

Peace Talks - Implementation	Robson 09/24/92	<p>Chairman Kerry: After that initial 60-day period beginning with 29 January to the end of March, what happened in terms of your effort to gain accounting for those people? Can you describe that for us?</p> <p>Mr. Robson: Yes, sir. We had that series of folders, as I said, approximately 80. I don't remember the exact number. But we also developed some more information. I say we, the services, JCRC, and the intelligence agencies developed more information which was fed to JCRC in Thailand, which in turn was passed back to us, and we ended up with a total of 104 folders with information on people that the enemy should be able to tell us about with any great amount of difficulty. And I personally passed that list and stuff to them, I believe, on the 17th of April.</p> <p>Chairman Kerry: What kind of response did you get?</p> <p>Mr. Robson: Nothing.</p>
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Peace Talks - Implementation	Robson 09/24/92	<p>Chairman Kerry: ...When we deposed Colonel Bernie Russell, who is --</p> <p>Vice Chairman Smith: The U.S. head of the Four-Party Joint Military Team, he said otherwise. He stated that in early May the Vietnamese were linking U.S. aid commitments to cooperation with the MIAs. And when the vote came, or when the word was passed down to the Vietnamese, or passed to the Vietnamese that there was no aid forthcoming, or at least not in the immediate future, that they stopped cooperating.</p> <p>Colonel Robson: There is no contradiction there, sir. That's exactly what happened.</p> <p>Vice Chairman Smith: What?</p> <p>Colonel Robson: When they got the word that the aid was cut off, they just --</p> <p>Vice Chairman Smith: Bailed out.</p> <p>Colonel Robson: Just started bailing out. I mean, they'd sit and talk to you.</p>
Peace Talks - Implementation	Robson 09/24/92	<p>Chairman Kerry: When you say nothing, they just --</p> <p>Mr. Robson: They took it and they said we will study it. The same thing they told Dr. Kissinger in Hanoi.</p> <p>Chairman Kerry: So in effect, the process that was put in place to get the accounting was truly not working almost from the beginning.</p>

Peace Talks - Implementation	Shields 09/24/92	<p>Chairman Kerry: But you did choose 14 that you did know were prisoner.</p> <p>Dr. Shields: No, we did not -- Senator, we did not know they were prisoner. We knew that they could have been prisoners. We never had any intelligence that they actually entered the prison.</p> <p>Chairman Kerry: That's not what you said on that day.</p> <p>Dr. Shields: I don't know the press conference transcript.</p> <p>Chairman Kerry: I will show you. "These 14 individuals were at one time identified by the DRV as having been captured, but were not listed on the so-called complete list provided on 22 December." We carried them as POW. We believed they were POW. We held a press conference saying they are POW.</p>
Peace Talks - Implementation	Shields 06/25/92	<p>Shields: I believe we failed to get as complete an accounting as we could have gotten at that time, yes, I do. There is no question about it. In mind, had Article 8B been implemented, we would have had the accounting that we desired.</p> <p>Chairman Kerry: And your interpretation of why it was not implemented is?</p> <p>Shields: We never had access to the areas where we needed to go. We needed to go into the areas where our men were lost. We needed to begin with the incident of loss and track down what happened to them from that point... in the area of Laos, we did not have access. We were not allowed to go. The government was hostile. The same was true of North Vietnam.</p>

Peace Talks - Implementation	Shields 06/25/92	<p>The record of our efforts to implement Article 8(b) have been well documented. Without cooperation from the other side, the JCRC sent teams into the field to investigate crash and suspected grave sites. An extensive and sophisticated underwater search effort was made off the cost of South Vietnam at suspected crash site locations.</p> <p>The last U.S. military man to die from hostile fire in Vietnam in a U.S. initiated action was killed in December, 1973. He was a member of a JCRC field team, and with the ambush of that team and his death, our field efforts ceased.</p>
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Peace Talks - Implementation	Shields 06/25/92	<p>Shields: Now, the families had all of the information which we had available. The family of Richard Van Dyke, now living I think in Salt Lake City, knew about his case. They knew about what the men in the prison camp had to say about him. They knew about Commander Ford. So this information was passed onto families. It was not information that anyone tried to hide.</p> <p>Chairman Kerry: But the point is, obviously, that here we are 20 years later with a list called, discrepancy cases. And General John Vessey who will testify later, who is an extraordinary public servant, who has devoted his time going over there, has a list of people that 20 years later we are saying to the Vietnamese, hey, wait a minute, we thought these folks were alive. Now, if 20 years later we are doing that, it just occurs to me that 20 years ago the presumption, the information, the probability, the expectation, ... were a hell of a lot higher, and the moment was riper.</p> <p>Shields: Certainly, Senator. We had at the time of the Paris Peace Accords an Article 8B which, as Mr. Sieverts has pointed out, contained all of the authorities we needed for an accounting.</p> <p>Chairman Kerry: So there was a real failure to pull off the Accord itself and get the accounting?</p> <p>Shields: Absolutely.</p>
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Peace Talks - Implementation	Shields 06/25/92	<p>Even though we were not having the cooperation that we needed, we made overtures to the Vietnamese time and time again. A Presidential commission went to Hanoi and to Vientiane, Laos, in 1977 appointed by the President, manned by distinguished Americans, specifically for this purpose of accounting for the missing. We had a complete set of hearings, and numerous hearings within the Congress on this issue, and the Department of Defense spoke out and maintained contact with families, and let the families know exactly where this issue was. So if there was not a hue and cry in the country, it was not for want of effort on our part.</p>
Peace Talks - Implementation	Shields 06/25/92	<p>We pinned our hopes on article 8(b). We negotiated. We staffed the FPJMT in the field. We had the JCRC in the field... We did not have access to Laos. We did not have access to North Vietnam. We did not have access to most of the areas in South Vietnam where we thought we could go. The man who was killed, Captain Reese, was killed in an area which we felt was under friendly control. As it turned out, of course, it was not.</p> <p>So we could not go into the field, we were limited to negotiations, a part of a treaty which was never observed, and never implemented. We faced extraordinary difficulties in those days.</p>
Peace Talks - Implementation	Sieverts 06/25/92	<p>...our overriding objective during this entire period was to assure that all our prisoners were returned, and to assure that we were pursuing all available means to secure the fullest possible accounting for our men.</p>
Peace Talks	Sieverts 06/25/92	<p>...the January, 1973 Paris Agreement was the first agreement ending an armed conflict that contained such extensive provisions for accounting for the missing and dead.</p>

Peace Talks - Implementation	Smith 09/22/92	...we did have iron-clad agreements with the Vietnamese but what happened is they did not comply with those iron-clad agreements.
Peace Talks	Smith	<p>I think it is important to understand the politics of the times, people in the streets protesting the war, 300 men dying every week. And those were the times that you entered onto the political scene with the President, and there was a great amount of political pressure to end the war, trying to end the war in an honorable way. And you proceeded into negotiations to try to do that, since there did not seem to be the political will to win it militarily. So these were difficult times, and you insisted on many matters concerning POWs and MIAs in those negotiations.</p> <p>The issue, as far as I am concerned, is did the Vietnamese and the Lao respond to what you insisted on?</p>
Peace Talks - Implementation	Vessey 06/25/92	<p>Chairman Kerry: Do you share a feeling that climate of 1973 may have contributed to... and attitudinal approach that accepted a sort of willingness to, perhaps, ask some tough questions and deal with some realities?</p> <p>Vessey: ... there were many people interested in this issue at the time. There were unanswered questions at the time.</p> <p>At the same time, the country seemed to be desperate to get out of Vietnam and be separated from that issue. And I think that people made the decisions that they thought were the best decisions at the time, based on the information that they had.</p>

Peace Talks	Walters 09/21/92	I think it was Ambassador Lord who said, you know, we cannot second guess every aspect of it...I am here to talk about POW/MIA, and what we knew about that and how that issue figured into these negotiations, and perhaps some larger issues about the negotiations and how they may have impacted our ability to get the full accounting that we sought.
Perot	Childress 08/12/92	It is my opinion...that Mr. Perot's trip was counterproductive to U.S. efforts.
Perot	Kerry 08/11/92	We may leave some questions out there because we are not capable, as humans, of resolving all of this 20 years later. But the record will be more complete. And the evidence will be greater and I think the effort more significant -- thanks, in part, to your participation and contribution.
Perot	Perot 08/11/92	<p>Mr. Perot: ...The POW project had to be a completely private project, otherwise it would have had no credibility with the Vietnamese, and these were the people we were trying to impact.</p> <p>Chairman Kerry: But that was your suggestion that it be kept private?</p> <p>Mr. Perot: ...No, I think that was actually Dr. Kissinger and/or Colonel Haig said this has to be done privately....</p>
Perot	Perroots 08/12/92	Mr. Perot's activities during my tenure had no adverse affect on my mission. I considered his efforts to be a reflection of his patriotism and sincere concern over the issue and that still applies. He made no mention of any enumeration nor any offer by the Government for any payback.

Perot	Perroots 08/12/92	Soliciting Mr. Perot's support as a member of my advisory board and authorizing him access was my idea.
Perot	Perroots 08/12/92	<p>The White House had acknowledged Mr. Perot's efforts in support of the POW/MIA issue and commended him for his efforts.</p> <p>In view of his past activities, I made a decision to provide him access and to keep him personally involved for our mutual benefit.</p>

Photos	Gray 12/04/92	<p>Mr. Gray: We talked to the sources who sent these photos out. The individual that sent them out said he was never told that these were American prisoners. He was told simply by the source of the photo to find out who these Americans are. But en route to the American embassy in Bangkok the story became that these are American prisoners.</p> <p>Sen. McCain: You do not know who put the names on them.</p> <p>Mr. Gray: Well, we asked the source who said -- the ceramic merchant in Khompong Chang, Cambodia, why did they -- the photos that came forward as those of American prisoners. He said, well, if the Vietnamese who gave him the photos were looking into these photos, then they had to be American prisoners, but he was never told they were prisoners.</p> <p>Now, the names were not associated when he sent those photos forward. None of the names were associated. The only names associated with the photos were actually the ones written on the photos, Chester Wimmer and others, names which were not of Americans who were missing. So not until later in the year of 1990 were names associated with the photo.</p> <p>We determined that the names Robertson and Stevens actually came from a handbill that had been out in Southeast Asia since 1987. And it said across the top \$1 million dollar reward being offered for American prisoners and the two photos across the bottom were Robertson and Stevens.</p>
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Photos	Kerry 12/04/92	[to Chambers] I think an interesting example of that was your own explanation of what happened on the Lundy-Robertson-Stevens photo where it went from one person as a photo of Americans and by the time it got out of the car it was a photo of prisoners, and by the time it got somewhere else it had names of people, and by the time it got to America it was on the front page of Newsweek with three people, startling new evidence, and so forth.
Photos	Sheetz 12/04/92	The photographic experts who used the computer-enhanced techniques at the U.S. National Labs to determine if the alleged Robertson-Stevens-Lundy photograph was accurate, they noted that the handwritten sign that the Senator is referencing was not on the original photograph, that was a paste-on, and then the photograph was re-shot. There was no question about that.
Priority	Apodaca 11/06/91	Earlier this year, I was actively involved in a highest national priority, Operation Desert Storm... I don't know if this is a good comparison, but if the POW/MIA issue has the highest national priority, why are hundreds of remains still in Vietnam today? Why are agencies allowed to not follow through on reports? Why can't we find the fingerprint records for almost 25 percent of those still missing?  I would not be so upset if the Government had called this a high national priority, but they didn't. For years it has been the highest national priority, and for years I've wondered.
Priority	Childress 12/01/92	...in January of '82 ...In the intelligence area, manpower and priorities were at an all-time low and I believe the POW branch had only nine personnel assigned.

Priority	Childress 12/01/92	Let me put it in a perspective. When we talked at the national level about a matter of highest national priority, we were referring to not just resources that the director of DIA or someone in the Pentagon could put to the problem based upon the priorities we were giving them in the national documents. There's a difference between implementation of the priority which allows them to move forward or tells them how are you doing, moving forward, and saying that, well, we didn't have enough people.
Priority	Gaines 12/01/92	Sen. Daschle: ...give me your sense of which of these criteria...had the most to do with our failures over the last 10 or 15 years? Colonel Gaines?  Colonel Gaines: I would like to offer that lack of priority as the one.

Priority	Kerry 12/01/92	<p>It is hard for me to believe. I mean, if you have got 70 people responding to this committee's requests. We have got a staff of 15 or 20 people working on it. We have got 58 people in Vietnam. This is 1992. Here you are with files that, by your own admission, were not organized. Are you saying to me you could not find people to organize the files? You could not put people to the task of collecting the lists? You could not bring all the documents into one house?</p> <p>I have to tell you, as I sit here, it just strikes me that this is one of those Government euphemisms that -- and I do not blame you guys. I do not think any of you made this policy...you were not the policymakers, you were carrying it out. But I think a lot of you folks were left dangling in the dark. Some people paid lip service to the notion this was the highest priority, but in fact, as you just said, it was not resourced, and that is the way you get things done, is resources. It does not do you any good to have a policy up here, and then you do not have the resources...</p>
Priority	Kerry 12/01/92	<p>Chairman Kerry: In all of your reviews, did you find that this was indeed treated as and resourced as a nation's highest priority?</p> <p>Mr. Wiand: No, Senator, I did not.</p> <p>Colonel Hargis: ...no, I do not...</p> <p>Mr. Nagy: No...</p> <p>Admiral Brooks: Most assuredly not...</p> <p>Colonel Gaines: No...</p>

Priority	Kerry 06/25/92	<p>I want to, obviously, point out that the committee feels very strongly that the effort of the last year, two years, has increasingly been augmented, that the Bush Administration and the Department of Defense and Secretary Cheney have put money and personnel where they have put their stated priorities. And today we can boast greater attention to this issue and greater effort to put it to rest than at any time, I think, in the history of this issue. So it is not something that, I think, we are achieving and we are doing it on a good schedule.</p>
Priority	Nagy 11/06/91	<p>...The kind of assets that we have now applied against the problem would have been best applied then [20 years ago]. I can't recover from that, and I can't apologize enough to the families personally.</p>
Priority	Perot 08/11/92	<p>Chairman Kerry: Mr. Perot, does all this not really stem from the fact that in reality, despite all the rhetoric about highest national priority, this issue has been bouncing around with no real general -- you know what I am saying, no person really having seized the cudgel and managing it. Is that not accurate?</p> <p>Perot: Yes sir, it's like a ship without a rudder. Every now and then a group will get interested and then let several years go by and then, another group will get interested, but there's no consistent logical program to resolve it.</p>
Priority	Perroots 12/01/92	<p>There was no question within the agency that the POW/MIA issue was the top priority. We gave it not only top budgetary priority, but top disclosure in terms of exposure.</p>

Priority	Williams 12/01/92	<p>Chairman Kerry: And the fact is I just have a sense that there was a kind of disregard, is a polite way to put it, for the real relevance of this, for what some of that evidence might really have meant. And it was kind of a convenient political highest priority but not really the highest priority. The highest priority was figuring out what the Russians were doing with missiles; the highest priority was responding to Grenada, Panama, a lot of other priorities. But this just was not there. That is my sense. Much more there today in 1992 than it ever has been at any proceeding time in history since 1973.</p> <p>General Williams: I think that is a fair statement. I would also say, though, that it was not until probably 1982 that the Reagan administration had a chance to reverse the long decline in intelligence manpower. The agency, DIA, had gone from -- had about a 35 or a 40 percent reduction, and you do not just reverse that in the program and budget cycle immediately. But you are absolutely right.</p> <p>Chairman Kerry: And also, with the demise of our position in Southeast Asia we lost our on-the-ground assets. We were basically shut out for the 4 years after Saigon fell in 1975. There are clear things that add into this that we need to take into account. And I acknowledge all of those.</p> <p>General Williams: And you are correct about your impression.</p>
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Private Groups	Duker 12/02/92	Well more times than not it can't be verified, so we have to pass it on as that. This is an article that came through to us and we could not verify it with Government agencies as to whether it was authentic or not. That's how we pass it on. We don't -- we won't say it's authentic if we cannot prove that it is authentic.
Private Groups	Duker 12/02/92	So it puts us in a position of what is the truth and what isn't. Where else do we have to go to get information but the Government. I mean that's where the answers are, it lies within your committee, it lies within the Department of Defense, the Defense Intelligence Agency. That is the sources that we have. That's where we have to go to try to verify the information that we get, the rumors, the speculation, and so forth.
Private Groups	Duker 12/02/92	...there are just absolutely thousands of pieces of information out there that cannot be verified, and so it does make our position difficult in terms of our membership because at times I think they may think we are not pursuing it as actively as we should, but we are. But again, we will not pass on information that we can't verify.

Private Groups	Eddy 12/02/92	<p>...the Prisoner of War Committee of Michigan operates as a nonprofit, nonpartisan POW/MIA public awareness organization. The committee's primary source of income comes from the sale of public awareness merchandise. For example, bracelets, pins, t-shirts, and flags, mostly through mail order. The most expensive item we have available for sale are a lined Windbreaker jacket and a 3 by 5 POW/MIA flag, each priced at \$30. The least expensive is a small bumper sticker priced at 25 cents apiece...</p> <p>In addition to the sale of public awareness merchandise, the committee occasionally receives donations from veterans' organizations, concerned citizens, and others who support the work and the objectives of the group.</p>
Private Groups	Ford 11/15/91	<p>...the people that really get hurt by this are the families who have these people coming around preying on their uncertainties and their concerns about their loved ones, and it ought to stop. That's one reason we think that this committee is one of the best ideas going, because hopefully we will get to the bottom of this.</p>
Private Groups	Ford 11/15/91	<p>If I have ever seen a cover-up, this is it. The fact is that what is being covered up, for whatever reason, is that Jack Bailey went to Southeast Asia with our assistance, with our hopes, with our prayers, and came up empty.</p>
Private Groups	Gadoury 10/15/92	<p>...in addition to our own governments efforts to search for information about potential American POWs and unaccounted for Americans, there were a number of private American individuals and organizations who were engaged in similar activities, some more extensively and in a more organized fashion than others.</p>

Private Groups	Gadoury 10/15/92	<p>While we work for a full accounting of our missing and unaccounted for, we should also demand a full accounting from those who have engaged in fabricating information to further their personal or organizational financial goals, and at the same time falsely raising hopes of the American people, especially the families of our missing and unaccounted for.</p>
Private Groups	Quinn 12/01/92	<p>...I think the need for some sort of better mechanism to reach out to other organizations, be they veteran's organizations, other POW/MIA, other family organizations, who have often expressed to me and raised the question about why they are so far on the outside when others are on the inside.</p>
Private Groups	Sampley 11/07/91	<p>The pattern has continued. Rather than focus all available resources on resolving the problem of our missing Vietnam veterans, much of the effort has been directed toward destroying the credibility and/or reputation of the critics.</p>

Private Groups	Sheridan 12/02/92	<p>The scholarship program that was established in 1970 has become one of the most important activities of the organization. It provides scholarship assistance to the dependents of those uniformed servicemen listed as missing in action or killed in action who were associated with the war in Southeast Asia, as well as those uniformed servicemen missing or killed in action associated with armed conflict through Operation Desert Storm.</p> <p>Since 1971, when the first three \$1,000 grants were given, 613 scholarships totalling over \$760,000 have been awarded. This year, 26 students alone were awarded scholarships totalling \$100,000...</p> <p>The Red River Valley Fighter Pilots Association has tax exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. We are eligible for contributions from the Combined Federal Campaign under the umbrella of the Independent Charities of America. Other funds are derived through annual membership dues, contributions from the private sector, local chapter fundraising activities, and the generosity of the American public.</p> <p>We have never used the services of a professional fundraiser.</p>
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Private Groups	Steadman 12/02/92	<p>I provided this committee with a chronological summary of our public efforts at influencing the Government on this issue, but I'd like to just highlight a few of our major efforts.</p> <p>First, VFW has consistently urged accelerating government-to-government contact with Southeast Asian countries in pursuit of the fullest possible accounting. Second, we have consistently held that it was a legitimate function of our Government and its duty to the families to provide this accounting. Third, the VFW has consistently maintained that maximum economic and diplomatic pressure should be exerted on the Southeast Asian governments to obtain their full cooperation in resolving the fate of our missing men.</p> <p>Since 1987 the VFW consistently supported public release of more information about our POW/MIAs and since then we have consistently called on the Government to increase its efforts to recover our missing men from the Korean War as well. Finally, with the revelations of Senator Helms and Senator Grassley over a year ago and Colonel Peck's allegations, we have supported a public investigation of the Government's handling of this issue...</p> <p>Concerning finances, we do not solicit any funds for ourselves or any other organization on the basis of the POW/MIA issue, nor do we use professional consultants as fundraising organizations to do it for us. The VFW supply department sells POW/MIA flags and emblem devices, but the monies derived are quite small in comparison to our overall sales.</p>
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Private Groups	Turner 11/07/91	It was apparent to me that there existed the strong possibility that actions by an agent of the U.S. Government had deliberately killed a viable operation to rescue American prisoners of war, and I wanted to find out what I could about it.
Remains	Bell 12/04/92	<p>Sen. McCain: Mr. Schweitzer said that there was no American left, there are no warehoused remains...What is your view?</p> <p>Mr. Bell: My view, sir, is that there certainly was a warehouse in the Hanoi area at one time. The mortician, I think, after he defected in 1979, he testified here in Congress that he processed some 452 remains.</p> <p>The Vietnamese were confronted with that information. They denied it. They indicated that they thought the mortician was fabricating.</p> <p>He actually provided about seven different items of information. I think six of those have been verified...</p> <p>The Vietnamese, I believe, came to the conclusion that we were confident that the man was telling the truth. Since the mortician gave his testimony, they have returned to us approximately 450 remains.</p> <p>Approximately 260 to 269 remains have now been identified, and what that indicates to me is...that we did have a warehouse but we don't have one now, and what that indicates to me is that they have admitted that the mortician was telling the truth.</p> <p>They're telling us that we have given you those remains back, and the warehouse here in Hanoi is now empty.</p>

Remains	Bell 12/04/92	<p>Sen. McCain: I think what you said is a very important point here, and if any of the other witnesses disagree with that, that there is no longer, in the view of the witnesses, a warehouse of remains, but there is in the view of the witnesses remains that still need to be recovered, and that's the job of the previous witnesses, CINCPAC and you, Mr. Bell. Is that accurate?</p> <p>Mr. Bell: Yes, sir.</p>
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