



**NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES
OF AMERICAN PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**

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STATUS OF THE POW/MIA ISSUE: October 5, 2006

1,798 Americans are still missing and unaccounted for from the Vietnam War, though over 450 were at sea/over water losses: Vietnam - 1,375 (VN-488; VS-887); Laos - 362; Cambodia - 54; Peoples Republic of China territorial waters - 7. The League seeks the return of all US prisoners, the fullest possible accounting for those still missing and repatriation of all recoverable remains. The League's highest priority is accounting for Americans last known alive. Official intelligence indicates that Americans known to be in captivity in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia were not returned at the end of the war. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, it must be assumed that these Americans may still be alive. As a policy, the U.S. Government does not rule out the possibility that Americans could still be held.

Unilateral return of remains by the government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV) has been proven an effective means of obtaining accountability, as have joint field operations in recent years, though the first joint excavation in northern Vietnam occurred in 1985. A comprehensive wartime and post-war process was established by Vietnam to collect and retain information and remains; thus, unilateral efforts by Vietnam to locate and return remains and provide records continue to offer significant potential. Hanoi's earlier commitments to expedite interviews to obtain intelligence information and move forward on coastline cases, including working out a bilateral agreement for use of a US recovery ship, are welcome and appreciated. These topics have repeatedly been raised during League Delegations, most recently in February 2003, and have now been raised by US officials at the highest levels. Archival research, also a high priority with Vietnam, has produced thousands of documents and photos, but to date all except 1+% pertain to returned POWs and Americans previously accounted-for, though recent commitments offer promise if implemented.

Joint field operations in Laos are very productive. Over the year, the Lao regularly increased flexibility and the number of US personnel permitted in-country in an effort to improve field operations. Recently, the Lao approved an archival research program that will begin implementation this summer. Agreements between the U.S. and the Indochina governments now permit Vietnamese witnesses to participate in joint operations in Laos and Cambodia when necessary, but it is a time-consuming, expensive process that could be at least partially alleviated with a decision in Hanoi to unilaterally provide relevant documents, as President Bush stipulated in his certification to Congress, March 20, 2002, and Secretary of State Powell September 7, 2004 and Secretary of State Rice September, 2005. POW/MIA research and field activities in Cambodia have received excellent support, including a full-time DIA Stony Beach representative working out of the US Embassy in Phnom Penh. Over 80% of US losses in Laos and 90% in Cambodia occurred in areas where Vietnam's forces operated during the war, but Hanoi has not responded to countless US requests for case-specific records on our losses in these countries. Records research and field operations are the most likely means of increased accounting for Americans missing in Laos and Cambodia.

U.S. intelligence and other evidence indicate that many Americans can be accounted for by unilateral Vietnamese efforts to locate and return remains and provide relevant documents and records. Despite this reality, President Clinton regularly certified to Congress that Vietnam was *"fully cooperating in good faith"* to resolve this issue. The League recognizes that legislation requiring certification includes punitive measures that would reverse political and economic relations to the level in place in 1994. The League supported steps by the US to respond to concrete results, not advancing political and economic concessions in the hope that Hanoi would respond. The Clinton administration lifted the trade embargo, established the US Embassy in Hanoi, normalized diplomatic relations, posted a US Ambassador to Vietnam, signed a bilateral trade agreement and established normal trade relations. The Bush Administration also issued the required certification that Vietnam is *"fully cooperating in good faith,"* but added criteria Vietnam should meet which the League welcomed. These included the need to increase unilateral provision of POW/MIA-related documents and records on Americans missing in areas of Laos and Cambodia under wartime Vietnamese control, greater attention to locating and providing information on discrepancy cases, with priority on those last known alive in captivity or in immediate proximity to capture, and the need to locate and repatriate the remains of those who died while in Vietnamese control that can't be recovered jointly and have not yet been returned. Senior officials from the Departments of State and Defense regularly press Hanoi for answers.

NATIONAL COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN ELIGIBILITY #1174
POW/MIA STATISTICS
Live Sighting statistics are provided by the Defense POW/MIA Office (DPMO)

Live Sightings: As of September 25, 2006, 1,988 first-hand live sighting reports in Indochina have been received since 1975; 1,942 (97.69%) have been resolved. 1,341 (67.45%) were equated to Americans now accounted for (i.e. returned POWs, missionaries or civilians detained for violating Vietnamese codes); 45 (2.26%) correlated to wartime sightings of military personnel or pre-1975 sightings of civilians still unaccounted for. 556 (27.97%) were determined to be fabrications. The remaining 46 (2.31%) unresolved first-hand reports are the focus of current analytical and collection efforts: 42 (2.11%) concern Americans in a captive environment. 4 (0.20%) are non-captive sightings. The years in which these 46 first hand sightings occurred is listed below

Year	Pre-76	76-80	81-85	86-90	91-95	96-2000	01-05	Total
	34	3	0	1	0	4	4	46

Accountability: At the end of the Vietnam War, there reportedly were 2,583 unaccounted for American prisoners, missing or killed in action/body not recovered. **As of October 5, 2006, there are 1,798 Americans still missing, over 90% of them in Vietnam or in areas of Laos and Cambodia where Vietnamese forces operated during the war.** A breakdown by year of recovery for the *785 Americans accounted for from Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and China since the end of the war in 1975 follows.

1965-1974	War years: (recently identified)	2
1974-1975	Post war years:	28
1976-1978	US/SRV normalization negotiations:	47
1979-1980	US/SRV talks break down:	1
1981-1984	1st Reagan Administration	23
1985-1988	2nd Reagan Administration	162
1989-1992	George H.W. Bush Administration	117
1993-1996	1st Clinton Administration	256
1997-2001	2nd Clinton Administration	92
2001-2006	George W. Bush Administration	57

According to CILHI, unilateral SRV repatriations of remains with scientific evidence of storage have accounted for only 177 of the 549 from Vietnam; two were mistakenly listed as KIA/BNR in Vietnam in 1968, but remains were actually recovered at that time. All but 6 of the 204 Americans accounted for in Laos have been the result of joint excavations. Four remains were recovered and turned over by indigenous personnel, one from Vietnam and five from Laos. In addition, three persons identified were recovered in Vietnam before the end of the war. The breakdown by country of the 785* Americans accounted for since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975

Vietnam	549	Laos	204
China	3	Cambodia	29

*An additional 63 US personnel were accounted between 1973 and 1975, for a grand total of 848. These Americans were accounted for by unilateral US effort in areas where the US could gain access at that time, not due to government-to-government cooperation with the post-war governments of Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia.

For the latest information, call the League's Office (703) 465-7432 and log onto the League web site:
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**VIETNAM'S ABILITY TO ACCOUNT FOR AMERICANS
MISSING FROM THE VIETNAM WAR**

October 5, 2006

Family members, veteran organizations and other POW/MIA supporters throughout the country have consistently opposed steps to improve economic and political relations with Vietnam until their leadership made the decision to cooperate fully to resolve the POW/MIA issue. The League supported a policy of reciprocity – steps by the U.S. to respond to efforts **by Vietnam** to locate and return remains and provide case-specific archival documents. In the League's view, important leverage was lost without commensurate results during the Clinton Administration.

One way of viewing what the U.S. knows and what Vietnam can do is by looking at what Vietnam has not, but could have done. At the end of the war, U.S. intelligence and other data confirm that roughly 200 missing Americans were last known alive or reported alive in close proximity to capture. Vietnam knows that these are highest priority cases, directly related to the live prisoner issue, but has accounted for far less than half of these Americans by returning identifiable remains. In all but about 30 of these cases, joint field investigations have reportedly been sufficient to confirm death. If true, remains of these Americans logically should be the most readily available for return (other than those who died in captivity in South Vietnam) since they were in captivity or on the ground near Vietnamese forces.

U.S. wartime and post-war reporting on specific cases, captured Vietnamese documents concerning the handling of U.S. prisoners and casualties, and debriefs of communist Vietnamese captives, reinforced by U.S. monitored directives and other reporting, form a clear picture of a comprehensive Vietnamese system for collection of information and remains, dating back to the French-Indochina War. Specific sources, such as the mortician in 1979, substantiated by others in the 1980's highlighted remains collection and storage as a key aspect of Vietnam's policy for eventual dealings with the U.S.

Assessments by community-wide intelligence served as the basis for long-standing U.S. expectations that hundreds of Americans could readily be accounted for by unilateral Vietnamese actions to locate and return remains. In 1986-87, the entire intelligence community maintained much higher estimates, but the numbers were subsequently further screened to establish the most realistic targets for the Vietnamese government to meet.

During the war and since, the Vietnamese communists placed great value on the recovery and /or recording of burial locations of U.S. remains. In wartime, if jeopardized by imminent discovery or recovery by U.S. forces, burial was immediate to hide remains, which were disinterred and photographed when possible, then reburied or transferred to Hanoi when feasible. Evidence of this process is confirmed by U.S. intelligence.

Forensic evidence serves as another basis for establishing expectations. Scientific evidence of above or below ground storage, or both, exists on 177 of the 549 identified remains returned from Vietnam. This number, confirmed by CILHI forensic scientists, is far below U.S. expectations, based on reliable intelligence indicating that hundreds more were stored by the Vietnamese government and, if Vietnam's leaders issue authorization, could be repatriated.

The total number of identified remains returned from Vietnam with scientific evidence of storage (177) is far short of the 400+ reported stored by valid sources and does not come close to the U.S. Government's long-standing assessments of remains available for unilateral repatriation by the Government of Vietnam. Evidence of storage also exists on three remains returned in 1992 and subsequently identified, and an important signal was sent by the Vietnamese in a 1989 stored-remains repatriation. Both instances revealed province-level storage/curation.

After two years of no results from the Vietnamese in 1979-80, during a September 1982 ABC "Nightline" program, the late Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach flatly denied that Vietnam was holding any U.S. remains, as did other senior Vietnamese officials throughout the Carter Administration. Yet, in 1983, Vietnam returned eight remains with clear evidence of storage. Negotiations for a two-year plan in 1985 brought the largest number of remains obtained to that point; nearly all showed evidence of storage. In 1987, negotiations resulted in the largest number returned during one year – over 60 in 1988 – about half of them returned at one time. Nearly all were virtually complete skeletons that showed clear evidence of storage; there are more recent examples.

Vietnamese officials have admitted storage of remains. In 1985, following up an initiative through a regional government, a U.S. National Security Council (NSC) official met privately with a Vietnamese Politburo member during an NSC-led U.S. delegation to Hanoi. The carefully drawn plan was for negotiations on live prisoners and remains, but the minister indicated live prisoners were not on the table for discussion. Rather, as discussed through the third party, the subject was hundreds of remains.

In order to test the scope of Vietnam's knowledge, two specific cases were officially presented to officials in Hanoi in 1985/86 with a request for their unilateral assistance; both losses were judged by the U.S. Government to have occurred inside Laos, in areas under Vietnamese control during the war. One was returned unilaterally in 1988, 98% complete and stored above ground since his 1972 incident along the Lao/Vietnamese border. Vietnam has unilaterally repatriated stored remains from Cambodia and very remote locations spanning the entire war, not just highly populated areas.

There is continuity. In 1991 and 1993, the Vietnamese provided graves registration lists with names of unaccounted for Americans. Inclusion of these names was likely purposeful, as was filtering through private channels photographs of dead, unaccounted for Americans whose remains have not yet been returned. The Government of Vietnam directed combat photography; though their soldiers did not own personal cameras, much less carry them. Regardless of mixed or conflicting signals, these and other actions by Vietnamese officials were apparently intended to signal the U.S. Government of remains availability.

Information obtained from field operations after the war, including Joint Task Force-Full Accounting (JTF-FA) activities, reveals that central Vietnamese authorities systematically recovered U.S. remains. Eyewitnesses reported central-level supervision of remains recoveries of Americans who still have not been accounted for. Vietnam's leaders have repeatedly pledged to renew and increase their own efforts to locate and return remains and provide relevant documents, but they invariably move incrementally, or obfuscate in other ways.

THE LEAGUE IS AGAIN NATIONALLY ELIGIBLE FOR COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN (CFC) DONATIONS, #1174.



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NUMBER OF AMERICANS MISSING
AND UNACCOUNTED FOR
FROM EACH STATE
5-Oct-06

Alabama	33	New Hampshire	6
Alaska	2	New Jersey	50
Arizona	18	New Mexico	12
Arkansas	20	New York	117
California	181	North Carolina	44
Colorado	28	North Dakota	10
Connecticut	28	Ohio	83
Delaware	4	Oklahoma	39
District of Columbia	8	Oregon	39
Florida	59	Pennsylvania	97
Georgia	34	Rhode Island	8
Hawaii	7	South Carolina	29
Idaho	10	South Dakota	7
Illinois	73	Tennessee	33
Indiana	57	Texas	118
Iowa	28	Utah	16
Kansas	29	Vermont	5
Kentucky	14	Virginia	48
Louisiana	24	Washington	45
Maine	14	West Virginia	17
Maryland	26	Wisconsin	30
Massachusetts	40	Wyoming	5
Michigan	54	Canada	2
Minnesota	37	Panama	1
Mississippi	12	Philippines	4
Missouri	38	Puerto Rico	1
Montana	19	Virgin Islands	0
Nebraska	19	Civilians*	8
Nevada	8		

TOTAL MISSING AND UNACCOUNTED FOR
1798

*These 8 civilians do not have a listed home of record.



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POW/MIA UPDATE: October 12, 2006

U.S. PERSONNEL MISSING FROM THE VIETNAM WAR: The number missing and unaccounted for from the Vietnam War in 1975 is now 1,798 – 1,375 in Vietnam, 362 in Laos, 54 in Cambodia and 7 in PRC territorial waters. The names of three US personnel have recently been released: Now accounted for are **1Lt James L. Hull, USAF**, of TX, **1LT Glenn McCubbin, USAF**, of KS, and **PFC James E. Widener, USMC**, of NY. A total of 785 US personnel have been accounted for since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975. Over 90% of the 1,798 still missing, including 90+ US personnel last known alive (LKA), were lost in Vietnam or in areas of Laos and Cambodia under Vietnamese wartime control.

PRESIDENT RENEWS COMMITMENT: Addressing The American Legion National Convention in Salt Lake City on August 31st, President Bush stated: *"My administration will also continue to work to locate the men and women in uniform whose fate is still undetermined – our prisoners of war and personnel missing in action. We will not forget these brave Americans. We must not rest until we've accounted for every soldier, sailor, airman, Coast Guardsman, and Marine. And we will always honor their courage."* His pledge met great applause.

DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE SPEAKS ON RECOGNITION DAY: The national ceremony was held at the Pentagon, 11:00 a.m. on September 15th. In his remarks, Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England stated, *"Today, we are gathered again to honor and remember those heroes who served and sacrificed – but have not yet come home."* He quoted President Bush's commitment to The American Legion and added, *"This President – and this Nation – remain fully committed to bringing our heroes home again."* Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff General Peter Pace stated: *"There is no more sacred duty for the country than to account for and to repatriate those who are missing. The families of those who are missing are serving this country every day in a way that we can't even imagine. We cannot imagine what is in your hearts and on your minds every day, but, we hope that days like today—where your fellow citizens stop to remember and to rededicate ourselves to accounting for and repatriating your loved ones—that somehow, ceremonies like this help to ease your pain."* Commemorative events were held across the country, and the White House issued a proclamation signed by the President.

PRESIDENT BUSH TO VISIT VIETNAM: The President will visit Hanoi in mid-November in conjunction with the Asia Pacific Economic Conference (APEC, hosted this year by Vietnam). Leaders countries in the vast Asia-Pacific region will attend, including the Presidents of Russia, the PRC and other countries directly linked to POW/MIA accounting interests. In a June 21, 2006 letter to the League, the President pledged to raise the need for increased POW/MIA cooperation when he meets with the Vietnamese Prime Minister. Prior to his arrival, the US Senate is reportedly scheduled to vote on and pass PNTR (permanent normal trade relations) with Vietnam, in anticipation of Vietnam's joining the World Trade Organization (WTO).

LEAGUE TRIP TO SOUTHEAST ASIA: On October 18th, League Executive Director Ann Mills Griffiths and Senior Policy Advisor Richard Childress will travel to Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia for meetings with officials. The primary objective is to convey to SRV leaders the need for specific unilateral actions to respond to President Bush when he visits Hanoi. Mr. Childress has always paid his own expenses when participating in a League Delegation; however, donations to offset costs would be most helpful. Send contributions to the League office, 1005 North Glebe Road, Suite 170, Arlington, VA 22201.

GENERAL FOGLESONG CONCLUDES BRIEF VISIT TO MOSCOW: The US Chairman of the US-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIA Affairs recently met in Moscow with Russian Federation officials. The League commends General Foglesong for his initiative and willingness to serve, but is disappointed that Russian President Putin has not yet named a respected official as Russian Chairman. We hope that Moscow will quickly take steps to restore the stature and sense of purpose that existed when the Joint Commission was first established by Presidents George H.W. Bush and Boris Yeltsin.

UPDATE ON JPAC OPERATIONS: JPAC leadership recently concluded a swing through several countries in Europe discussing future field operations related to WWII. Plans are near completion to resume field operations in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia in mid-October, extending until at least mid-November when President Bush visits Vietnam in conjunction with the APEC summit.

THE LEAGUE IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN (CFC) #1174