



POW-MIA FACT BOOK



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

INTRODUCTION

This Fact Book has been prepared in support of the U.S. Government's effort to increase public awareness of the POW/MIA issue. It outlines the extent of the problem and summarizes U.S. Government efforts to resolve the matter.

President Reagan and his entire Administration are deeply committed to obtaining the fullest possible accounting of our POWs/MIAs, supported by a strong bipartisan consensus in the Congress. Few issues enjoy such widespread, bipartisan support. The question of resolving the fates of these Americans is a matter of the highest national priority. In his remarks at the last National Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, the President said:

...Even though they can't be at the table this Christmas, they must not be far from our hearts. And let me add, there is no one we hold in our hearts more closely than those MIAs -- those missing in action in Southeast Asia, some of whom may be serving our country still. They, too, are absent at the table, and the gathering will never be complete until they return or are accounted for.

All involved government agencies are fully dedicated to resolving the fates of over 2,450 Americans still missing in Indochina as a result of the Vietnam War. The Department of Defense feels a very special commitment. First, we owe these Americans a deep debt of gratitude for serving our country in difficult times. But, just as importantly, those still serving and those who will do so in the future must know they will never be abandoned, even under trying and difficult circumstances. We will not rest until we have reached this goal.

Supreme Commander

GENERAL SUMMARY

In the last four years, the United States Government has increased its approaches to the communist governments of Indochina in an effort to obtain the fullest possible accounting of Americans lost during the military conflict there. Although there are indications of increased willingness to cooperate, in general the Indochinese governments' response to us has been minimal in comparison to what they are capable of doing.

A great deal of evidence exists that the governments of Vietnam and Laos hold information which could resolve the status of many unaccounted for Americans.

Despite the difficulties involved, the United States Government is deeply committed to resolving the POW/MIA issue. This issue is a humanitarian matter of such importance that our policy is to not allow it to be linked to other issues between the U.S. and the Indochinese governments.

It is a moral and legal responsibility of the U.S. Government to place such a high priority on resolving the status of unaccounted for Americans. In an address before the National League of POW/MIA Families, Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger stated:

We Americans have a direct responsibility to our servicemen who have fought for the United States. It is imperative that we meet that responsibility, not only in the specific instance of accounting for servicemen still missing, but so that future generations of Americans can serve with the faith and trust that we care. They must be confident that should they be captured or listed as missing, we will do everything to support them in combat or return them to their homeland afterwards".

U.S. Unaccounted for Personnel

Army	706
Air Force	924
Navy	500
Marines	291
Coast Guard	1
Civilians	<u>42</u>
Total	2,464

U.S. SERVICEMEN UNACCOUNTED FOR BY STATE

Alabama - 43	Nebraska - 25
Alaska - 3	Nevada - 10
Arizona - 25	New Hampshire - 10
Arkansas - 27	New Jersey - 63
California - 249	New Mexico - 17
Colorado - 41	New York - 159
Connecticut - 39	North Carolina - 61
Delaware - 5	North Dakota - 17
District of Columbia - 9	Ohio - 129
Florida - 82	Oklahoma - 49
Georgia - 48	Oregon - 46
Hawaii - 11	Pennsylvania - 125
Idaho - 12	Rhode Island - 10
Illinois - 102	South Carolina - 30
Indiana - 71	South Dakota - 9
Iowa - 39	Tennessee - 44
Kansas - 38	Texas - 161
Kentucky - 22	Utah - 23
Louisiana - 34	Vermont - 4
Maine - 18	Virginia - 62
Maryland - 37	Washington - 60
Massachusetts - 60	West Virginia - 26
Michigan - 77	Wisconsin - 37
Minnesota - 47	Wyoming - 6
Mississippi - 18	Puerto Rico - 2
Missouri - 51	Virgin Islands - 1
Montana - 21	Other - 7

US GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO OBTAIN

THE FULLEST POSSIBLE ACCOUNTING

United States Government efforts regarding the POW/MIA problem are coordinated through the POW/MIA Interagency Group. Membership in this group includes the State and Defense Departments, the White House National Security Council (NSC) staff, representatives of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the National League of POW/MIA Families, and House and Senate staff members from the respective Foreign Affairs and Foreign Relations Committees. The Group addresses policy considerations concerning the POW/MIA issue and evaluates current efforts, always seeking new initiatives and approaches to enhance resolution of the question.

Most Americans felt that with the signing of the agreements ending the war in Indochina, accounting for our missing countrymen would finally occur. It was expected in 1973 that the then Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) --North Vietnam-- would honor Article 8 of the Paris Peace Agreement, the article dealing with those missing and killed in action. This article specifically provided for repatriating POWs from both sides as well as exchanging information about the missing and return of remains of those who died. These points were conditional only on the withdrawal of U.S. and allied forces from Vietnam. The agreement ending the war in Laos had similar articles pertaining to POWs and MIAs. However, because of the intransigence of the Indochinese governments, the POW/MIA issue has yet to be resolved.

Prior to the fall of the Republic of Vietnam in 1975, teams from the Joint Casualty Resolution Center (JCRC) searched the jungles and mountains of South Vietnam for remains of U.S. personnel, under the auspices of the Four Party Joint Military Team (FPJMT) established by the Paris Accords. Despite a lack of cooperation from the Vietnamese communists and at times at great personal risk, the JCRC recovery teams achieved noteworthy success in their efforts.

U.S. efforts in North Vietnam were limited to negotiations with the Vietnamese concerning the fate of our servicemen and the repatriation of remains. Between April 1973 and April 1975, North Vietnam returned the remains of 23 U.S. personnel.

In the first six years after the fall of the Republic of Vietnam, several U.S. Congressional Delegations, as well as missions from both the State and Defense Departments, met with the Vietnamese specifically regarding this issue. In addition, JCRC representatives met in Hawaii with Vietnamese officials in July 1978 and travelled to Hanoi in October 1980 and May 1981. These three meetings dealt with the technical aspects of the accounting process.

In February 1982, a U.S. Delegation led by then Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard L. Armitage traveled to Hanoi to discuss the POW/MIA question with the Vietnamese, and impress upon the Vietnamese the high priority the United States Government attaches to resolution. During the ensuing discussions, Mr. Armitage stressed the President's commitment to resolving this issue as well as the deep concern of the American people regarding our missing personnel. As a result of this visit, the Vietnamese accepted a U.S. Government invitation to visit the U.S. POW/MIA facilities in Hawaii. These facilities include the JCRC and the U.S. Army Central Identification Laboratory. The visit took place in August 1982 and continued the dialogue between the two countries.

Following a visit to Hanoi by the National League of Families, on September 30, 1982, the Vietnamese agreed to a longstanding U.S. proposal that technical experts from both sides meet on a regularly scheduled basis to discuss the POW/MIA question. The Vietnamese agreed to four technical meetings per year, the first of which was held in December 1982, the second in March 1983, and the third in June 1983, at which time the remains of nine individuals were returned. The Vietnamese then interrupted the schedule.

In October, 1983, Mr. Richard Childress, Director of Political-Military Affairs, National Security Council, and Mrs. Ann Mills Griffiths, Executive Director of the National League of Families, met in New York with Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach. Discussions focused on overcoming obstacles to advance serious, high-level negotiations between the two governments and laid the groundwork for future such discussions.

In February 1984, the highest level Executive Branch U.S. delegation to go to Vietnam on this question visited Hanoi in an attempt to increase the pace of cooperation. Led again by Richard Armitage, Assistant Secretary of Defense, the delegation included Mrs. Griffiths, Mr. Childress and Mr. Lyall Breckon, State Department's Director of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. This meeting resulted in a Vietnamese offer to accelerate cooperation (concentrating initially on the most accessible cases in the Hanoi/Hai-phong area and those listed as having died in captivity in the south) and to resume the quarterly technical meetings, and a pledge to turn over the remains of eight missing servicemen. These remains were repatriated on July 17, 1984. Six of the eight remains were identified as missing American servicemen and returned to their next of kin. A technical level meeting was again held in mid-August.

In October, Mr. Childress and Mrs. Griffiths met with Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach. During their discussions in New York, the Vietnamese Foreign Minister renewed and strengthened the February 1984 commitments and agreed to set an early date for

the next technical meeting which was scheduled later that month. The October technical meeting was reported as the most cooperative and positive to date and general agreement was reached to hold the next regular meeting in early 1985.

The next meeting took place February 6-9, 1985. During this meeting, the Vietnamese announced they would soon be returning five remains. Also, during this meeting, the Vietnamese took the American team to visit a U.S. aircraft crash site in Vietnam.

Mr. Childress and Mrs. Griffiths met with Foreign Minister Thach and other high-level Vietnamese officials in Hanoi, March 3-5, to discuss continuing cooperation on the POW/MIA issue. All aspects of critical importance to the POW/MIA issue were raised, and the U.S. and Vietnamese sides agreed to several specific points to further accelerate cooperation:

- Meetings between technical personnel will be increased from four to a minimum of six per year, depending on the need and information available.

- Remains mentioned during the February technical meeting were agreed to be returned in March. (Six remains were subsequently turned over to the U.S. on March 20th, identified, and returned to their next-of-kin. Of note was the fact that the names of two of these Americans appeared on the People's Revolutionary Government - Viet Cong - "died-in-captivity" list, representing the first time efforts had been made by the Vietnamese to account for Americans on this list, the initial step in fulfilling a specific pledge of the Vietnamese Foreign Minister.)

- There was an exchange of views on other methods to accelerate progress on the POW/MIA issue, to include joint efforts to excavate crash site locations.

At the technical meeting held April 17-20, 1985, in line with the agreement to hold six or more meetings per year, the Vietnamese agreed in principle to conduct a preliminary survey of a U.S. crash site in Vietnam. The U.S. Government discussed with the Vietnamese the details of a such a survey, proposing a crash site to be visited.

The latest technical meeting was held July 3-6, 1985, in Hanoi. During the meetings, the Vietnamese stated their intentions to turn over the remains of 26 Americans and identification material or information on six others, in approximately 6 to 8 weeks. Also, the U.S. and Vietnamese technical officials jointly surveyed a crash site of an American aircraft incident, a necessary first step to excavation. This announcement is welcomed by the U.S. Government as evidence of the accelerated level of cooperation pledged by the Vietnamese Foreign Minister.

Progress on this question with the Vietnamese has been and is still too slow. Since 1973, the Vietnamese have repatriated to the U.S. the remains of 99 Americans, but clearly the pace is beginning to accelerate. Initiatives through a neighboring country have brought a recent public announcement that the Vietnamese again are willing to enter into negotiations with high-level U.S. officials to resolve this issue within the next two years. This announcement is also welcome and the U.S. Government will move rapidly to pursue this issue in the same spirit. Additionally, the Vietnamese have publicly acknowledged that the accounting for missing Americans is a humanitarian matter and should not be linked to other issues which divide the two countries, a position with which the U.S. fully concurs.

Regarding Laos, our sustained effort to obtain the cooperation of the Lao Government has met with some success. A visit by the National League of Families in September, 1982, was followed by two high level U.S. delegations to Laos in 1983. These discussions resulted in two visits by the JCRC to Laos, the first since 1975. During the second visit, JCRC representatives surveyed the requirements to excavate a crash site in southern Laos. This eventually led to the most encouraging development yet - an unprecedented joint crash site excavation which took place February 10-22, 1985. A U.S./Lao team conducted a full-scale excavation of a U.S. Air Force C-130 aircraft shot down near Pakse, Laos. During the excavation, the team recovered partial human remains and some personal effects.

The remains and personal effects were taken to the U.S. Army Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii, where the technicians, using the latest in analytical techniques, identified the remains of all 13 men lost aboard the aircraft. This excavation is considered to be a major step in developing a sustained pattern of cooperation on the POW/MIA issue. It is hoped it will be the first of many such excavations to resolve the fates of many of the nearly 600 Americans still missing in Laos.

Additional high-level meetings on the POW/MIA issue with the Lao have occurred, including discussions in New York between U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Paul Wolfowitz and Lao Vice Foreign Minister Soubanh Srithirath. During March, 1985, meetings in Vientiane, Laos, between Mr. Childress, Mrs. Griffiths and Lao Vice Foreign Minister Soubanh, the Lao government agreed to continue and increase cooperation with the U.S., to pursue accountability on a unilateral basis and to meet as often as necessary with U.S. officials. They also agreed in principle to visiting the JCRC and CIL facilities in Hawaii.

Despite the limited cooperation of the Indochinese governments and the inadequate progress obtained thus far, the United States assigns and will continue to assign highest priority to achieving the fullest possible accounting for missing Americans.

U.S. PERSONNEL WITH EVIDENCE OF CAPTURE

The following list provides examples of U.S. personnel on whom the Indochinese governments should have information. The individuals mentioned herein are those on whom there is "hard evidence" (e.g. post-capture photography, U.S. or indigenous eyewitnesses to capture or detention, intelligence reports) that they were captured and detained by communist forces. These cases represent only a sampling of those individuals for which the Indochinese should be able to provide an accounting.

ROBERT ANDERSON
USAF
NORTH VIETNAM

COL Anderson went down over North Vietnam on October 6, 1972. He and his back seater both parachuted and talked with rescue planes. Anderson said, "I have a good parachute, am in good shape and can see no enemy forces on the ground." His back-seater was immediately captured. Radio Hanoi reported that a number of U.S. pilots were captured the same day, however, Anderson's plane was the only one lost that day. The back seater was repatriated in 1973.

RICHARD L. BOWERS
USA
SOUTH VIETNAM

CAPT Bowers and SFC Arroyo-Baez were captured together. One Vietnamese captured with them escaped the same day and reported their capture. Another Vietnamese also was captured with them, escaped later and reported that Arroyo-Baez was alive but that Bowers had been shot the same day of capture. The Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) indicated that Arroyo-Baez died in captivity; his remains were returned in March, 1985. But the Vietnamese have never provided information on Bowers.

BARTON CREED
USN
LAOS

LCDR Creed was shot down along the Ho Chi Minh trail in southern Laos on March 13, 1971. After ejecting from his plane he radioed from the ground to the rescue craft that he had a broken leg and arm. His last message was, "Pick me up now. Pick me up now. They are here." Rescue planes made four different attempts in the next 24 hours to rescue him, but failed. One rescue pilot reported that Creed was "most certainly alive" when U.S. rescue forces attempted rescue.

CHARLES DEAN
CIVILIAN
LAOS

Charles Dean and his Australian companion Neil Sharman were aboard a boat enroute to Thakhek, Laos, in early September 1974 when they were captured by the Pathet Lao at Ban Pak Hin Boun. Numerous reports indicated that they were subsequently held in the Kham Keut area of central Laos. Reliable information indicated they were alive in that area as of February 1975. Captured after the cessation of hostilities in Laos, the Lao government should have information on Charles Dean.

RANDOLPH FORD
USN
NORTH VIETNAM

LCDR Ford was downed in an A7A on June 11, 1968, while on a night reconnaissance mission. Ford maintained voice contact until morning and stated that he had a broken arm. On June 15, 1968, Ford arrived at a temporary detention area in which a U.S. returnee was being held. The returnee stated that Ford, who had a broken arm and severe abdominal pains, was medicated to relieve his problem, and shortly thereafter Ford became delirious. An hour later, Ford was taken out of camp on a stretcher and never seen again.

EUGENE H. DEBRUIN
CIVILIAN
LAOS

A photo of Eugene DeBruin and his surviving crewmembers in captivity was obtained from a Pathet Lao publication. LTJG Dieter Dengler, USN and one of the Thai nationals who was a member of the DeBruin crew and held with DeBruin successfully escaped from the Pathet Lao and provided information on DeBruin. In 1982, the Lao Government indicated that he was killed in an escape attempt but provided no further information or clarification.

SOLOMON GODWIN
USMC
SOUTH VIETNAM

A U.S. trained Vietnamese intelligence agent who was held with WO Godwin escaped three weeks after capture and reported on Godwin's status. U.S. returnees confirmed Godwin's capture and reported his death in captivity. Godwin's name did not appear on any lists furnished by PRG.

JACK ERSKINE
CIVILIAN
SOUTH VIETNAM

A Filipino with Jack Erskine escaped from the VC ambush and reported Erskine's capture. Three months later a VC rallier who had participated in Mr. Erskine's capture reported on the incident. About one year later sketches showing Erskine in captivity were captured; however, he was not identified on any lists furnished by the Vietnamese.

DAVID HRDLICKA
USAF
LAOS

COL Hrdlicka's chute was observed opening and he was seen on the ground. One flight member believed he saw Hrdlicka being supported or led away by natives. A helicopter pilot landed at a nearby village and was told Hrdlicka had been picked up by the Pathet Lao. Rallier reports indicated he was a prisoner. A post capture photo of Hrdlicka was obtained from several sources. A recording allegedly made by him was broadcast in May 1966 and the text appeared in Foreign Broadcast Information Service documents.

SEAN FLYNN
CIVILIAN
CAMBODIA

Sean Flynn, a photographer for TIME Magazine, accompanied by Dana Stone, a cameraman for CBS, rented Honda motorbikes and left Phnom Penh on April 6, 1970, travelling southeast on Route One. Villagers in the area said that two Westerners on motor scooters were captured by combined Viet Cong/North Vietnamese forces in Svay Rieng Province. Reports received after January 1973 indicated Flynn and Stone were shot to death in mid-1971 in Kampong Cham Province.

TERRY REYNOLDS
CIVILIAN
CAMBODIA

Terry Reynolds, a UPI reporter, and Alan Hiron, an Australian UPI photographer, were reported missing on April 26, 1972. The automobile in which they were driving was found at the site of an enemy road block on Route 1 in Prey Veng Province, Cambodia. Their photo equipment was found in the abandoned car. According to villagers in the area, both

journalists were captured and led away by communist forces. In early May 1972, a Viet Cong rallier reported observing two Caucasians, equating to Reynolds and Hiron, who had recently been captured. Another report equating to Reynolds indicated that he was being held in Sampan Loeu Hamlet, about 40 kilometers southeast of Phnom Penh in June 1972.

CHARLES SHELTON
USAF
LAOS

Voice contact was made with COL Shelton on the ground and he indicated he was in good condition. A villager witnessed the crash and observed the capture and arrest of Shelton by Pathet Lao forces. Rallier reports indicated he was a prisoner.

DONALD SPARKS
USA
SOUTH VIETNAM

Letters written by CWO Sparks while a POW were captured. Subsequent intelligence indicated Sparks possibly died. No information has been furnished on Sparks.

PHILIP TERRILL
USA
SOUTH VIETNAM

There is a high degree of correlation between VC and Hanoi radio broadcasts describing capture of two Americans and the circumstances surrounding the loss of SP5 Terrill and MSGT J. Salley. Several sighting reports correlated well to the two men. Capture status was confirmed by U.S. returnees who said both men died after capture. Salley was on the PRG DIC list, but Terrill was not.

MILTON VESCELIUS
USN
NORTH VIETNAM

CAPT Veacellius was shot down over Vietnam on September 21, 1967. Other pilots in the area saw him eject and reported that when he reached the ground he was surrounded by Vietnamese. Additionally, a Radio Hanoi broadcast on the following day described the incident and stated that the pilot was captured.

DEGREE OF KNOWLEDGEABILITY POSSESSED BY THE INDOCHINESE GOVERNMENTS REGARDING U.S. UNACCOUNTED FOR PERSONNEL

The U.S. Government has repeatedly urged the Indochinese governments to meet their humanitarian obligation to provide the fullest possible accounting for Americans missing in their countries. These governments assert that no Americans are held captive, but they have done little to substantiate that assertion. It is clear that the governments of Indochina have available to them considerably more information on missing Americans than they have given to the United States. The United States is fully committed to repatriating any Americans who may still be held captive, and to obtaining the fullest possible accounting for those Americans still missing in Southeast Asia.

Cambodia

The communists in Cambodia recently claimed that they have some knowledge of U.S. personnel missing in that country. It is known that during the War, some U.S. personnel now listed as missing were captured in Cambodia, mostly in areas which were under Vietnamese control. Appeals through the Vietnamese government and other channels thus far have not resulted in information to US authorities.

Lao People's Democratic Republic

With regard to Laos, an agreement was signed in that country to end the hostilities there around the time of the repatriation of U.S. prisoners from Vietnam. The United States is not a signatory to this agreement. However, the Laos Agreement specified conditions and provisions for the exchange of prisoners of war, regardless of nationality, and information on the missing similar to the Vietnam Agreement. The Lao have provided little information on unaccounted for U.S. personnel. The nine American prisoners released by the Vietnamese in early 1973 during Operation Homecoming were not, as was claimed at the time, captured by the Pathet Lao. They were, in reality, captured by North Vietnamese forces operating in Laos and moved as expeditiously as possible to North Vietnam for detention. After signing the peace agreement ending the war in Laos, the Pathet Lao claimed to hold only one prisoner, Mr. Emmet Kay, a U.S. civilian, captured on 7 May 1973. He was subsequently released on 18 September 1974. A Pathet Lao official commented that the Pathet Lao Central Committee had been gathering information on U.S. missing in action personnel, but he warned that they would probably only be able to provide

information on a "feeble percentage." On 24 August 1978, the Lao government provided the remains of four persons to a U.S. Congressional delegation. Two of these were determined to be indigenous Southeast Asian. One of the remaining two individuals was identified as a USAF pilot who was shot down on the Lao/Vietnam border and the other is still unidentified. As the cases presented in this Fact Book demonstrate, the Lao should have considerably more knowledge of missing U.S. personnel than they have thus far been willing to provide.

Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV)

There is much evidence to indicate that the Vietnamese have knowledge concerning the fate of many U.S. personnel lost over North Vietnam. A wealth of information on specific aircraft downings was published in the North Vietnamese press throughout the war. A communist source interrogated during the Vietnam War stated that the SRV Ministry of Defense, Enemy Proselyting Department, maintained central listings of all U.S. POWs detained in the SRV. This source also reported that in the SRV, all data pertaining to the death and/or burial of an American prisoner, whether in the north or south, was to be forwarded to Hanoi as quickly as possible together with sketches of the burial site. In 1980, a Vietnamese mortician of Chinese ancestry told U.S. officials that the remains of approximately 400 Americans were warehoused in Hanoi. U.S. intelligence personnel conducted intensive interviews with the source and the U.S. Government judged the information he provided to be very credible.

In the south, representatives of the former Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) should have information on many unaccounted for U.S. personnel. For example, after signing the Paris Peace Agreement, the PRG provided the U.S. a list of 37 missing Americans who had died in captivity. Prior to the March 20, 1985 repatriation of remains, the Vietnamese had taken no action to return the remains of anyone on this list or to otherwise account for them. In addition, it is known that the South Vietnamese communists captured a number of other U.S. personnel whose names have not appeared on any lists provided to the U.S. by either the former PRG or present Vietnamese Government.

Based on the above information, and the known communist proclivity for detailed reporting, it is believed that the SRV still holds a significant amount of specific information on missing American servicemen and civilians.

US GOVERNMENT POSITION ON AMERICANS STILL BEING HELD CAPTIVE IN INDOCHINA

Since the fall of Saigon in 1975, the United States Government has acquired more than 3,800 reports bearing on the POW/MIA problem. Of the total reported, over 770 are firsthand live sighting reports with over 62% resolved through a determination that they correlate with individuals since accounted for. Additionally, 171 - or 22% - of the reports are known or suspected to be fabrications by the source. Over 120 - or 16% - of the sighting reports are as yet unverified and are under continuing investigation in an attempt to confirm the information. The remaining reports pertain to hearsay sightings and to crash site and grave site information.

Given the above circumstances, it would be irresponsible to rule out the possibility that live Americans are being held. Thus, the U.S. Government's current position is:

LIVE-SIGHTING POSITION STATEMENT

ALTHOUGH WE HAVE THUS FAR BEEN UNABLE TO PROVE THAT AMERICANS ARE STILL DETAINED AGAINST THEIR WILL, THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US PRECLUDES RULING OUT THAT POSSIBILITY. ACTIONS TO INVESTIGATE LIVE-SIGHTING REPORTS RECEIVE AND WILL CONTINUE TO RECEIVE NECESSARY PRIORITY AND RESOURCES BASED ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT AT LEAST SOME AMERICANS ARE STILL HELD CAPTIVE. SHOULD ANY REPORT PROVE TRUE, WE WILL TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION TO ENSURE THE RETURN OF THOSE INVOLVED.

INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES
ON THE POW/MIA ISSUE

Background

With the buildup of U.S. forces in Southeast Asia during 1964, intelligence acquisition capabilities concerning POW/MIAs were enhanced. A regular flow of captured documents as well as enemy POWs, ralliers, and refugee interrogation reports developed.

In April 1966, the intelligence community increased the emphasis on collection of information on POWs and MIAs. DoD's highest priority was assigned and CIA and DoD collectors were immediately notified of this increased emphasis, and expanded formal collection requirements were published and disseminated. U.S. Government installations and organizations worldwide were involved in obtaining information about POWs and the missing.

Past Efforts

Following the Hanoi announcement in June 1966 that captured airmen would be tried for war crimes, the entire system of collecting, disseminating and processing information on missing personnel was reviewed and intensified. A network of debriefing and interrogation centers was developed in liaison with local government intelligence agencies in Vietnam and Laos. Sources were debriefed or interrogated in depth on the information they possessed. Indigenous teams checked out, where possible, crash sites, detention sites, and reported sightings of Americans. The scope of the worldwide collection effort was expanded to include all overt media coverage and photography of POWs. Communist radio broadcasts were carefully monitored for information about POW/MIAs. The major elements of the Executive Department focusing on POW/MIA problems were the DoD (Defense Intelligence Agency, the Intelligence Branches of the Military Services), the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Department of State.

The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), established in late 1961, was assigned a limited responsibility for POW/MIA analysis until mid-1966. After that time, DIA's role expanded. During 1967, DIA assumed chairmanship of the Interagency POW Intelligence Ad Hoc Committee. In December of 1971, DIA chaired the DoD Intelligence Task Force which was established to supervise the intelligence aspects of the POW/MIA problems and to provide more rapid and effective communication between policymakers and intelligence officials.

Following the repatriation of the listed POWs in 1973, the intelligence community's efforts focused on the nearly 2,500 Americans still missing. The withdrawal of U.S. forces from Vietnam and the fall of Saigon in April 1975 resulted in a mammoth reduction in the level of field assets, the opportunity to access geographic locations as well as indigenous sources.

Current Efforts

The entire intelligence community affords top priority to collecting and analyzing information which would lead to an accounting for Americans who are missing in Indochina. Strong command attention is being placed on this issue.

At the present time, the principal but not the only source of POW/MIA information available to the U.S. Government is Indochinese refugees. The continued absence of political stability in the Southeast Asian region has resulted in an unabating flow of refugees from one or more of the three countries of primary concern. Interviews have been conducted with many of these refugees by both government and private individuals. Reported sightings of Americans by these sources continue to reach the USG from any number of different sources. The USG has an established program for follow-up action which is taken on each such report received.

DIA has primary responsibility for evaluating reported POW/MIA related sightings. Necessary follow-up action is conducted through the Defense Attache System, the Joint Casualty Resolution Center Liaison Office in Bangkok, the Department of State through U.S. Embassies, and by DIA or other military assets within the United States. Due to numerous refugee movements between camps, onward settlement in other countries, and temporary accommodations provided by sponsor organizations, follow-up action for clarification or amplification of reported information consumes many manhours and at times can require months to complete, but the time required is reduced to the maximum amount possible. As stated by the President, "intelligence assets of the United States are fully focused on this issue."

POW/MIA intelligence information, regardless of the source, is channeled into DIA for analysis. Through close coordination with the Military Services, all correlated information relating to POWs is provided to the Services; the POW/MIA's parent service Casualty Branch then transmits the information to the POW/MIA's next-of-kin. Additionally, DIA keeps the Government decision-makers apprised of POW/MIA intelligence information.

JOINT CASUALTY RESOLUTION CENTER

Future Efforts

Aside from normal briefings or reports on new or updated information, when evidence becomes convincing that one or more Americans are still detained in Indochina, U.S. Government officials will be notified in order to decide on appropriate action.

An obvious question arising is - what amount of evidence is required to be "convincing." First, the evidence will have to satisfy certain criteria such as currency and specificity. It is unrealistic to assume that a single refugee report will justify decisive action without additional verification. One hope is that a report can be strengthened and supported through technical means. Another is that more than one report will be specific and similar as to time, place and circumstance, and hopefully, at least one source's credibility will be enhanced by polygraph examination. The simple fact is, despite the many reports we have received and the technical means available to us, no single report or combination of reports and technical sensors has thus far been specific enough to be "convincing." What continues to condition our thinking and motivate our efforts is the "weight of evidence" theory. The many reports, the limited information provided by the communist governments in Southeast Asia, and the fact that some of the missing initially survived the incident in which they were lost, preclude ruling out the possibility that Americans may be alive in communist controlled Southeast Asia.

The Joint Casualty Resolution Center (JCRC) is a United States military task force designated to assist in the recovery or status resolution of unaccounted for U.S. personnel from the Southeast Asian conflict. Presently, JCRC maintains active case files on 2,422 U.S. military personnel and 42 U.S. civilians who were captured, are missing or who died but their remains were never recovered.

JCRC was established as a joint service, humanitarian organization, by direction of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in January 1973 in Saigon, Republic of Vietnam. In February 1973, with the approval of the Royal Thai government, the JCRC relocated to Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Force Base in northeast Thailand. JCRC later moved to Camp Samae San and U-Tapao Royal Thai Navy Base, Thailand. In May 1976 the organization was moved to Naval Air Station, Barbers Point, Hawaii.

Initially JCRC's mission placed emphasis on an almost total American effort in field recoveries. For the first year, its primary activity was conducting these recovery operations in South Vietnam while negotiating for access to sites in other Indochina countries. During the summer of 1973, undersea recovery attempts were conducted. 140 dives were made in 82 days but the limited evidence recovered resulted in no identifications. In December 1973, a JCRC field team was ambushed while conducting recovery operations at a site south of Saigon. One American officer was killed and several team members were wounded.

This loss forced JCRC to take a more cautious approach with major revisions being made in recovery techniques. The "Safe Haven" concept was developed in which U.S. recovery personnel, remaining in secure areas, assisted and directed the operations of U.S.-trained Vietnamese recovery teams. Complementing the "Safe Haven" concept with Area Desk Officers in each of the military regions, JCRC continued its activities in South Vietnam until that country, Laos, and Cambodia fell under communist control.

JCRC efforts after cessation of field operations were concentrated on information refinement, analytical investigations, and contingency planning in anticipation of agreement which might reopen field operations. Over 150,000 documents have been assembled, correlated, analyzed, and processed through automated data processing to develop the most accurate information possible concerning the fate of U.S. military and civilian personnel.

While its field activities in Indochina were suspended, JCRC continually updated its records. It has refined the probable location of more than 600 recovery sites. Case files have been prepared for discussions with the Indochinese. These folders contain a description of the incident, a photo of the missing

person, and a map of the most likely recovery area. Additionally, translations of the folders in the Vietnamese, Khmer and Lao language have been made. Much of this translated material has been passed to the Vietnamese and Lao governments. It is of increasing importance now that the governments of Laos and Vietnam have expressed willingness to cooperate in recovering U.S. personnel missing in those countries.

JCRC personnel conduct an extensive program to interview Indochinese refugees in an attempt to gain POW/MIA information. Command interviewers travel to refugee camps in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Hong Kong, and the Philippines, and produce 200-250 interview reports per year. These reports receive careful and thorough evaluation by JCRC analysts, and if found to correlate to active cases, are incorporated into the appropriate individual file and provided to the next-of-kin by the responsible Service Casualty Officer. Uncorrelated reports are continuously compared with each other in an effort to establish patterns and correlations which may not at first be evident. Copies of all interview reports and subsequent analysis are provided to the Defense Intelligence Agency for further study.

While the majority of JCRC's activity is devoted to interviewing refugees, analytical investigation, and records updating, it continues to serve as the primary agency for receiving and repatriating remains of U.S. personnel. Whenever remains are recovered or returned, they are delivered to the Central Identification Laboratory (CIL), a Department of the Army activity in Honolulu, for official identification. JCRC analysts compare information provided by the returning country with data in their files to prepare a list of candidate identifications. Laboratory professionals then compare recorded physiological characteristics of the candidates with the actual remains to arrive at a tentative identification. This tentative identification is reviewed by the Armed Services Graves Registration Office in Washington, D.C. prior to being submitted to the appropriate military service for final approval.

Despite the minimal cooperation of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV), JCRC has established a working level dialogue on the effort to achieve the fullest possible accounting for missing Americans. Officials of the Vietnamese Office for Seeking Missing Persons (VNOSMP) visited the JCRC during July 1978, and August 1, 1982, and were given briefings on the U.S. casualty resolution effort, as well as detailed instruction on the physical identification of remains from the Central Identification Laboratory, Hawaii. The Lao government also has an open invitation to visit, to which they have agreed in principle. An August 1978 Congressional Delegation visit to Hanoi proposed the JCRC Liaison Office

at the U.S. Embassy, Bangkok as a link for exchanging information of a technical or working-level nature. This link has been used extensively and has proven both useful and effective. At the same time, the SRV agreed to coordinate resolution efforts and to allow JCRC personnel to travel to Hanoi to work with them. Through the years, frequency of meetings has increased and a minimum of six meetings per year is now agreed upon.

The ultimate goal of JCRC is to account for all missing Americans. While working to repatriate the remains of those killed in action, the U.S. hopes to establish a process for regular U.S./Lao and U.S./SRV joint crash site searches. The JCRC will continue to be a major participant in these searches and in the regularly scheduled technical meetings.

The JCRC is presently manned by sixteen military personnel and four civilians. Included in this manning is a five man liaison office in the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand. Recently, the Joint Chiefs of Staff authorized four additional personnel for JCRC Headquarters, and two personnel for the liaison office to augment the refugee interviewing process, bringing the total JCRC manning authorization to 20 personnel.

AGREEMENT ON ENDING
THE WAR AND RESTORING
PEACE IN VIET-NAM

Excerpts Dealing With Captured and Missing Personnel

CHAPTER III

THE RETURN OF CAPTURED MILITARY PERSONNEL
AND FOREIGN CIVILIANS, AND CAPTURED
AND DETAINED VIETNAMESE CIVILIAN PERSONNEL

Article 8.

a) The return of captured military personnel and foreign civilians of the parties shall be carried out simultaneously with and completed not later than the same day as the troop withdrawal mentioned in Article 5. The parties shall exchange complete lists of the above-mentioned captured military personnel and foreign civilians on the day of the signing of this Agreement.

b) The parties shall help each other to get information about those military personnel and foreign civilians of the parties missing in action, to determine the location and take care of the graves of the dead so as to facilitate the exhumation and repatriation of the remains, and to take any such other measures as may be required to get information about those still considered missing in action.

c) The question of the return of Vietnamese civilian personnel captured and detained in South Vietnam will be resolved by the two South Vietnamese parties on the basis of the principles of Article 21 b of the Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities in Vietnam of July 20, 1954. The two South Vietnamese parties will do so in a spirit of national reconciliation and concord, with a view to ending hatred and enmity, in order to ease suffering and to reunite families. The two South Vietnamese parties will do their utmost to resolve this question within ninety days after the ceasefire comes into effect.