

July 9, 1993

Lt. Colonel Mack M. Brooks
Chief, POW/MIA Affairs
Department of the Army
U.S. Total Army Personnel Command
Alexandria, Virginia 22331-0482

Dear Lt. Col. Brooks:

As you are aware, I have been greatly concerned about the possibility of my brother Paul A. Hasenbeck's file being closed. The reason for this concern is the great number of discrepancies in the information provided to my family or which I was able to obtain on my own in the past six plus months and the fact we have been given no positive or physical proof to substantiate any of the information. I know that once his file is closed, it will never be reopened no matter how compelling the new data and until some of the discrepancies can be clarified, it should not be closed.

Areas of confusion/concern are:

1. What documents and/or evidence does the government have that qualified Paul and the three men with him as discrepancy cases? Of some 2200 plus men missing, what makes these four qualify for the short 135 man discrepancy list?
2. On which Vassey list did they first appear? Vassey 1, 2 or 3?
3. Why were photos of Paul, Mangino, Nidds and Winters along with Garwood, Greer and Schreckengost provided in connection with investigation of a "Salt and Pepper" team involved in collaboration after 1973?
4. An explanation of why Memorandum dated December 26, 1974 lists case number for Thomas Mangino as 0646-1-02. The -1- indicating known POW, as in the case of Garwood 155-1-01. These are the only two case numbers with the -1-.
5. I would like a copy of the DOD April 1991 list of last known alive cited by Senator Bob Smith. I would also like to know why DOD feels they should be on this list.
6. I would like to know if there is any additional details on the search conducted 21 April 1967, including the dispatch of Navy divers to search the river.

7. I need to know exactly how long the search lasted, as in number of days, American military remained in the area. The reason for the need of this information is....
8. If American forces remained in the area for several days or more, how did they fail to observe the two movements of remains, and digging of two graves; one long enough to hold four men buried head to toe. This movement of remains and grave digging occurred during the first week after the incident according to JTF-FA report.
9. What were weather conditions for the area during that week. Was there a heavy rain that uncovered the second grave site?
10. I am still awaiting copies of CIA document entitled "Alleged Viet Cong use of American Prisoner of War in Nghia Hanh District, Quang Ngai Province to teach cadres English". I was able to obtain a copy of this report "outside" of government sources but am awaiting their explanation of its confusion. Why does DIA feel that paragraph 2 dated early June 1967 does not correlate to Hasenbeck, Nidds, Mangino and Winters. Considering the fact that the date, location, and description all match, this report could not be about any other loss. This was the only four man team lost in Southeast Asia on 21 April 1967. In fact, only one other man, a Marine in another area, went missing on that date.
11. Paragraph 1 of this same document could not relate to this incident as the four were captured in April, not early June. Also, the four were NOT in the area of Duc Pho. Paragraph 1 relates to bases 0715-0-01, 0715-0-02, and 0715-0-03, captured 31 May 1967 near Duc Pho. According to the document, soldiers in case 0715 were the ones used to teach English. Paragraph 1 and 2 of this document related to two separate incidents.
12. Need explanation of report dated April 1969 indicating possible identification of Daniel Nidds in a POW camp. I need an assessment as to the accuracy of detailed information provided about VC running the camp.
13. According to the article published by Sydney Schanberg, Senator Kerry was aware of the press event to announce the resolution of this case. Why were the families not advised beforehand?
14. Why didn't the Casualty Office advise the families of developments on this case? Why did the families have to learn of it from an ABC news program?

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15. How did photos of Paul's dogtags and other personal effects end up in a Danang Museum? Where are they and his other personal effects now?
16. I am requesting the government make a formal request to the Vietnamese for return of all personal effects in their possession of Paul's.
17. How did the photos of Mangino's personal effects end up in Hanoi?
18. I am requesting a revised, unsanitized copy of the first JTF-FA report showing the names of the witnesses. I have been told this unsanitized version is now available.
19. Also required is an explanation of the participation of Nguyen Thi Hong in the events of Paul's ambush and execution. The first JTF-FA report cites one witness who states she led them to the ambush and is now dead. Another witness states she participated in the ambush. The second JTF-FA cites Mrs. Nguyen Thi Hong Thu as a witness. Is she alive or dead????
20. First JTF-FA Report contains no mention of NVA in the area. Where was Colonel Dai?
21. First JTF-FA report makes no mention of events contained in Colonel Dai's diary.
22. Time of incident and time of search differs in JTF-FA report and Colonel Dai's diary.
23. No one in the JTF-FA report mentions divers in the river. Yet, it is discussed in Dai's diary. Surely, villagers would have remembered divers in the water, especially if they were hiding four bodies in that river and were afraid of discovery.
24. Description of the second grave site differs from first to second JTF-FA report. First report said it was "constructed one meter deep" and all four were laid side by side. Second report states grave was an artillery crater.

25. According to the witness "Fisherman" cited in the first JTF-FA report, ambush occurred at 1615 hours (4:15p.m.) with searchers arriving at about 1800 hours (6:00p.m.). Other witness put the ambush at 1800 hours. Col. Dai's diary states that American forces entered the village at 10:00p.m.
26. New York Times article dated November 18, 1992 states: The diary was presented to Senator Kerry by Col. Pham Duc Dia, director of all Vietnamese military museums, who said he saw the 1967 ambush in which the four soldiers were killed. "I saw the ambush and all four soldiers were killed right then." the colonel said. "Fifteen minutes after, American helicopters were flying very near, trying to find them so the children came out and they laid on the bodies of the dead soldiers - covering the bodies of the soldiers with their own bodies - so that the helicopter pilots could not find them." This is in direct contradiction to the board of inquiry which said that it was two hours before a search was mounted. In fact, the delay in mounting the search resulted in a reprimand for one Lt. in charge of the platoon.
27. JTF-FA report stated none of the witnesses could provide a unit designation. Yet, Col. Dia said they wore "cards on their chests 'Light Infantry Brigade No 196'".
28. None of the witnesses in the first JTF-FA report mentions searching the bodies or taking of personal belongings. JTF-FA reports states "none of the witnesses interviewed remember anyone taking documents or identification media from the four Americans." Yet, Col. Dia speaks of a lock of hair being taken from the "pocket of one G.I. named Daniel. We now know Hasenbeck's and Mangino's personal belongings were taken and, although the bodies were supposedly immediately thrown in the water and buried, none of the photos of these articles suggest they were ever in the water?

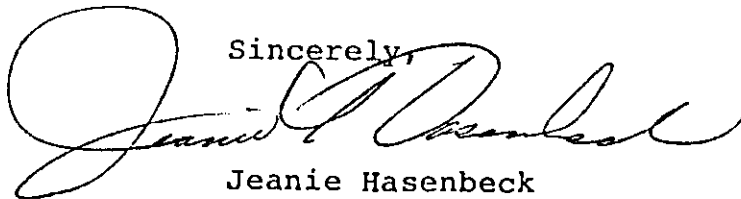
In summary, did they die on April 21, 1967 and if so, how come the sightings months later? If they were ambushed and executed in the manner described, how come all the conflicting accounts? If they were buried, how come all the many varying descriptions of the sites? No one ever would forget the details of an event such as this, no matter the number of years that past. Psychological studies have proven this to be true.

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I think the length of this letter stands on its own merit with the number of discrepancies listed as to reasons enough not to close Paul's case. I understand the urgency of the governments of both Viet Nam and the United States to explain away or to account for, no matter the story told being truthful, to finally after all these years to be allowed to close these cases. I would rather Paul forever be carried "status unknown" than to have his departure from this earth be a story of lies. The truth is probably buried in all of this somewhere and I need to be able to continue to search to find it. I have only been at this seven months but have learned a lot. My greatest concern is that before I can learn the full truth, his case will be closed.

I am formally asking that the case of Paul A. Hasenbeck be continued in an open status for as long as it takes to bring the true story to light.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jeanie Hasenbeck". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the word "Sincerely,".

Jeanie Hasenbeck

Sister of SSgt. Paul A. Hasenbeck, MIA

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Chung Ngai Wong DTG 10/4/57

May 67