

POW/MIA POW/MIA POW/MIA POW/MIA POW/MIA

RESOLVING
THE
ISSUE THROUGH

UNITY
DETERMINATION
OBJECTIVITY....
PROGRESS



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

THE PROGRESS:



Serious strategy was developed early in President Reagan's first term to return living Americans and achieve the fullest possible accounting for those missing as a result of the Vietnam War. This policy, advocated by the League, has brought significant results since 1981:

- The US Government position on live POWs was changed from negative to positive: All efforts are pursued under the assumption that some Americans are held in captivity.
- High level negotiations were opened with the Governments of Vietnam and Laos and have continued on a frequent basis. The subject of live American prisoners is raised in all negotiations.
- Intelligence priorities were significantly raised, improving collection capability and coordination between intelligence agencies.
- The US Government adopted a public awareness campaign urging unified American support and involvement in efforts to resolve the issue.
- Communication with the POW/MIA families was renewed and increased.
- Strong bipartisan support of the issue was achieved in Congress.
- Full-time POW/MIA personnel assigned in the Defense Intelligence Agency increased from 12 to 39; in the Joint Casualty Resolution Center from 14 to 26; and in the Central Identification Laboratory from 12 to 41.
- Regular technical level meetings (six per year) have been agreed to by the Vietnamese.
- Joint crash site excavations, the first since the end of the war, have been conducted in both Laos and Vietnam. Commitments have been obtained to continue this process.
- Americans last known in captivity (discrepancy cases) have been accounted for through remains repatriations, including for the first time some from South Vietnam.
- More Americans have been accounted for in the past two years than at any time since the end of the war.
- Vietnam has acknowledged that resolving the POW/MIA issue is a humanitarian issue, separate from other matters which divide the US and Vietnam.
- For the first time, Vietnam provided a written work plan, publicly agreeing to resolve the issue, and the US formally pledged cooperative actions in support.

The significant progress noted is the direct result of current high priority, strategy and policy which offer the best hope this nation has yet seen to resolve the POW/MIA issue.

THE FACTS:

Over 2,400 Americans are unaccounted for in Southeast Asia. Priority is placed on those known or believed captured. Below are four examples:

COL ROBERT ANDERSON, USAF, North Vietnam

While flying an F4E over North Vietnam on October 6, 1972, COL Anderson and his crewman were forced to parachute. Talking with rescue planes, Anderson said, "I have a good parachute, am in good shape and can see no enemy forces on the ground." His crewman was captured immediately. Radio Hanoi reported several US pilots captured on that date; but Anderson's plane was the only one lost that day. The crewman was repatriated in 1973, yet no information has been provided on COL Anderson.



CAPT. HARLEY H. HALL, USN, South Vietnam — On January 27, 1973, CAPT Hall's aircraft was

downed by enemy fire 15 miles NW of Quang Tri, Vietnam. He and his crewman were seen ejecting with deployed parachutes. CAPT Hall was seen disengaging his parachute on the ground. Emergency beepers were heard during descent and after landing in a heavily populated area controlled by Vietnamese troops. CAPT Hall's crewman was captured, taken to Hanoi and released in 1973. The Vietnamese Government has not yet provided information on CAPT Hall.

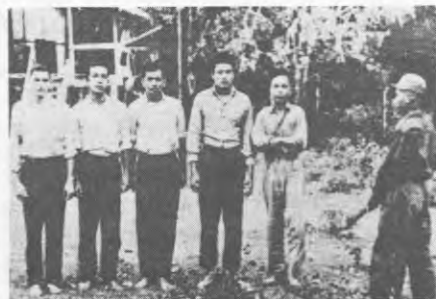


COL DAVID HRDLICKA, USAF, Laos

— COL Hrdlicka's chute was seen opening after ejection over northern Laos from his F105D. A flight member reported seeing Hrdlicka being led away by natives. Subsequently taken prisoner, this post-capture photo of Hrdlicka was obtained from several sources. A broadcast made by COL Hrdlicka was recorded by the US in July, 1966. Repeated discussions with Lao officials have resulted in their pledge to provide specific data about this discrepancy case.

EUGENE H. DEBRUIN, CIVILIAN, Laos

— This photo of Eugene DeBruin and his surviving crewmembers was obtained from a Pathet Lao publication after capture on September 5, 1963. LTJG Dieter Dengler, USN, and a Thai member of the DeBruin crew both held with DeBruin successfully escaped from the Pathet Lao and provided information on DeBruin. The Lao Government has now pledged to provide information on this discrepancy case.



THE DANGERS:

Highest national priority has brought more media attention to the issue than at any time since the end of the Vietnam War. Successful public awareness efforts helped set the climate for high level negotiations, ensuring that the Indochinese Governments understood the seriousness of the American people, the US Government and the families about resolving the issue. However, public visibility has also brought negative actions which threaten to destroy progress thus far achieved and expected in the coming months.

Credibility Undermined

Claims to have evidence of Americans in captivity have increasingly been made, though proof has yet to be presented. The **facts** on the live prisoner issue stand on their own merit. The League's position that Americans are alive in Indochina is based on history of the issue, discrepancy cases of Americans known alive but not yet returned and the weight of intelligence information. It is **not** based upon unfounded claims, allegations or any specific report. Claims without proof undermine the seriousness of the issue and the League's position which is based on logic, reason and objective analysis of available information, plus common sense.

Family Members Targeted

Family members are being given misinformation and solicited for funds to obtain information or the release of a loved one by capitalizing on frustration. The result is divisiveness, advantageous only to Hanoi. Lessons learned during the Vietnam War must be remembered. Divisiveness fed Hanoi's perception of American weakness, undermined the US commitment and led to precipitous US withdrawal — the reason for continued efforts to account for Americans still unreturned.

Resources Wasted

Unfounded charges of conspiracy and coverup on the POW/MIA issue have drained critical, hard-earned assets and resources which should be devoted to resolving the issue. The League as well as agencies of the US Government are affected, including those in DIA who should be focused on resolving questions about living Americans in Indochina. Conspiracy and coverup charges continue to surface in spite of five previous investigations which found no merit in the allegations. Valuable assets must focus on returning Americans, not on redundant, ill-considered and time-consuming investigations.

OFFICIAL COMMITMENT

THE PRESIDENT, July 19, 1986: *"We will apply every resource . . . to achieve the fullest possible accounting of your relatives still missing in Southeast Asia . . . It's no secret there are those who want to promise easy solutions or even exploit this issue for selfish reasons. But we have made progress, and the truth is we will continue to make progress as long as we stick with the facts . . . keep faith with each other and demonstrate the unity of purpose so fundamental to our cause. All Americans . . . have a common goal in this endeavor: Freedom for any prisoner who may still be held in Southeast Asia and justice for all of the families who have worked so long to resolve the fate of our POWs and MIAs in Vietnam."*

THE VICE PRESIDENT, July 19, 1985: *"The return of all POWs, the fullest possible accounting for those still missing and repatriation of the remains of those who died serving our nation — these goals are the highest national priority . . . top priority means that we do not rule out the possibility that Americans are still alive and held captive in Indochina."*

SECRETARY OF STATE (delivered by Acting Secretary of State) July 19, 1986: *"A great deal has been accomplished in the last few years, but we are still only at the beginning of resolving this issue. The principal question is, of course, that of living American prisoners . . . We must persevere in our efforts until we determine whether Americans are being held. If they are, we must and we will obtain their freedom."*

CHAIRMAN, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, July 19, 1986: *" . . . The JCS have taken a searching look at the possibility of live prisoners being held in Indochina . . . This is a most haunting prospect: that our comrades in arms may still be serving their country, but in captivity. The indochinese governments are very aware that the live prisoner issue is our highest priority."*

THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES

1608 K Street, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20006 — (202) 223-6846

Incorporated in the District of Columbia on May 28, 1970, the League is comprised of the wives, children, parents and other close relatives of American prisoners of war, missing in action, killed in action/body not recovered and returned Vietnam POWs. Located in The American Legion building, the League is a non-profit, non-political, tax-exempt organization, financed by contributions from concerned citizens and the families themselves. The organization's objectives are to obtain the release of all POWs, the fullest possible accounting for the MIAs and the return of remains of those who died serving our country.

BECOME INFORMED...

Call the League 24-hour UPDATE LINE

(202) 659-0133



.... AND MORE ACTIVELY INVOLVED

WRITE LETTERS

- **To members of Congress** urging them to give full bipartisan support to the US government's current high priority, oppose formation of any special POW/MIA commission and counter misinformation with facts.

(Name of Representative)
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

(Name of Senator)
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

- **To editors of local papers**, drawing responsible attention to the issue and countering misinformation with facts.
- **To the Vietnamese and the Lao**, urging them to increase efforts and fulfill their commitment to cooperate fully with the US Government to resolve the POW/MIA issue.

SRV Mission to the UN
20 Waterside Plaza
New York, NY 10010

LPDR Mission to the UN
820 Second Avenue, Suite 400
New York, NY 10017

PUBLIC AWARENESS

- Distribute current, factual POW/MIA information and counter misinformation; question those who claim to have evidence and fail to provide it.
- Remember POW/MIA in appropriate ceremonies: Veterans Day, Memorial Day, Christmas and National POW/MIA Recognition Day.

SUPPORT THE LEAGUE

- Help raise funds to continue this important work: 1) Participate in the League Adoption Program (\$5/month); 2) Wear a POW/MIA logo lapel pin (\$3.00 each or two for \$5.00); 3) Fly a POW/MIA Flag, available from the League office at \$43.00 each, prepaid; 4) Make a tax deductible contribution (IRS #23-7071242).