

# THE U.S. VETERAN

JUNE 17, 1994

**DISPATCH**

\$1.00

## WARNING!

This special edition contains explicitly graphic photographs of United States military casualties of the Vietnam War. The photographs were purchased in Vietnam and are currently held secret by the United States government.

The photographs, which were taken by North Vietnamese photographers during the war, prove without a shadow of doubt that the communist government of Vietnam has for years been lying about its knowledge of U.S. servicemen missing in action in that country and that U.S. government officials have collaborated with those lies. Pages 5 - 10

**HANOI JANE  
REMEMBERED**

**PAGE 12**

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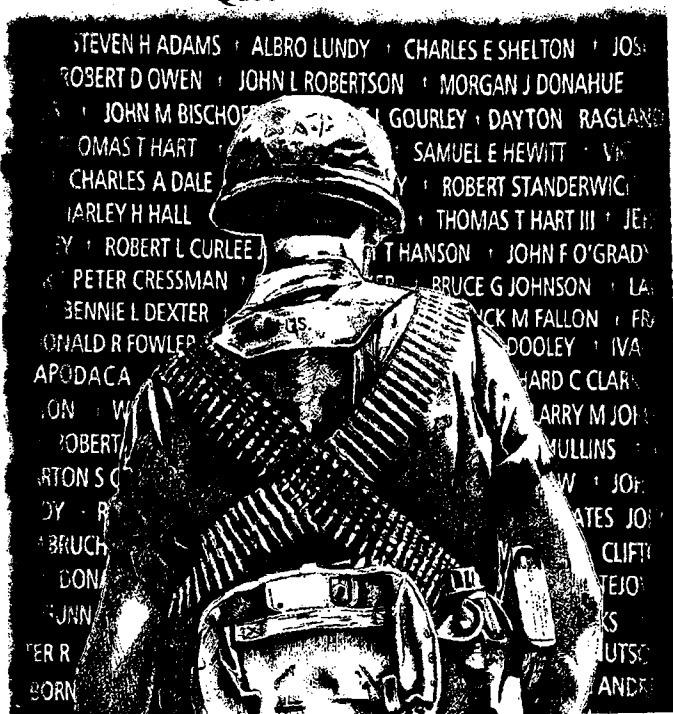
## THE U.S. VETERAN DISPATCH

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**TO: ALL POW/MIA FAMILIES, VIETNAM  
VETERANS, VETERANS GROUPS AND  
CONCERNED AMERICAN CITIZENS**

**FROM: DONNA LONG  
THE LAST FIREBASE  
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

On May 19, 1994, a member of the National Park Service handed me a news release announcing a proposed revision of its regulations governing sales within park lands. The proposed changes would only allow the sale of books, along with traditional written material, that of newspapers, leaflets and pamphlets, at first-amendment demonstration sites.

The Last Firebase, a non-profit POW/MIA organization operates a 24 hour vigil on one of the targeted demonstration sites near the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Under the proposed new regulations, The Last Firebase would not be allowed to sell POW/MIA bracelets, T-shirts, bumper stickers or any other item carrying the message of our abandoned men.

The Last Firebase does not solicit funds or donations. We man a 24 hour vigil, regardless of the weather, informing the public about our abandoned Americans. The Firebase even generates its own T-shirts - to make sure the POW/MIA message is not only correct, but that it appears on quality material that will last and be seen by millions. Thousands of man-hours are also spent on updating and providing the fullest possible bio on each man whose POW/MIA bracelet is offered.

Funds received from the items sold at the vigil are used to print thousands of copies of the monthly newspaper, The U.S. Veteran Dispatch (which are given out free of charge at the vigil), finance POW/MIA awareness projects, including those of The National Alliance of Families, reprint pertinent articles on the issue (which are also distributed free at the vigil), POW/MIA archival research and sending breaking information to thousands of people and veterans groups across the country. A house, internationally known as "The POW House," is also provided for those who man the vigil and is available to any POW/MIA family member who travels to D.C. and needs a free place to stay.

It would be nice if The Last Firebase could provide all the services it does without selling anything. But it can't. The Last Firebase doesn't have a benevolent benefactor to finance their fight to keep the plight of the unreturned POWs and MIAs before the American public. And the bottom line is, if the Park Service changes the regulations as it is attempting to do, it will succeed in getting rid of the most visible POW/MIA activist group in the country.

And that's exactly what the Clinton administration, via the Park Service, is attempting to do by labeling all demonstration sites as "discordant commercialism." In addition, they claim all the sites have "severely disrupted the quality of the park visitor experience" and have "negative impact on the aesthetic values" of the parks.

I am one of those who are presently manning The Last Firebase vigil, and I can't tell you how often people, particularly Vietnam veterans, shake my hand and say "God Bless You - keep up the good work." Nor can I count the number of visitors who thank me for telling them about the POW/MIAs on the Wall (the Park Services' best kept secret). Nor can I describe the faces of the young people as they search for and find that "special" POW/MIA bracelet to wear or the look of gratitude when I find out what happened to a POW/MIA on a bracelet that someone has been wearing for years. The only negative reaction I have personally encountered from the public is cries of disgust at the putrid smell that drifts across the walk-way from the nearby unsightly portable bathrooms and outrage at the expensive cost of items sold in the Park Services' "Souvenir Booth."

The Park Service has given the public 60 days to respond to the proposed changes. The deadlines for public comment is July 18, 1994.

Unless you want the nation's most visible and productive POW/MIA vigil removed, immediately write a letter opposing the regulation changes that would prohibit the sales of T-shirts, bracelets and other items carrying the POW/MIA message on the demonstration sites near the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to:

**Robert Stanton  
Regional Director  
National Capital Region, National Park Service  
1100 Ohio Drive, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20242.**

To keep Mr. Stanton honest (since it appears that he is in favor of the change), send a copy of your letter to:

**The Last Firebase  
5154 Piedmont Place  
Annandale, VA., 22003**

That way, we can be sure that the letters against the proposed changes aren't "accidentally lost" or "shredded."

Most of us would go to hell and back to try and get our missing men home. Writing one letter and making a copy of it, then mailing one to Stanton and one to The Last Firebase is not quite as dramatic - but without a tremendous outpouring of such letters, The Last Firebase will be history - another thorn removed from the side of those who have been trying to kill the POW/MIA issue for over 20 years.



Australian communist Wilfred Burchett meets four U.S. prisoners of the Viet Cong. Left to right: Issac "Ike" Camacho, Kenneth Roraback, Claude McClure, and George Smith. Burchett released the photograph to the world press in May 1964.

## WHAT REALLY HAPPENED TO SSGT. KENNETH RORABACK?

### *The Last Firebase Veterans ArchiveS Project*

United States Army Green Beret, SFC Kenneth M. Roraback from Baldwin, NY, along with three other Green Berets, was captured by South Vietnamese communist guerrillas (Viet Cong), November 24, 1963. All four of the captured Americans are pictured being interviewed by Australian communist Wilfred Burchett in the above official Viet Cong photograph taken in 1964.

Burchett, who claimed to be a journalist, had a history dating back to the Korean War, of actually helping communist interrogators in their attempts to brainwash American prisoners of war.

Former Green Beret SMaj. Dan Pitzer, who had been held prisoner with SSgt. Roraback, said that Burchett, after interviewing SSgt. Roraback, told Viet Cong interrogators that SSgt. Roraback was a "noncooperative and unrepentant prisoner, and should be considered as a reactionary." Soon after, SSgt. Roraback began receiving harsher treatment. SSgt. Roraback was a part of the U.S.

Army Special Forces, Vietnam (Provisional), which was formed in Saigon in 1962 to advise and assist the South Vietnamese government in the organization, training, equipping and employment of the Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) forces. Total personnel strength in 1963 was 674, all but 98 of whom were TDY (temporary duty) from 1st Special Forces Group on Okinawa and 5th and 7th Special Forces Groups at Ft. Bragg. USSF Provisional was given complete charge of the CIDG program, formerly handled by the CIA, on July 1, 1963.

The USSF Provisional/CIDG network consisted of fortified, strategically located camps, each one with an airstrip. The area development programs soon evolved into combat operations, and by the end of October 1963, the network also had responsibility for border surveillance. Two of the Provisional/CIDG camps were at Hiep Hoa (Detachment A-21) and Tan Phu (Detachment A-23), Republic of Vietnam. Their isolated locations, in the midst of known heavy enemy presence, made the camps vulnerable to attack.

On October 29, 1963, Capt. "Rocky" Versace, 1Lt. "Nick" Rowe, and SFC. Daniel

Pitzer were accompanying a CIDG company on an operation along a canal. The team left the camp at Tan Phu for the village of Le Coeur to roust a small enemy unit that was establishing a command post there. When they reached the village, they found the enemy gone, and pursued them, falling into an ambush at about 1000 hours. The fighting continued until 1800 hours, when reinforcements were sent in to relieve the company. During the fight, Capt. Versace, SFC. Pitzer and 1Lt. Rowe were all captured. The three captives were photographed together in a staged setting in the U Minh forest in their early days of captivity.

The camp at Hiep Hoa was located in the Plain of Reeds between Saigon and the Cambodian border.

In late October 1963, several Viet Cong surrendered at the camp, claiming they wished to defect. Nearly a month later, on November 24, Hiep Hoa was overrun by an estimated 400-500 Viet Cong just after midnight.

Viet Cong sympathizers in the camp had killed the guards and manned a machine gun position at the beginning of the attack. The Viet Cong climbed the camp walls and

shouted in Vietnamese, "Don't shoot! All we want is the Americans and the weapons!" Lt. John Colbe, the executive officer, evaded capture. Capt. Doug Horne, the Detachment commander, had left earlier with a 36 man Special Forces/CIDG force. The Viet Cong captured four of the Americans there. It was the first Special Forces camp to be overrun in the Vietnam War.

Those captured at Hiep Hoa were SFC Issac "Ike" Camacho, SSgt. Kenneth M. Roraback (the radio operator), Sgt. George E. "Smitty" Smith and SP5 Claude D. McClure. Their early days of captivity were spent in the Plain of Reeds, southwest of Hiep Hoa, and they were later held in the U Minh forest.

In July, 1964, Green Beret SFC. Edward R. Johnson, who had been captured near Hiep Hoa, was brought into the POW camp. The Viet Cong called him "da den" (black skin).

SFC. Camacho continually looked for a way to escape. In July 1965, he was successful. His and Smith's chains had been removed for use on two new American prisoners, and in the cover of a violent night storm, SFC. Camacho escaped and made his

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**



## RORABACK

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

way to the village of Minh Thanh and U.S. custody. He was the first American serviceman to escape from the Viet Cong in the Second Indochina War.

In November, 1965, the Viet Cong released SP5 McClure and Sgt. Smith, who they considered "progressives" (cooperative prisoners) and based on SP5 McClure and Sgt. Smith's promise to join the anti-war movement upon returning to the United States.

The U.S. Army shipped SP5 McClure and Sgt. Smith to Okinawa where they were charged with collaborating with the communists and forced out of the Army.

Capt. Versace had been torn between the Army and the priesthood. When he won an appointment to West Point, he decided God wanted him to be a soldier. He was to enter Maryknoll (an order of Missionaries), as a candidate for the priesthood, when he left Vietnam. It was evident from the beginning that Capt. Versace, who spoke fluent French and Vietnamese, was going to be a problem for the Viet Cong.

Although Capt. "Rocky" Versace was known to love the Vietnamese people, he could not accept the Viet Cong anti-democracy philosophy, and spent long hours assailing their viewpoints. His captors eventually isolated him in an attempt to break him.

1Lt. Rowe and SFC. Pitzer saw Rocky at interludes during their first months of captivity, and saw that he had not broken. Indeed, although he became very thin, he still attempted to escape. By January 1965, Capt. Versace's steel-grey hair had turned com-

pletely white. He was an inspiration to them both. 1Lt. Rowe wrote:

*..The Alien force, applied with hate, could not break him, failed to bend him; Though solitary imprisonment gave him no friends, he drew upon his inner self to create a force so strong that those who sought to destroy his will, met an army his to command.*

On Sunday, September 26, 1965, "Liberation Radio" announced the public execution of Capt. Versace and SSgt. Roraback in retaliation for the deaths of 3 terrorists in Da Nang. A later news article stated that the executions were faked, but the Army did not reopen an investigation. In the late 1970's, information regarding this "execution" became classified, and is no longer part of public record.

In the summer of 1966, another American joined the camp. A Special forces medic, SFC. James E. Jackson, Jr. had been captured on July 5, 1966, in the same vicinity as the others. Jackson was a 20-year Army veteran on his second tour in Vietnam.

In a November 11, 1967 propaganda move, SFC. Jackson and SFC. Johnson, who are both black, were selected to be released from Cambodia.

At the time, racial tension was high in the U.S. and the Vietnamese communists wanted to seize the opportunity to show their "humane and lenient" treatment of Americans, especially black Americans.

However they soon realized that their show and tell "humane and lenient" demonstration was in jeopardy because they had mistreated SFC. Jackson so much that he was suffering simultaneously from malaria, beriberi, hepatitis and amoebic dysentery and

was near death.

Fearing that SFC. Jackson may die on his trip through the jungle to freedom, the Viet Cong, out of an act of desperation, packed up SFC. Pitzer, a Special Forces medic, issued him a small amount of medicine and instructed him to keep Jackson alive.

SFC. Jackson, SFC. Pitzer and SFC. Johnson were released to the custody of Tom Hayden (whom SFC. Jackson had not heard of before). Hayden took the men to Lebanon where they were met by U.S. officials. SFC. Jackson later became friends with Hayden and his wife, Jane Fonda, and although he frequently disagreed with the pair politically, he said he respected them for their intelligence and living what they believe.

By late December, 1968, the Viet Cong had had enough of 1Lt. Nick Rowe and had scheduled him to be executed. His captors considered him a "reactionary" because of his refusal to accept the communist ideology and his continued escape attempts.

While away from the camp in the U Minh forest, 1Lt. Rowe took advantage of a sudden flight of American helicopters, struck down his lone guard, and ran into a clearing where the helicopters rescued him, still clad in black prisoner pajamas. He had been promoted to Major during his five years of captivity.

Maj. Rowe remained in the Army, and shared his survival techniques in Special Forces classes. In 1987, after being promoted to Col., Rowe was assigned to the Philippines, where he assisted in training anti-communists. On April 21, 1989, a communist sniper attacked Col. Rowe in his car, killing him instantly.

Of the nine U.S. Army Special Forces personnel captured at Hiep Hoa and Tan Phu,

the fates of only Capt. Versace and SSgt. Roraback remain unknown. Full documentation of the executions has never been made public; it is not known with certainty that these two men died.

Although the Vietnamese claim credit for their deaths, they did not return their remains. From the accounts of those who knew them, if these men were not executed, they are still fighting for their country.

**NOTE:** The current Prime Minister of Vietnam, Vo Van Kiet, was a ranking member of the Viet Cong Central Committee of the National Liberation Front during the Vietnam War. It was the Central Committee that ordered Capt. Versace, SSgt. Roraback, executed.

Kiet knows exactly what happened to the Americans, and if they are dead, he knows exactly where their remains are buried. Various U.S. officials have met with Kiet, who pledged Vietnam's full cooperation in solving the POW/MIA issue in exchange for President Clinton lifting the trade embargo against Vietnam.

The U.S. government has refused to press the issue of Capt. Versace and SSgt. Roraback, apparently fearing that the sticky subject of execution of American prisoners may draw public demand for war crime investigations and disrupt current U.S. business interests in Vietnam. All U.S. business deals with Vietnam are required to be made with Vietnam's Communist Party which is led by many of the same communist henchmen responsible for the brutal treatment and murder of U.S. prisoners of war and the bloody Vietnam War waged against democracy and capitalism.

See Nick Rowe story on page 16

# Secrecy Cloaks Hanoi Reds Abuse of Navy Hero's Remains

## The Last Firebase Veterans Archives Project

To his family and the Navy pilots who flew with him, Lt. Cmdr. Edwin Tucker of Balwinville, Mass., was nothing less than a hero, a man who sacrificed himself on their behalf.

To the Vietnamese who shot his F-8C Crusader jet out of the skies of North Vietnam on April 24, 1967, Lt. Cmdr. Tucker became little more than a scientific specimen to be poked and probed for whatever secrets it held.

Lt. Cmdr. Tucker died shortly after he parachuted from his crippled plane and landed near Hon Gay City northeast of Hanoi.

He was buried March 4, 1988, with full military honors in Arlington National Cemetery. What happened in the nearly 21 years between Lt. Cmdr. Tucker's downing and his burial has been an embarrassment to the U.S. government, a source of frustration and anguish to his family and an outrage to critics of U.S. government policy on the prisoners of war (POWs) and missing in action (MIAs) from the Vietnam War.

Intelligence reports and sources familiar with the case say Lt. Cmdr. Tucker's remains were used for medical research at a teaching hospital. A congressional source said that Lt. Cmdr. Tucker's skeletal remains, which were wired together at the joints, along with his flight helmet bearing his name, had been on public display in Vietnam for 15 years.

The remains were withheld from his family, despite repeated requests for their return, long after the Vietnamese agreed to cooper-

ate with U.S. officials to determine the fate of more than 1,700 U.S. servicemen missing in that country.

Lt. Cmdr. Tucker's remains were repatriated Nov. 25, 1987, after family members and U.S. officials agreed not to disclose details about the case that might embarrass Vietnam.

A spokesman for the government of Vietnam said he had no specific information about the Tucker case or any of four other sets of remains that were returned at the same time.

"I don't know of any research (on Tucker) or anything like that," said Ha Huy Thong, press officer at the Vietnamese Mission in New York. He said the terms of the understanding Vietnam has with the United States require the remains of missing Americans to be repatriated as soon as they are found and are determined to be American.

Lt. Cmdr. Tucker's family has refused to discuss details of the case. After the funeral March 4, 1988, a brief summary of Lt. Cmdr. Tucker's downing was distributed by the Navy, but it made no mention of use of Lt. Cmdr. Tucker's remains for medical purposes.

The question of research on Lt. Cmdr. Tucker's remains is prominent, however, in a narrative of the case written by the Army's Joint Casualty Resolution Center in Hawaii. The narrative was presented several times to the Vietnamese during meetings on the POW/MIA issue.

"We have received numerous accounts which state that an American pilot was captured near Hon Gay City and taken to the city hospital where he subsequently died of his

wounds," the narrative reads.

"The accounts further state that after his death, his skeleton was prepared and used as a teaching aid in the medical school of Quang Ninh province in Hon Gay City," the narrative continues. "These reports were provided by persons formerly associated with either the medical school or the hospital and were received over a period of several years."

The reports were provided by Vietnamese who said they had seen Lt. Cmdr. Tucker's remains at the hospital and who fled the country after the fall of South Vietnam in 1975. Among them was believed to be a nurse who participated in surgery performed on Lt. Cmdr. Tucker in a futile attempt to save his life shortly after his capture.

Before Tucker was captured, Navy spokesman Lt. Cmdr. Scott Wilson said, he was assigned to a fighter squadron based aboard the aircraft carrier Bon Homme Richard.

On April 24, 1967, Tucker was flying ahead of eight bombers that had targeted rail lines in Hon Gay City. Tucker's mission was to go in ahead of the bombers and draw anti-aircraft fire away from them long enough to allow them to complete their bomb runs.

"As Lt. Cmdr. Tucker passed through 5,000 feet his plane took a direct hit," Wilson said. Lt. Cmdr. Tucker bailed out before the plane crashed, and the pilots in the bombers "observed a fully opened parachute," Wilson said.

Lt. Cmdr. Tucker was listed as a POW until 1974, when his status was changed to "killed in action, body not recovered."

When asked about the government narra-

tive concerning use of Lt. Cmdr. Tucker's remains for research, Wilson replied, "I can't comment on that."

Lt. Col. Keith Schneider, a spokesman for the Defense Intelligence Agency, which analyzes reports on American servicemen still unaccounted for in Southeast Asia, also declined comment on the Tucker case.

However, three days earlier, March 17, 1988, a Pentagon official, demanding anonymity and contrary to Pentagon intelligence reports, denied that Lt. Cmdr. Tucker's remains had been on public display, stating "we simply don't know if it's true. Rarely do the Vietnamese give us extra information. Very seldom do they give us anything but remains."

"He landed literally in the middle of a village...and all the reports we have been able to collect say he was alive. We believe he was not in good health. He was either injured or shot on the way down. He was surrounded by villagers and put into a captured status immediately."

"This is a person I consider to be a hero and to have his name and the family name almost dragged through the mud...I just don't see any useful purpose to it," the officer said.

The POW activists, however, say that it is not a case of dragging Lt. Cmdr. Tucker's or his family's name through the mud, but a case of the Pentagon again juggling the truth in an effort to conceal the lack of honesty of the Vietnamese communists and the atrocities they committed against our servicemen during and after the war.

The information for this story was taken from U.S. government documents and published news reports.

# Photographs Prove U.S./Hanoi Officials Collaborating to Exploit POW/MIA Issue

By Ted Sampley  
U.S. Veteran Dispatch

On the eve of the presidential election, in October of 1992, the American people were led to believe the United States should lift the U.S. imposed trade embargo against Vietnam because Vietnam had made "important progress" toward resolving the POW/MIA issue. That revelation came shortly after the Bush administration announced that a 20 to 30 year-old secret cache of 4,800 communist Vietnamese-made photographs depicting Americans killed in the Vietnam War had been discovered and released to the U.S. government.

A U.S. delegation, headed by Retired Gen. John Vessey, special U.S. Emissary for POW/MIA Affairs, was hastily put together to visit Hanoi and discuss the photographs with Vietnamese leaders during the weekend of Oct. 17-18.

Soon after, a joint communique from Hanoi was issued by Vietnam and Gen. Vessey reporting that Vietnam had provided additional "important information" on unresolved cases and in the context of "accelerated cooperation" on the POW/MIA issue, the statement said, "the United States will move more rapidly towards normalization."

Members of that delegation included Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), a former POW and a member of the Senate Select Committee on POW and MIA Affairs (a major force in the Senate favoring normalization of relations with Hanoi), Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Kenneth Quinn (also eager to normalize relations), Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for POW/MIA Affairs Alan Ptak, and Ann Mills-Griffiths, the controversial executive director of the National League of Families of Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia, an echo of Bush administration POW/MIA policy.

Regardless of the fact that the Vietnamese had previously stated that their archives had been "eaten by termites" and further "flatly denied" that their archives contained no such information about U.S. MIAs, the Bush administration with the high profile support of Senator John Kerry, the former co-chairman of the Senate Select Committee of POW/MIA Affairs, and Senator McCain started what has turned out to be an irre-

versible process of normalizing trade relations with Vietnam.

It must be noted, at this point, that certain members of Sen. Kerry's family, who are involved in doing business with Vietnam, stand to make millions of dollars as the result of lifting the U.S. imposed trade embargo against Vietnam and establishing full diplomatic relations.

U.S. government accounts of the sequence of events that led to the release of the grisly death-scene photographs are contradictory and shrouded in secrecy.

At first Pentagon brass claimed that some of the photographs were provided by individual Vietnamese, then the story changed to "the photos were provided by Theodore Schweitzer, working in Hanoi on a book about the Vietnamese Army." He supposedly contacted the Pentagon and was ultimately provided a computer and other gear to use in his research in the North Vietnamese war files, as well as a reported "\$100,000 to buy pictures."

After Joe L. Jordan, a POW/MIA activist and director of the National Vietnam POW Strike Force, last month made public that he had acquired, outside of U.S. government channels, over 4,000 Vietnam archives photographs and 12,000 negatives, and that he planned to make them available to any interested MIA family member at the annual National Alliance of POW/MIA Families meeting July 15-17 in Crystal City, Va., the Pentagon changed its story again.

In response to Jordan's claim and speaking on the condition of anonymity, a Defense Department official told the Washington Times that the source of Jordan's photographs was "Gene Brown, a 'walk-in' who was employed by DIA [Defense Intelligence Agency] for a brief period during 1992 and 1993 under the cover name 'Druid Smoke'." "Hired on a 'fee-for-service' basis, Brown succeeded in bringing some 4,500 photos out of Hanoi by the simple expedient of buying them from communist officials with money supplied by DIA," the official said.

The Defense Department source stressed that DIA has copies of all the photos, which to date have resolved only 15 to 18 cases.

In a subsequent press release, the Department of Defense said that they have again contacted the MIA families "to make them aware there may be an attempt to publicly

exploit the photographs...We also strongly believe that release of this material would be a callous and unwarranted invasion of these families' privacy, and release should be the decision of the respective families, not their government's decision."

It is a fact that Hanoi officials have continuously lied about its knowledge of our missing servicemen. These photographs prove that Vietnam has known from the date of incident, dating back twenty to thirty

years, the fate of many of our MIAs and that Hanoi will only disclose such information when cornered with evidence.

The public disclosure of these photographs proves that, regardless of Vietnam's lies and deceit, U.S. government officials are collaborating with Hanoi to exploit the POW/MIA issue for the sake of appeasing Vietnam and U.S. corporate interests who want to do business with communist Vietnam.



The graphic photograph above was one of several that Pentagon officials reportedly showed to the family of Col. Joseph Morrison in late 1992, convincing them that he had in fact been killed.

Col. Morrison and Maj. San D. Francisco were flying an F4D aircraft when it was lost over North Vietnam, November 25, 1968.

Both officers safely ejected from the plane and established radio contact on the ground with recovery forces. Other U.S. aircraft spotted their parachutes within 700 meters of a North Vietnamese encampment.

Contact with Maj. Francisco was lost within a half hour. Col. Morrison evaded the communists successfully throughout the night, and re-established radio contact on the following day. Recovery was prevented primarily by weather, and voice and beeper contact was lost.

The U.S. government placed both Col. Morrison and Maj. Francisco in Prisoner of War status. Neither were released in 1973 when 591 Americans were freed from North Vietnam.

Although one photograph clearly indicates the possibility that Col. Morrison was shot in the head execution-style, Pentagon officials reportedly attempted to downplay that possibility.

According to the Pentagon, the photographs which show the dead pilot with his arm in the extended position and with an open hand is proof that Col. Morrison was firing his pistol at the communists when they killed him.

Pentagon officials assert that Maj. Francisco, the "back-seater," was also killed, because two U.S. pistols were displayed along with other captured items in another photograph related to Col. Morrison.

Contradicting the Pentagon's assertions,

former National Security Agency staffer, Jerry Mooney said that signal intelligence intercepted by the NSA at the time of the incident proves that both Col. Morrison and Maj. Francisco had been captured alive by the anti-aircraft Regiment that shot them down and that the communists had identified Col. Morrison and Maj. Francisco by name as prisoners of war.

Signal intelligence further revealed the North Vietnamese had planned to transfer Col. Morrison and Maj. Francisco to the Regiment Command and Control Authority, the 367th Division, operating near the Vinh area, where they would have been interrogated and sent north. Instead the communists apparently changed their plans, directing that the two U.S. prisoners be sent south to what was called the "POW pick and shovel brigade," to build underground depots for supplies.

These depots were a secret Vietnamese military project, therefore the POWs who worked on them would have been considered a security risk if released.

A later coordination of records showed that Maj. Francisco and Col. Morrison were both listed as Missing (not Prisoner) by the Defense Intelligence Agency and the Air Force, while the Joint Casualty Resolution Center (JCRC Thailand) carried both Maj. Francisco and Col. Morrison as Prisoner (not Missing).

JCRC was ordered to "delete any references pertaining to POW status" in Francisco's case. No order was issued at that time to change Col. Morrison's status. The reasons behind the order are unclear.

*The communist Vietnamese still have not returned the remains of Col. Morrison or Maj. Francisco.*



UNIDENTIFIED



## SECRET VIETNAM WAR PHOTOS REVEAL HANOI STILL WITHHOLDING FATE OF U.S. POWs

Pages 6 through 9 of this issue contain graphic photographs of what appears to be dead American servicemen killed during the Vietnam War. Joe Jordan, POW/MIA activist and director of the National P.O.W. Strike Force, purchased these, plus several thousand more POW/MIA related photographs, from a "former DIA [Defense Intelligence Agency] operative."

Last week, speaking on the condition of anonymity, a Defense Department official identified Jordan's source as Gene Brown, a "walk-in" who was employed by DIA for a brief period during 1992 and 1993 under the code name "Druid Smoke." The photographs are currently held secret by the U.S. government.

**The U.S. Veteran Dispatch has chosen to publish these photographs for two reasons:**

The first is because the photographs prove without a shadow of doubt the Vietnamese government has been lying for years by saying it had no such records. These photographs, which were smuggled out of Hanoi's war archives are proof that Vietnam kept meticulous records pertaining to U.S. prisoners of war and missing in action -- dead and alive.

The second, and no less important, is that the photographs are of United States servicemen who were sent into combat as an official action of the United States Government. Since the U.S. government is a government of and by the people, then the people must share the responsibility for that action and should not be protected from having to look at what happened to our men, no matter how painful.

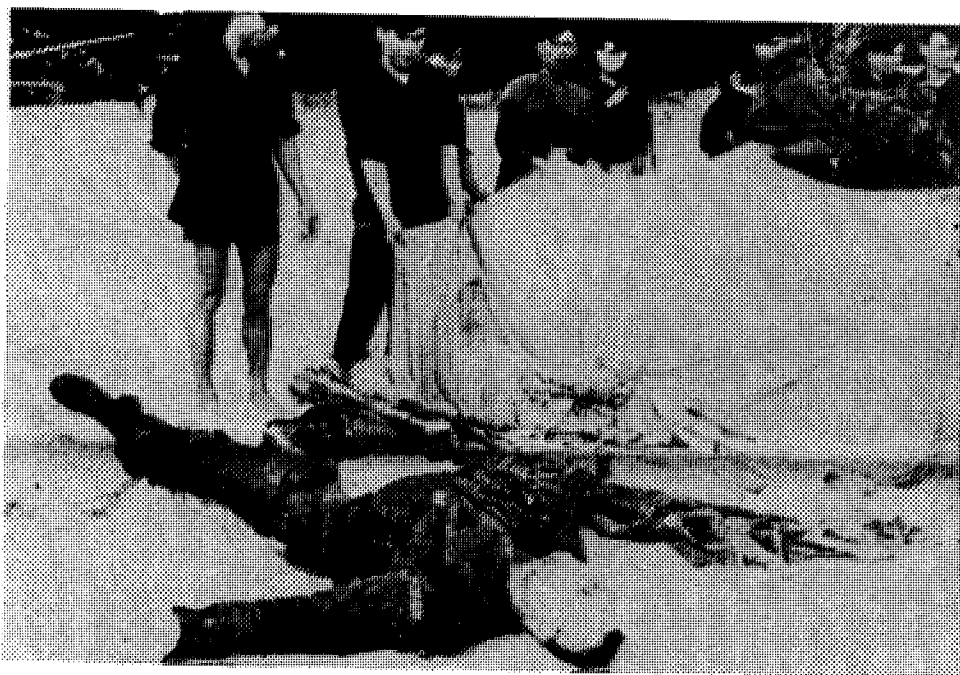








# Secret Vietnam War POW/MIA Related Photographs Stolen From Communist Vietnam's Archives



The above photograph is one of several which pertains to Navy Lt. Edward A. Dickson of Wyoming, Penn., who was shot down over North Vietnam, February 7, 1965. Another of the photographs showed Lt. Dickson's identification card and other personal effects.

North Vietnamese milici are standing behind what is believed to be the body of Lt. Dickson holding his deployed parachute. The Vietnamese communists have had the photographs pertaining to Lt. Dickson since 1965 and have never volunteered to share the information with the U.S. government.

Lt. Dickson was an A4E Skyhawk pilot assigned to Attack Squadron 155 onboard the CORAL SEA. He was a section leader in a four-plane flight strike at Dong Hoi, North Vietnam. About 5 miles south of the target area, Lt. Dickson reported that his aircraft had been hit by ground fire. His wingman was instructed to look his aircraft over for damage as they continued to approach the final run-in to the target.

Just prior to reaching the bomb release point, Lt. Dickson's left wing burst into flames. Shortly after, the flight leader gave the signal to drop the bombs. Lt. Dickson continued in his bomb run, turning out to sea only after his last bomb had left the aircraft.

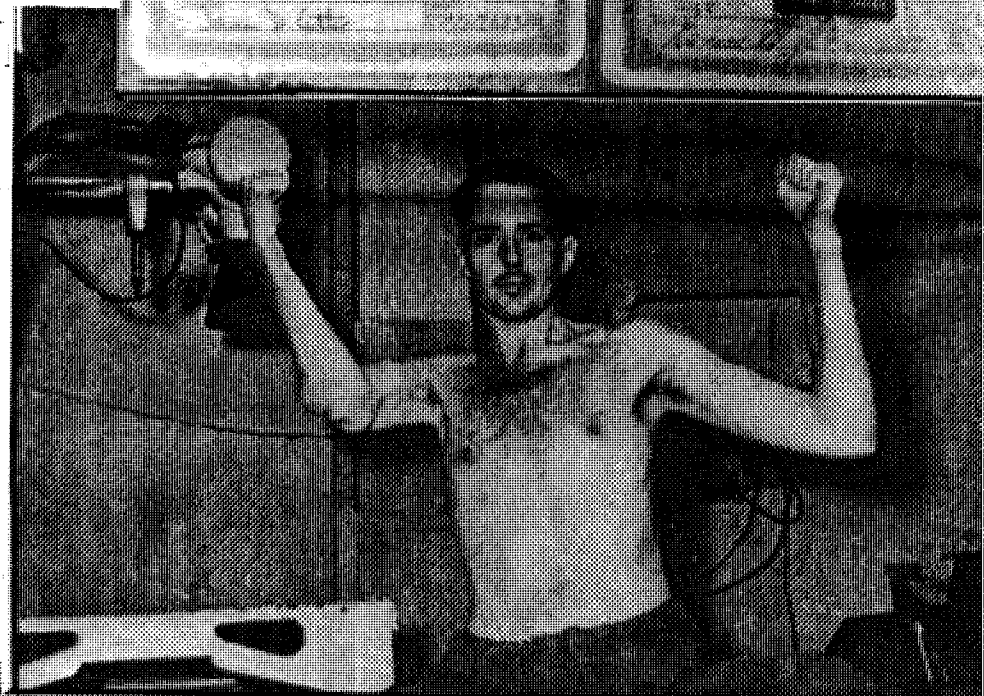
Upon completing the bombing run, the flight made an immediate turn to head for the sea, and for easier rescue. As the flight continued to the coastline it was noted that the

left wing of Dickson's aircraft was completely engulfed in flames. He was instructed to eject, and upon ejection, the canopy and ejection seat were observed to leave the plane.

Partly because the aircraft were traveling at a high rate of speed, no one was sure Lt. Dickson himself left the aircraft, nor was a parachute seen deployed. The crippled A4 crashed into the Gulf of Tonkin approximately one-half mile off shore. Search and rescue facilities were alerted and accompanying aircraft circled in the vicinity of the crash site for roughly 15 minutes without being able to locate their downed comrade. Weather conditions in the target area were overcast with multiple stratus cloud layers. The search was terminated two days later with no results.

Lt. Dickson, because no parachute was seen deployed and he was lost over water, was classified Killed in Action, Body Not Recovered. His name has been listed among the missing in action because the Vietnamese had released no information about his case and his remains were never returned home.

Lt. Dickson's loss was indeed ironic, or possibly just symbolic of the deadly business of naval aviation. One year earlier, Lt. Dickson had narrowly evaded death after ejecting from an A4 during a training exercise over the Sierra Nevada range in California. His parachute failed to open, but he landed in a thirty-foot snowdrift and survived.



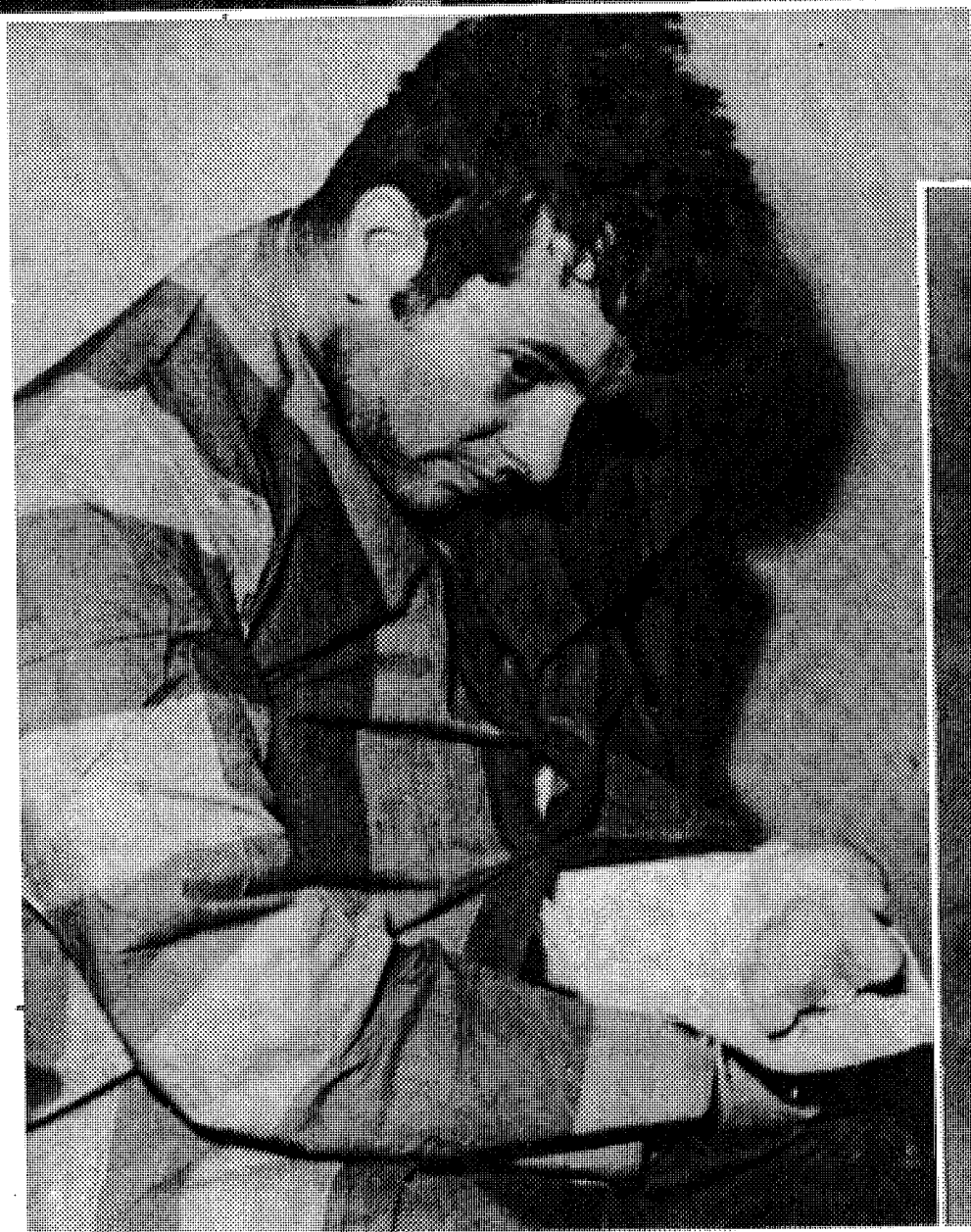
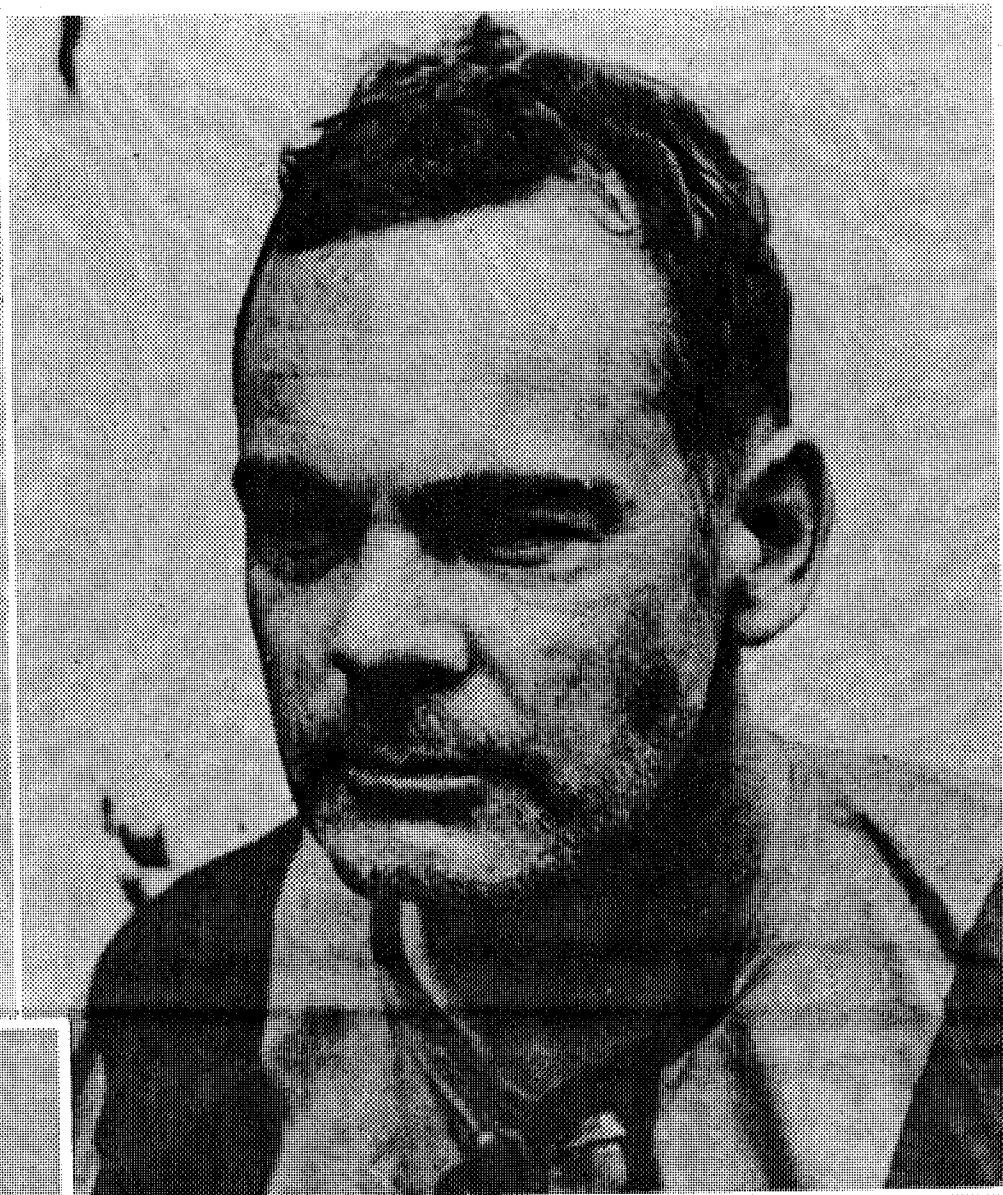




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# UNIDENTIFIED U.S. PRISONERS OF COMMUNIST VIETNAM





# MEETING IN JULY:

## THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF POW/MIA FAMILIES 5th annual Forum

THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF FAMILIES will hold its 5th annual Forum on July 14 - 17, 1994, at the Sheraton Crystal City Hotel's Grand Ballroom. Please keep in mind the public is welcome. There is no charge.

Plans are moving ahead to make this year as informative as past years. The lecturers who have confirmed to bring us informative and new information are GARNETT "BILL" BELL, the first Director of the U.S. POW/MIA office in Hanoi and Special Assistant for Negotiations for the JTTF, former Chief Investigator for the JCRC, and a multi-tour airborne ranger in Vietnam, with involvement in POW/MIA investigations dating back to 1968.

And Major Mark Smith, returned POW (1973), who remained in the Army Special Forces. In 1985, Major Smith and SFC Melvin McIntyre brought suit against the U.S. Government for failing to comply with U.S. law in securing the freedom of American POWs in Southeast Asia. The two had been on a special assignment in Thailand, and had gathered substantial evidence that American POWs were still being held. Further, Smith and McIntyre claimed that this

information, passed on to higher authority, had been "deep-sixed" and there had been no attempt or intent to act upon it.

Mark Smith, like many close to the POW/MIA issue, feels that his government has let our men down, those who proudly served their country. Since the lawsuit (1985), Smith returned to Thailand where he remains to this day actively seeking the freedom of the men who were left behind.

Smith made many attempts to secure a time to testify before the Senate Select Committee for POW/MIA Affairs, but to no avail - he was ignored. We will have the privilege of hearing what the Select Committee was oblivious to.

Thirty-one year old former Marine and U.S. Foreign Service officer and playwright Allen Yeck, plus several actors, will perform "2266," a two act drama about what else??? One family's fight for their POW/MIA.

The National Vietnam Veterans Coalition will hold their Board of Directors meeting on Friday, July 15 at 6:30PM at the Sheraton Crystal City Hotel. Everyone is welcome to come in and observe.

There will be active participation of the Vietnamese community regarding Hanoi's

obvious disregard for the "human rights" of our POWs and their own Vietnamese people. Hanoi is rated in the top three countries by Amnesty International for their disgraceful, abhorring disregard for human life in Vietnam.

The National Alliance is continually appreciative for the marvelous support that is always extended us by so many organizations and individuals.

We are grateful to the following organizations for their financial and moral support for past forums and "FORUM 1994:"

THE NATIONAL FORGET-ME-NOTS OF NEW JERSEY -- THE LAST FIREBASE -- LIMA AREA MIA-POW -- NATIONAL VIETNAM VETERANS COALITION -- U.S. VETERAN DISPATCH

For Further Information on "FORUM 1994" - Please Call: 718-846-4350 or 612-378-1947.

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Major Mark Smith is willing to address the National Alliance "FORUM 1994." However, we must raise the funds to bring him to D.C. - Airfare, round trip from Bangkok to Washington, D.C., plus the hotel will cost roughly \$2200. Normally, the Alliance does not actively solicit donations from the public. However, if you are interested in hearing Mark Smith speak at the Forum, please consider a donation to help with the expenses. Mark your donation "for Mark Smith."

Also, indicate if you wish your donation returned if the total amount needed to bring Major Smith in cannot be raised. Otherwise, donations will be used to defray other costs involved with this years Forum.

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"THEY ARE NOT FORGOTTEN"



In 1972, Jane Fonda took her pro-communist radicalism to North Vietnam. She visited that country's Russian built anti-aircraft emplacements and cheered the spirits of its communist gunners by wearing a gunners steel helmet and peeping through the gun sight, "looking for one of those blue eyed murderers."

Vietnam vets say "no apology will ever erase the pictures of Jane Fonda in giggly bliss, laughing and clapping her hands, as she sit mounted in the gunner's seat of that anti-aircraft gun--the barrels of which were probably still hot from shooting at our pilots."



# Hanoi Jane:

## *Yesterday's fiery communist revolutionary is today's very rich capitalist*

U.S. Veteran staff report

**W**hen Aerobic Queen Jane Fonda traded in her Ho Chi Minh sandals and Viet Cong pajamas for a pair of tights and a leotard, this country quickly forgot how the illustrious star of stage and screen had only a few years earlier been one of communist Vietnam's most loyal and fiery supporters.

Ms. Fonda's involvement with the Vietnam War began in 1967, after several visits with French Communists and underground revolutionaries in this country convinced her America was the bastard nation of the world.

Using her wealth and influence, she managed to garner support from American college campuses, advocating communism and encouraging rebellion and anarchy against the U.S. government. In a speech to Duke University students in 1970, Ms. Fonda told the gathering, "If you understood what Communism was, you would hope and pray on your knees that we would someday become Communist."

Not content with spreading her poison within the home ranks, Ms. Fonda began soliciting returned Vietnam veterans to speak publicly about alleged atrocities committed by American soldiers against Vietnamese women and children. The broadcasts were coordinated with North Vietnamese officials in Canada.

A series of "Coffee Houses" established outside U.S. military bases was another scheme Ms. Fonda concocted to counter the positive effect patriotic entertainers such as Bob Hope, Martha Raye, and according to Ms. Fonda "their ilk" were having on the morale of U.S. forces. There, special employees would attract off-duty servicemen, get them relaxed, and then urge them to desert. According to some of those men approached, they were also promised jobs and money if they deserted.

Ms. Fonda was the major financial support to one of the most damaging pro-Hanoi groups called Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW), which was led for a time by Robert Muller, a Vietnam veteran who had been shot in the spine. VVAW, at its peak membership, mustered about 7,000, some of whom had been indoctrinated in the "Coffee Houses." That organization was later led by Vietnam vet John Kerry, now a U.S. senator and former co-chairman of the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs.

In 1972, Ms. Fonda took her pro-communist radicalism to North Vietnam. She visited that country's Russian built anti-aircraft emplacements and cheered the spirits of its communist gunners by wearing a gunners steel helmet and peeping through the gun sight, "looking for one of those blue eyed murderers."

At a time when 50,000 U.S. servicemen had already died on the battlefields of Vietnam, Ms. Fonda sided with the communists, making radio broadcasts from Hanoi designed to break the morale of U.S. fighting

forces while encouraging the North Vietnamese to fight harder and kill more Americans.

Ms. Fonda's Hanoi radio broadcasts and propaganda films were especially painful and damaging to American servicemen held as prisoners of war by the Hanoi Reds. Communist interrogators used the Fonda recordings, along with starvation and torture in attempting to brainwash American POWs into becoming turncoats.

Upon returning to the United States, Ms. Fonda told the world press that U.S. prisoners of war were being well treated and not being tortured. Her outrageous claims were later exposed when American POWs were finally freed and told of years of agonizing tortures and inhuman treatment. Ms. Fonda responded, not with an apology, but with an accusation calling our returned POWs "liars and hypocrites."

Ms. Fonda's actions stirred up a firestorm in America, prompting nationwide demands that she be tried for treason.

David Hoffman, a former POW who was shot down over North Vietnam in 1971, said that he had been tortured because of Ms. Fonda's visit to Hanoi. "The torture resulted in a permanent injury that plagues me to this day," says Hoffman, who suffers a disfigured arm inflicted by brutal communist guards at the POW camp known as the "Zoo."

"When Jane Fonda turned up, she asked that some of us come out and talk with her," he recalled bitterly.

"No one wanted to. The guards got very upset, because they sensed the propaganda value of a famous American war protestor proving how well they were treating us.

"A couple of guards came to my cell and ordered me out. I resisted, and they got violently angry. My arm had been broken when I was shot down, and the Vietnamese broke it a second time. It had not healed well, and they knew it caused me great pain.

"They twisted it. Excruciating pain ripped through my body.

"Still I resisted and they got more violent, hitting me and shouting, 'You must go!' I knew there was a limit to which I could push them before they might actually kill me.

"I was dragged out to see Fonda. I decided to play the role. I knew if I didn't, not only would I suffer - but the other guys would be tortured or beaten or worse.

"When I saw Fonda and heard her antiwar rhetoric, I was almost sick to my stomach. She called us criminals and murderers.

"When I had to talk to the camera, I used every phony cliché I could. My arm hung limply at my side, and every move caused me pain which showed in my face.

"When it was over, Fonda unbelievably did not see through the ruse - or she didn't want to. I was taken away politely - then shoved back into my cell.

"I detested Jane Fonda then and I detest her now - but I would fight to the death to protect her right to say what she thinks.

"What she did was a slap in the face to every American. It was wrong, ill-advised and stupid. But it was her right. Unfortu-

nately, it was not my right to refuse to be seen with her.

"There is no way I will ever forget what she did to me. I have the reminder here - in an arm that can never be normal again.

In late January, 1973, Ms. Fonda divorced her husband and three days later married pro-communist radical leader Tom Hayden, who had founded the revolutionary Students For Democratic Society in 1962 and was a defendant in the conspiracy trial of the "Chicago Seven."

In 1975, after North Vietnam violated the 1973 "Peace Agreement" resulting in the takeover of South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, Hayden greeted the news by saying "I see this as a result of something we have been working toward for a long time." That "we" includes Ms. Fonda of course.

Another infamous deed of Ms. Fonda is the naming of her son, Troy. Ms. Fonda returned to Vietnam shortly after the war ended in 1975, with her small son, to attend a special service being held in her honor. Ms. Fonda was still a recognized idol and hero to the Communist regime from her earlier years of sending money, food and moral support to the North Vietnamese.

But the ceremony, it turned out, was not just to recognize and honor Ms. Fonda for her love of the Communists. Her newborn son was formally christened and named for the Communist hero Nguyen Van Troi. Troi was a Viet Cong sapper who was executed by the South Vietnamese in 1963 for attempting to assassinate U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara.

Immediately after the christening ceremony, the baby developed a serious case of bronchitis, according to reports. The Vietnamese and Ms. Fonda panicked and called for a Russian doctor. The child was treated and Fonda and her child returned to the United States.

As a result of the communist takeover of South Vietnam, Ms. Fonda's friends in Hanoi turned all of Vietnam into a communist Gulag of slave labor camps with police-state oppression and no freedom of speech, press and worship. Millions of Vietnamese were forced to flee their country and turned into homeless "boat people."

Years later, Ms. Fonda was invited by NASA as V.I.P. to witness the first space shuttle launching. Apparently, one source said, NASA and its officials felt little or no threat from Ms. Fonda's taste for Red Government.

In late 1987, when it became known that Ms. Fonda planned to film her new movie "Stanley & Iris," in Waterbury, Conn., there was a huge backlash from local veterans.

Veterans held rallies, promising violent demonstrations if the filming began. Many bumper stickers reading "I'M NOT FONDA HANOI JANE," began appearing throughout the community.

On June 18, 1988, Ms. Fonda flew to Waterbury in an attempt to pacify the veterans. She met with them for four hours. Ms. Fonda later recalled "I told them my story - why I was antiwar and why I had gone to



Hanoi Jane peeping through the gun sight,

Vietnam."

A few weeks later Ms. Fonda appeared on TV with Barbara Walters and apologized saying: "I'm very sorry for some of what I did...I'd like to say something not just to the veterans in Waterbury but to the men in Vietnam who I hurt, or whose pain I caused to deepen because of the things I said or did. I feel I owe them an apology...There were times when I was thoughtless and careless...I'm very sorry that I hurt them."

The vets did not buy it.

They said Ms. Fonda, an award winning actress, was faking an apology because veterans were protesting against her all over the country. As a result of the protest, the vet said, her movies were doing badly and she had been removed from Nabisco Shredded Wheat boxes.

The vets said "no apology will ever erase the pictures of Jane Fonda in giggly bliss, laughing and clapping her hands, as she mounted the gunner's seat of a communist Vietnamese anti-aircraft gun."

"I'd say a lot of American boys lost their lives because of the encouragement she gave the North Vietnamese," said a former rifle platoon leader from Texas.

In December of 1991, Hanoi Jane, the once fiery communist activist, who advocated violent revolution to overthrow America's democracy and the free enterprise system, married billionaire Ted Turner, a leading American capitalist and chairman of the Atlanta based Turner Broadcasting System Inc., the parent company of Cable News Network.

Today, the communist architects of Ho Chi Minh's brutal war against democracy, freedom and capitalism, which resulted in the deaths of over 3 million North and South Vietnamese, and 58,000 American servicemen, are now "best friends" with Western bankers and capitalist businessmen. They are even traveling the world appealing to foreign investors to bring more big business and money back to Vietnam, so like Hanoi Jane, they too can be rich.

A veteran summed it up: "It is a shame that some of those who fought so well for America can be treated as 'forgotten ghosts' and left to rot as POWs in Hanoi's prisons, while those like Fonda, who so passionately supported our enemy and condemned our system of government, are now overwhelmingly blessed by its wealth."

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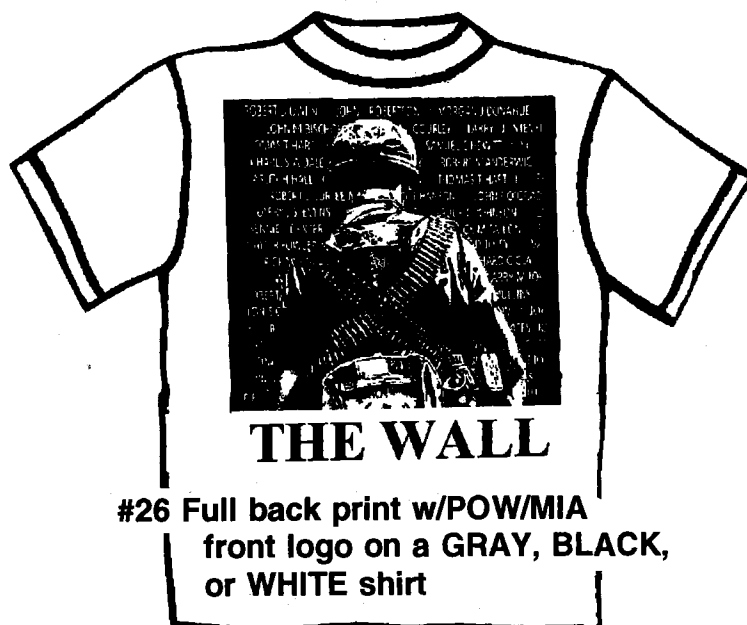
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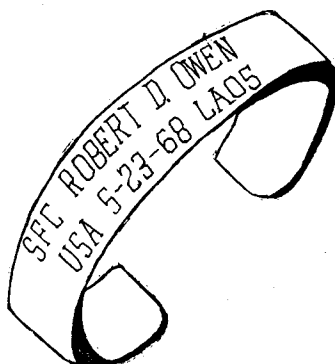
In the late 1960's, Americans concerned with the inhumane treatment American prisoners of war were receiving at the hands of their Vietnamese captors, picked up on the "Montagnard bracelet" and created the idea for the POW/MIA arm bracelet.

Today, Americans are continuing to join the effort to "keep the faith" with American servicemen still missing as a result of the Vietnam War.

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# Nick Rowe: The American Hero Left Out In The Cold

*The Last Firebase  
Veterans Archives Project*

In another time, in another war, Nick Rowe would have been one of America's most honored heroes.

He won a Silver Star, the Legion of Merit, two Bronze Stars and two Purple Hearts for his gallantry in combat.

More significantly, Nick Rowe, a Green Beret lieutenant, survived and escaped after five years of captivity in a Viet Cong prison camp, five years of torment and torture during which he was subjected to constant physical humiliation and repeated attempted political indoctrination and threats of execution.

Lt. Rowe, the only officer to successfully escape from long term captivity of the communist Vietnamese, brought back from captivity horrific stories of torture and cruel living conditions inside Viet Cong prison camps.

Lt. Rowe's experience and leadership would later be instrumental in rewording and reinterpreting parts of the military Code of Conduct, and he eventually designed and developed the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and Schools Program on Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape (SERE) at Fort Bragg. He was later promoted to full Colonel and sent to the Philippines to provide anti-insurgency training for the Philippine military.

The jungle war was heating up by the time Lt. Rowe was sent to Vietnam in 1963. His Green Beret unit was responsible for a counter insurgency program in the Mekong River Delta of South Vietnam, with Lt. Rowe acting as a Special Force's advisor to Civilian Irregular Defense Forces (CIDG) at Tan Phu.

On October 29, his unit of CIDG set out on an operation to Le Cour, a small hamlet northwest of Tan Phu. The day's mission was considered routine, but for Nick Rowe and his friends, Capt. Rocky Versace and medic Dan Pitzer, the firefight that broke out in the early morning marked the end of a life of order and sense.

For 62 months, he battled dysentery, beriberi, fungal diseases and the morally undermining realization that he might be executed, or worse, kept alive but never released.

His home was a tiny cage made of slender saplings, three feet by four feet by six feet in dimension. His bed was a rice sleeping mat. At times, his only friends were small creatures unconcerned with the American's "imperialistic ways."

Lt. Rowe endured physical torture and forced isolation. He resisted attempted political indoctrination or "thought correction," even concocting a cover story that he was merely an engineer building civil projects in South Vietnam with no soldiering experience whatsoever. Lt. Rowe understood that if the Viet Cong realized he was a Special Forces officer, they would then deduce that he knew his Special Forces camp defense system in detail. By using a simple cover story, he hoped he could save his peers from jeopardy. The scheme worked - the North Vietnamese

believed him.

Lt. Rowe continued to resist attempts to force him to denounce his country and its mission in Southeast Asia. His release, the Viet Cong cadre informed him, was dependent on learning the "truth" about "U.S. imperialism and its war crimes against the freedom loving Vietnamese people" - and believing it. He was told that if the truth was not learned, there would be no release, regardless of the outcome of the war.

Lt. Rowe's cover story held true for five years. It was betrayed in the end, however, by the very people whose freedom he was struggling to help protect.

Acting on a request from the North Vietnamese, students in a so-called anti-war organization in the United States researched public records and formulated biographies on Americans captured in Vietnam.

When the Viet Cong received Lt. Rowe's biography, they brought him in before several Viet Cong officials. A piece of onion skin paper was held up. "... the peace and justice loving friends, of the National Liberation Front, who live in America, have provided us with information which leads us to believe you have lied to us," they informed Lt. Rowe. According to what we know, you are not an engineer...you have much military experience which you deny...You were an officer of the American Special Forces."

Lt. Rowe sat dumbfounded, unable to comprehend that his own people would betray him. He felt it was over. He had lied to the communist for five years. Worse in their eyes, the Viet Cong had believed him and lost face, and for that he would be punished.

They condemned Lt. Rowe to death.

He was being led to a destination for execution when his small group of guards was caught on the edge of an American B-52 saturation bombing raid. The guards scattered, leaving Lt. Rowe with only one.

Lt. Rowe knew he had nothing to lose. He bided his time until the remaining guard inadvertently moved to Rowe's front, whereupon Lt. Rowe bludgeoned him with a log and escaped.

Not only did Lt. Rowe survive his ordeal as a POW, he escaped and emerged stronger than before his capture, more committed to the American ideal and more convinced than ever that what the communists had planned for Vietnam and the world was a blueprint for tyranny and human suffering.

Nick Rowe frustrated the communists. They never broke him. They never shook his faith in the American system. He was the quintessential American fighting man, unable to be broken mentally or physically.

But Nick Rowe's war was Vietnam, a war which neither the American government nor the American people considered a noble enough cause to produce heroes. The warriors, not the war, were blamed for what happened in Vietnam. And so, Nick Rowe and what he did and what he stood for was forgotten by those for whom he fought.

The communists, however, never forgot Lt. Nick Rowe. They never forgot the threat men such as he posed to them and their view of world domination.

Shortly before 7 a.m. on April 21, 1989, a small white car pulled alongside a gray,

chauffeur-driven vehicle in a traffic circle in the Manila suburb of Quezon City. The barrels of an M-16 rifle and a .45-caliber pistol poked out the window of the white car and spit out more than two dozen shots. Twenty-one of them hit the gray car. One of the rounds hit Col. James N. "Nick" Rowe in the head, killing him instantly.

The hooded killers were members of the communist New People's Army (NPA), the Filipino version of the Viet Cong.

It took the communists nearly 25 years, but they finally silenced Nick Rowe. What they could not do in a jungle cage in South Vietnam's U Minh Forest through torture, intimidation and political indoctrination, they did with a .45 and an American made M-16 on the streets of Manila.

At the time of his death, Col. Rowe was serving at the Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group providing anti-insurgency training for the Philippine military. He had carried to the Philippines the same hard-line anti-communist message that he had brought home from Vietnam. It was a message the NPA could not tolerate because Rowe, in his quiet, unassuming way, was more effective than any dozen diplomats in spreading freedom and democracy.

Col. Rowe had warned U.S. Embassy officials in the Philippines weeks before his death that the NPA was planning a major terrorist act, that a high-profile American might be in danger. The NPA wanted to prove its viability as a communist insurgency and to convince them that not even American military might could stop them.

The State Department ignored Col. Rowe's warnings.

Rowe was left to fend for himself in the Philippines, just as the American military was left to fend for itself in Vietnam. Nick Rowe was as much a victim of America's impotence abroad as he was a victim of the communists.

Just how feeble America's foreign policy has become was evident in the State Department's response to his murder.

Col. Rowe's death prompted no unusual response from the American government or the public for whom he had diligently labored as a career army officer. There were no reprisals, no retribution, no outraged calls for vengeance over the death of this American hero.

Had Col. Rowe been an officer of equal stature in the Israeli Army, his death would have provoked immediate and harsh retribution. To the Israelis, an attack on anyone in the military is an attack on the national honor. Not so in the United States, where national honor is of little concern either to the career bureaucrats who infest the diplomatic corps or to politicians who infest Congress.

Col. Rowe knew the dangers of going to the Philippines to confront the communists on their own ground once again. And after Vietnam, he should have known that he would receive little backing from the U.S. State Department in whatever he did. But he chose to go, despite the dangers from the NPA and his own government, because of his commitment to this country and its people.

Col. James N. Rowe was buried May 2, 1989, in a steady rain near a grove of flower-



**Nick Rowe**

ing cherry trees at Arlington National Cemetery. There were about 450 mourners at the funeral services, including Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney and Secretary of State James Baker. Those high-ranking career bureaucrats offered little solace and raised little commotion about Rowe's death. They are merely functionaries of a government that has abandoned its military men and allowed them to be used as political pawns.

Col. Rowe was a true believer in America and the American system, despite the ineptitude displayed by diplomats and politicians in Washington.

Col. Rowe was a soldier's soldier, and even though his government abandoned him in his time of need, he died a hero's hero, faithful to his country to the end.

Two Filipino communist rebels, Donato Contiente and Juanito Itaas, were later captured and convicted of the ambush slaying of Col. Rowe. The two rebels were subsequently pardoned and released in early 1992 under a directive by Philippine President Fidel Ramos.

Washington officials made only a lukewarm request for the Philippine government to refuse amnesty to Col. Rowe's killers.

As a post script, when the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs issued its final report in January, 1993, the Committee wrote:

"During the course of our investigation, the Select Committee was struck by the heroics of the Americans held in captivity in Vietnam.

"The commitment and sacrifice of these men under the most extreme conditions was truly remarkable. In spite of discord at home, propaganda, and torture, the conduct of most of the POWs stands as an inspiration and example to all who wear our country's uniform.

Following are few examples of those who were captured and detained in North Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia."

Col. James N. Rowe, a war hero who should have been treated as a national treasure, was not listed as one of the POWs our senators considered to be heroes. Col. Rowe had for years before his death been a critic of U.S. government policy as it pertained to the issue of U.S. servicemen, because he believed some men are still being held in captivity.