

JUL 13 1995 13:04 P.0104
FAX FOR TONY LAKE

From: Ann Griffiths
Subject: NORMALIZATION DECISION BY THE PRESIDENT
Date: July 9, 1995

I have heard from NBC that the President has made his decision and intends to announce it on Tuesday, the day before Gilman's International Relations Committee holds its hearing and a few days before Senate debate associated with the State Department Authorization bill. I've also heard that your decision memo has not yet been given to the President.

At this point, I don't know who, what to believe as to timing, but am convinced that the President intends to move forward despite sworn testimony which makes clear that Vietnam has not met his criteria. If he does, I sincerely hope that at least the decision will be honestly announced, rather than further destroying integrity by claiming full cooperation by Vietnam.

The misplaced and inaccurate focus on "ending the war" implies that all interested in getting available accounting from Vietnam are still holding unwarranted hostilities and re-fighting the war. It is nonsense, disproven not only by the League's long-standing support for humanitarian assistance to Vietnam, but by our many years of advocating a U.S. policy of reciprocity.

Further evidence is a project we have been pursuing -- THE BRIDGE. A joint humanitarian venture of World Touch (Dr. Larry Ward) and the League, it is our hope to establish an office in Da Nang, Vietnam, headed by former Chief of the U.S. POW/MIA office in Hanoi, to fund and support projects to help the people of Vietnam and seek their help in achieving answers on America's missing. In particular, we hope to provide help to Vietnamese youth -- medical, prosthetics, skills training -- and seek the help of the Vietnamese people, especially veterans, to obtain concrete accountability.

Since Vietnam is being praised as fully cooperative, I hope that the President, you and your colleagues at State and Defense will urge Government of Vietnam's full cooperation and support. In view of Hanoi's many public offers to visit and see for ourselves that they are cooperating fully, as well as the rationale for establishing the U.S. liaison office, U.S. officials should wish to be supportive and provide whatever assistance might be needed. The humanitarian exchanges we hope to establish should be applauded by all who have pushed for veteran-to-veteran cooperation as a means of achieving accountability and improving relations on a people-to-people basis. The Administration's assistance would facilitate that process.