

TO: Department of Defense
FROM: Mary Louise Hall (Mrs. Harley Hall)
DATE: September 13, 1993
RE: ALLEGED "ACCOUNTING" for "REMAINS" OF
POW HARLEY H. HALL, USN (3 FRONT TEETH)

**QUALIFIED ACKNOWLEDGMENT UNDER PROTEST
FOR OBJECTIVITY AND TRUTH**

Dear Sirs:

In response to the recent recovery of three of Capt. Harley Hall's front teeth from the site of his downing and capture on 1/27/73 in Quang Tri Province, I would like the following to go on record:

While I acknowledge these to be three of my husband's correctly identified teeth (confirmed by a dental expert), I **object most strenuously** to the inference that they constitute evidence of death, and I **by no means acknowledge or accept them as an accounting** of the person of Harley H. Hall. As such, they represent not only **insufficient evidence** for case closure, but more importantly, **BLATANTLY CONTRADICT ALL UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT ASSERTIONS & INTELLIGENCE ON THE HARLEY H. HALL CASE**. Specifically, various U.S. Agencies have consistently maintained that **he could NOT POSSIBLY have died AT THAT SITE**, i.e. Quang Tri, an inference drawn from multiple references of **captivity elsewhere**.

Apart from the obvious fact that adults frequently lose teeth, which was notorious among POW's, the condition of the teeth, the fact that they are **front teeth**, and especially the **LOCATION of discovery** all point to a more obvious or plausible explanation. Namely, Capt. Hall was either punched, received a blow to the mouth by his captors, these teeth were **extracted**, or fell out due to malnutrition and poor care.

As to the **location** of his alleged "death":

1. **NAVAL INTELLIGENCE**: Naval Intelligence informed me two weeks after his downing that Harley had been captured - an absolute certainty based on first hand sensitive intelligence. It was **the U.S. Government itself** that had the information to change his status to **Category I: Capture Confirmed**. (Early documents sent to me under the Freedom of Information Act indicated all four crewmen in Quang Tri incidents that day were captured. Capt. Hall remained in **Category I POW status for a full seven years (1973 - 80)** until all such cases except Charles Shelton, USAF, were altered to "PFOD (Presumptive Finding Of Death)."

2. **DR. ROGER SHIELDS**: It soon became evident that Harley was not only captured, but had arrived at a prison site of some sort. I was personally told by POW/MIA expert Dr. Roger Shields that Harley's was "one of the **compelling**, if **not THE most compelling** case of capture he had ever reviewed." "They are **holding** your husband, Mrs. Hall, one way or another," (the inference clearly being 'dead or alive') "and they can answer for him and **never settle for anything LESS**."

3. **THE NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY:** NSA files have subsequently revealed that **Capt. Hall was tracked** from battalion to battalion to a particular **PRISON CAMP ON THE VIETNAMESE/LAO BORDER**, hence **NOT** in Quang Tri Province.

4. **DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY REPORT:** On 13 July, 1988, the DIA issued an analysis of Vietnamese reports to General Vessey about an "unrecoverable body" in the Quang Tri area which had fallen "into a trench." DIA analysis countered that this "answer" was totally unacceptable, and that the SRV report was a **concoction** "implausible and in conflict with their known policies and practices" regarding Americans.¹ The area was heavily patrolled by North Vietnamese troops who would not have to resort to local villagers to account for an American downed under their noses (See Attached). Next, local "witnesses" began to tell of an American body, allegedly Harley's, "buried there," but digging teams repeatedly found nothing. **But now the sudden turnover of three teeth from Quang Tri is viewed as a "resolution," while in fact they in no way mitigate the U.S. Government's previous objection to this story and insistence that Capt. Hall could not have died there, let alone be buried in an unrecorded spot.**

5. **CLASSIFIED U.S. FILES:** This summer I returned to Washington, D.C., to review all pertinent files including classified material accessible to families. This reinforced my previous conclusion and added the **STUNNING NEW REVELATION that Harley Hall had been INTERROGATED BY THE SOVIETS** (which, I hasten to point out, could **not** have happened had he "died" in the area where his teeth were allegedly lost and recovered twenty years later!) This is in **startling contradiction** to the U.S. Government's present bland acceptance of his "death" in the Quang Tri area shortly after being shot down.

6. **REFUGEE STATEMENTS:** I realize less credence is given to "hearsay" from Vietnamese, but it is no secret that about the time of my husband's downing and capture, there was frequent recounting of and bragging about "the parading of a big Blue Angel" in Vietnam, possibly through Hanoi.

Cases of misidentification and case closing on insufficient evidence are not new or unique to my husband's case, but **all the above shows me is that the United States Government's "highest national priority" in this area is to shorten if not eliminate the missing list and close the book on as many discrepancy cases as possible, even if it means a completely false burial of hundreds of Americans - all to expunge the past, achieve a hasty and slipshod "accounting," and facilitate lucrative and politically expedient relation with Hanoi.**

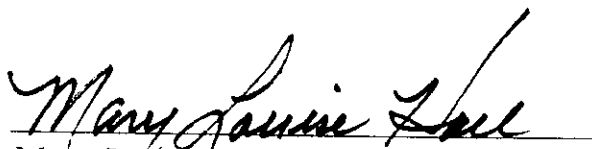
¹ As for the incredible statement that "we have no information which would indicate Capt. Hall survived to become a captive of the Vietnamese," one need only consider every other agency cited here, and Harley's official POW status, to perceive a gross discrepancy and untruth.

Some cases are genuinely resolved. My close friend, Carleen Blackburn, received almost full skeletal remains of her husband (notably with **FOUR FRONT TEETH MISSING**). Other cases are not, and perhaps never can or will be resolved. But the most **unfortunate and painful** of all are the **FALSELY RESOLVED CASES**. Thus, after twenty years of almost unbearable limbo and uncertainty, I may now face the **worst possible case scenario**: an **eternal limbo, still not knowing**. The three teeth only reinforce the intelligence on capture, while the U.S Government prepares to call the case "resolved" and cease even trying to account. Such a **FALSE ANSWER IS WORSE THAN NONE**, leaving me with **less peace than before, not more!**

I do not reject **receiving** the three teeth, nor will I take legal action against their **identification**, because they are indeed Harley's teeth and constitute all I have of my husband at the present moment. Had they been presented in the spirit of further clues or evidence in Harley's case, and not as an unwarranted "accounting" and resolution of "death," I would even welcome them as one small clue to the mystery of what happened to him in captivity.

Be assured that my protest does **NOT** stem from "**wishful thinking**," "hoping against hope," or **reluctance or refusal to accept death** as an inevitable/probable outcome. For years, I have imagined, longed for and even dreamed of the day when I could hold a proper memorial service for Harley, when his earthly remains could rest in U.S. soil. Then his children and I could experience the peace of knowing, and begin to close the long chapter of grief. But to grant burial with full military honors and a full size coffin to three front teeth would not only be ridiculous, but represent acquiescence in a lie.

Considering the above, I protest the closure of Harley's case in the strongest possible terms, and implore you to leave his name on the honored list of **unaccounted for** Americans, specifically of "focus" **POW cases where he was listed in the first place**. (Otherwise, his name will wrongfully appear on the "remains returned" list, and many thoughtful Americans will assume that this notorious case is finally resolved/settled.) **To do otherwise** on the basis of **incomplete and misleading** "remains" of three teeth is a **travesty and an affront to the truth**, as well as yet another blow to the families, who have fought so valiantly (and had their faith so badly shaken) in this cause. This is the least you owe to the men who served and those of us who have paid so high a price.



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