late 1988. While the level of activity is high, results have been disappointing when compared to what could be provided by the Vietnamese.
- In Laos, the joint work plan established in 1989 was expanded in early 1990 to include joint field investigations into the fate of individuals last known alive in contact with Pathet Lao forces. Also agreed to were crash

and gravesite surveys/recoveries throughout the country, and increased joint excavations.

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"We will continue to assemble the best resources, technology, and, most of all, qualified people to interview refugees, evaluate intelligence information, and negotiate with foreign governments."

- President George Bush  
July 28, 1989

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• Laos is consulting with the SRV on cases of Americans lost in areas of Laos controlled by Vietnamese forces during the war. Plans are underway for U.S./Lao/Vietnamese cooperation to resolve these incidents.

• More Americans have been accounted for in the past few years than at any time since the end of the war. While the return of any and all living Americans continues to be the highest priority objective, the repatriation of remains brings long-awaited peace of mind for the families, and an honorable homecoming for a U.S. serviceman or civilian.

# WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



**PFC Don Sparks, USA** - On June 17, 1969, PFC Sparks was wounded in a firefight in South Vietnam and was seen being stripped by North Vietnamese Army Personnel. Searches the following day showed no sign of Sparks. In May 1970, two letters dated April 11, 1970, found on a Viet Cong soldier, were proven conclusively to be from PFC Sparks by qualified handwriting analysts.

**LCDR David Greiling, USN** - On July 24, 1968, LCDR Greiling's aircraft crashed during a mission over North Vietnam. Due to the eruption of a fierce forest fire, rescue efforts were unsuccessful. In July 1969 in a seaman's club in Haiphong, a European merchant seaman saw 75-100 small pictures of captured American pilots on display and copied identification data from thirty. Twenty-eight of these men returned in Operation Homecoming, 1973, and the remains of one were repatriated in 1985; no information has been provided on LCDR Greiling.

**SP4 James Van Bendegom, USA** - SP4 Van Bendegom was wounded and captured by the People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN) on July 12, 1967. U.S. POWs saw SP4 Van Bendegom alive at a PAVN hospital in Cambodia approximately 1 week after his capture. Five other Americans involved in this incident were released in Operation Homecoming, 1973.

**LCDR Barton S. Creed, USN** - On March 13, 1971, LCDR Creed's aircraft was hit in Savannakhet Province, Laos. After parachuting to the ground, LCDR Creed established radio contact; his final transmission was, "Get me out now, get me out now, they are here." The following day, rescue craft saw his parachute spread out in another area. LCDR Creed is believed to have been captured.

**Eleanor Vietti, Civilian** - On May 30, 1962, Dr. Eleanor Vietti and two other U.S. civilians were captured at the "Christian and Missionary Alliance Leprosarium" in South Vietnam. A journal seized on November 23, 1962 indicated they had been killed; however, other wartime sources of undetermined reliability subsequently reported one or more of the three in the hands of Vietnam forces in various locations.



## HANOI KNOWS

# WHAT ABOUT...

## Conspiracy and Coverup?

Since 1982, investigations have repeatedly been conducted into charges of U.S. Government conspiracy and coverup on the POW/MIA issue, each resulting in a clear finding that no such coverup exists. Further investigation, without grounds for such action, is a fruitless waste of assets and resources which the League sought for many years. The answers are not in Washington, D.C. - the answers lie in Southeast Asia, primarily Hanoi.

## Fundraising?

Numerous "activist" groups solicit funds through direct mail appeals and/or organizational literature, often with little to no accountability. Frequent schemes include claims of conspiracy and coverup and details of impending rescue missions which the distributor claims will result in the return of live American POWs. Graphic descriptions of captive environments and other emotional appeals are frequently included. DO NOT BE VICTIMIZED! Prior to contributing to any organization, contact the Better Business Bureau.

## Reward Offers?

Rewards for the return of a live POW have been offered by various groups for years, without the return of one missing serviceman - alive or dead. The results have been negative: 1) High level official Lao and Vietnamese public denials of the existence of live POWs, making government-to-government negotia-

tions on this sensitive question even more difficult; 2) A rash of false reporting from reward-seeking refugees, consuming valuable intelligence assets; 3) Exploitation of family members, veterans and the public.

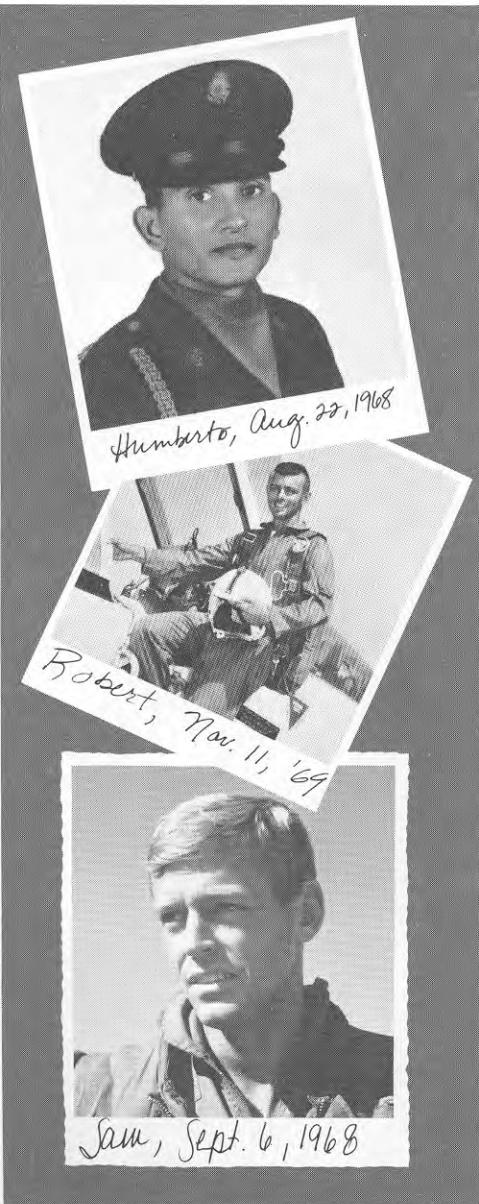
## "Rambo" activities?

Sensationalistic private rescue attempts have brought no positive results, jeopardize ongoing government-to-government cooperation and gain widespread media interest, destroying the credibility of this real and very serious issue. One such "Rambo" attempt resulted in a stalemate in cooperation with the Lao Government for over one year.

## The National League of Families?

Incorporated in the District of Columbia on May 29, 1970, the League is comprised solely of the close relatives of American prisoners of war, missing in action, killed in action / body not recovered and returned Vietnam POWs. The League's three-fold goal is to obtain the return of all live prisoners, the fullest possible accounting for those still missing and the repatriation of all recoverable remains of those who sacrificed their lives serving our nation in Southeast Asia. A non-profit, 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization, audited annually, the League is financed by contributions from concerned citizens, individual veterans and veteran organizations and the POW / MIA families (IRS #23-7071242, CFC #0855).

# WHAT CAN YOU DO?



**Obtain** current information: request the League's bimonthly, cost-free newsletter.

**Call** the League's 24 hour Update Line: 202-659-0133.

**Distribute** facts throughout your community. (Cost-free literature available.)

**Show** "Seeking Answers," an informational video (VHS and broadcast quality tapes\* available).

**Circulate** the Petition to Hanoi among friends and coworkers.

**Fly** the POW/MIA flag.\*

**Participate** in the POW/MIA Adoption Program (Official adoption application available).

**Wear** a POW/MIA bracelet (available through official League vendors) and/or lapel pin.\*

**Secure** knowledgeable POW/MIA speakers for meetings/community events.

**Support** the National League of POW/MIA Families (IRS tax-exempt #23-7071242, Combined Federal Campaign #0855).

\*For further information, contact:



**National League of POW/MIA Families**  
1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 219  
Washington, DC 20036-5504  
202-223-6846



# WANTED: DEAD OR ALIVE

"Let me simply state the policy of this new administration. The fullest possible accounting remains a matter of highest national priority. We will do everything a government can to recover the missing, and if we discover proof of captivity, we will take action to bring our men home."

- President George Bush  
July, 1989

"A nation that will not care for those fallen in battle, a nation that will not seek freedom for those held captive, a nation that forgets its missing in action, such a nation has lost its soul. That will

not be the final legacy of the Vietnam War."

- The Honorable Richard B. Cheney  
Secretary of Defense  
July, 1989

"I can assure you that I will not rest, that President Bush will not rest, that this nation will not rest, until we obtain the fullest possible accounting. This is more than a commitment; it is a solemn oath."

- GEN Colin Powell, USA  
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff  
November, 1989