

Originally Processed With FOIA(s):

S

FOIA Number:

S

FOIA MARKER

This is not a textual record. This is used as an administrative marker by the George Bush Presidential Library Staff.

Record Group/Collection: George H.W. Bush Presidential Records
Collection/Office of Origin: Speechwriting, White House Office of
Series: Speech File Draft Files
Subseries: Chron File, 1989-1993

OA/ID Number: 13632
Folder ID Number: 13632-007

Folder Title:
National League of Families [of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia] 7/24/92 [OA 5810]

Stack:	Row:	Section:	Shelf:	Position:
G	26	18	3	5

agency. With your help, we can reach our goal.

George Bush

The Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Army, the Acting Secretary of the Navy, the Secretary of the Air Force, the Attorney General, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Administrator of General Services, the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, the Director of the United States Information Agency, the Chairman of the Postal Rate Commission, the Director of the Institute of Museum Services, the Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality, the Acting Director of the Office of Policy Development, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy

**Statement by Press Secretary
Fitzwater on the Escape of Pablo
Escobar**

July 23, 1992

Pablo Escobar escaped from prison when Colombian authorities attempted to move him to a more secure facility. This is unfortunate at a time when President Gaviria was trying to control the prison and put an end to Escobar's criminal activities. Escobar and his ilk represent a threat to law-abiding, civilized societies throughout the hemisphere, and they must be brought to justice.

This incident underlines the difficulties legitimate governments have in halting drug trafficking and placing drug traffickers before the bar of justice. We have strongly supported President Gaviria and the people of

Colombia in their valiant fight against these violent international criminal organizations. We will continue that support and cooperation, especially to strengthen the Colombian judicial system.

**Remarks to the National League
of Families of American Prisoners
and Missing in Southeast Asia
in Arlington, Virginia**

July 24, 1992

Thank you all. Sue, thank you very much. And Ann, I'm just glad to be back with you and this organization. To members of the board, my respects; to the family, friends.

Let me first start off by saluting two former NSC hands, Bud McFarland and Dick Childress over here who have worked very hard on all of this, and also the chairman emeritus, George Brooks.

Let me begin by thanking you for the opportunity to speak again to what has got to be one of the bravest and most dedicated groups of Americans in this country.

We live in a marvelous time, a time of tremendous opportunity. We've seen the end of the cold war and the collapse of imperial communism and a new birth of freedom from Moscow to Managua. America's courage, America's vision, America's values have indeed changed the world.

And yes, the cold war may be over, but the noble cause that took your fathers, your sons, and your husbands away from home is with us still. Our work must not end and will not end until you have answers about your loved ones.

Over the past 20 years, the National League of Families has seen the issue of your missing swept up in international or domestic politics, manipulated by foreign governments, exploited by con men, sensationalized by the media. All that time, you never lost sight of what you were looking for: good faith, an honest effort to resolve your uncertainty, to find answers to the agonizing question that you live with every day.

Sometimes you may have wondered whether your Government had forgotten you. When President Reagan and I took of-

fight against these
inal organizations.
oport and coopera-
en the Colombian

**nal League
an Prisoners
east Asia**

ank you very much.
o be back with you
o members of the
family, friends.
ff by saluting two
nd McFarland and
e who have worked
nd also the chairman

ing you for the op-
to what has got to
nd most dedicated
is country.

time, a time of tre-
ve've seen the end
collapse of imperial
v birth of freedom
ua. America's cour-
merica's values have
d.

ar may be over, but
ok your fathers, your
away from home is
ust not end and will
answers about your

years, the National
een the issue of your
national or domestic
oy foreign govern-
men, sensationalized
time, you never lost
oking for: good faith,
lve your uncertainty,
onizing question that

ay have wondered
nent had forgotten
eagan and I took of-

office in '81, we made your ordeal our top pri-
ority. We knew that with all the uncertainties
you live with, the one thing you should be
sure of is that your Government really cares.

You're talking to a person that was shot
down himself in combat. Fortunately, I
wasn't taken prisoner, but I was shot down
in combat. I understand a little bit what that
means. I understand what it means. And so
we set out to meet with you to ask your ad-
vice.

When we took office, no policy-level nego-
tiations with Vietnam, Laos, or Cambodia
had been held for several years. Despite the
fears of some that negotiating with Vietnam
implied recognition, despite the fears of oth-
ers that the POW-MIA issue was a cold war
fantasy, we took your advice and entered into
high-level negotiations.

When we took office, some saw this issue
as a matter between this Nation and Viet-
nam, not part of the broader relations be-
tween the U.S. and the Soviets, China, and
our friends in ASEAN, the ASEAN coun-
tries. We took your advice and urged our
friends as well as our adversaries to help us
find the answers.

Let me add that I am gratified to hear the
ASEAN ambassadors are here today. I salute
them over there. They are cooperating with
us. Their countries deserve credit for their
understanding, for their help, and for their
fellowship with you, the families.

Most important of all, when we took office,
we came up against a string of official
statements—

*[At this point, there was a disruption in the
audience.]*

No, no, no, this is very emotional, under-
standably emotional.

The thing that I would say to you, how-
ever, as a veteran, and one who still wears
my Navy wings from time to time is, I hope
you understand how I feel about patriotism,
about service to my country. And I will put
my record up against anybody here.

*[At this point, there was a disruption in the
audience.]*

And I just—would you please be quiet and
let me finish. Would you please shut up and
sit down.

I would say this: To suggest that a Com-
mander in Chief that led this country into
its most successful recent effort would con-
done for one single day the personal knowl-
edge of a person held against his will, wheth-
er it's here or anyplace else, is simply totally
unfair. Now, to say I understand the agony
that I've reheard here today is true. I do.

But I do not like the suggestion that any
American anywhere would know of a live
American being held somewhere against his
will, whether it's here or the allegation being
over in the other part of the world. Iran, the
suggestion was made that we left people
being prisoner in Iran so to win an election.
Now, what kind of an allegation is that to
make against a patriot? What kind to make
against—it is not.

So I would simply say to you: I care about
it. We are trying, and we're going to continue
to try. And I understand the divisions here.
I understand the divisions we hear in these
hearings. I understand the agony that people
feel. But I would also like to ask that you
understand where I'm coming from on this
issue. I think most of you do. I'm going to
continue to try.

We talked about Presidential commissions
and congressional committees indicating that
they felt Vietnam had done all it could, and
once again, we took your advice. We refused
to accept the fact that the book was closed.

It's no secret to any of you that for many
years now, significant lobbying has taken
place in opposition to this policy. Some of
it comes from those same voices we've heard
since the seventies, people who want us to
pretend Vietnam never happened. Some
comes from people who seek to smooth over
sticking points that stand in the way of com-
mercial opportunities. Others say, "Look, the
war is over. Let's move on." And that is
something we can and will never say. Now,
for us, the POW-MIA issue is not a sticking
point, not some bad dream we shake off, not
a footnote from a forgotten time we can sim-
ply ignore.

The POW-MIA issue is something entirely
different, something more. This I want you
to understand: It is a question of justice, of
oaths sworn, of commitments kept, and a na-
tion's test of its own worth measured in the
life of one, lone individual. This we know:

The wounds won't heal, the American family will not be whole, as I said earlier, so long as the brave men remain missing.

In my Inaugural Address as President, I did say that "goodwill begets goodwill." In the spirit of that statement, we developed a detailed road map for Vietnam, a road map that addresses our objectives as well as that Government's desire in terms of diplomatic and economic relations with the United States.

Let me be very clear: Without further positive movement on the POW's and MIA's, we cannot and will not continue to move forward with Hanoi.

Now, the other side of this is where they have moved, we've responded. When the Government of Vietnam pledged greater cooperation, including field operations, we greatly increased our manpower, even opened a permanent office in Hanoi. While we've seen an unprecedented level of joint investigations, these activities have not provided the concrete results that we seek. Make no mistake, we want to continue and expand our joint efforts. And I'll never accept joint activities as a substitute for real results. Your long years of uncertainty must end, and I am pledged to end them in any way I can.

Now as a measure of simple human decency, I call on the Government of Vietnam again to repatriate all recovered and readily recoverable remains. I call on the Government of Vietnam to act without delay.

I can say in return the United States stands ready to move forward on the road map that we've laid out. My message is the same to the other nations of Indochina. In Laos, our joint field operations have produced definitive answers, but the process remains painfully slow and cumbersome. We recognize the reality that most of our men unaccounted for in Laos were lost in areas under Vietnamese control.

Our relations with Laos have grown from wary distrust in those early eighties, to a broader, more open relationship. We cannot let this momentum wane. I address the Lao leaders when I say our relationship can grow further and will, if and when they provide the cooperation we now seek.

Our years of trying to seek cooperation from Cambodia and the Soviets were not re-

warded until just recently. The U.N.-sponsored settlement plan in Cambodia, the historic changes in the lands that used to be the Soviet Union, have opened the way for unprecedented access. We will push hard to translate this access into answers.

I know you've lived through hopes and then hopes dashed before. Unfortunately, and it breaks my heart to see this happen, we have seen false reporting. I think we would all agree there have been some scam operations that divert manpower and sap our resources. I simply cannot fathom the cruelty of those who would exploit that issue for personal gain.

Nevertheless, we are determined not to allow such incidents to discourage us. We're going to continue to pursue and openly receive information from all sources and continue to treat each report, every report, as the breakthrough that just might end the ordeal of one single American family.

I think our efforts have produced some results. For 241 families, the uncertainty has ended. For others, too many others, the questions linger. Every day now, it seems, the news purports to unearth some great new revelation of fact, facts that you've known for 20 years and facts we've shared with you for a decade.

Well, the key fact is one we all agree on: There are Americans who did not return home at the end of hostilities and Americans last known to be alive. Accounting for these men remains this highest priority. Although there's not proof that any Americans are now alive, in the absence of firm answers, our assumption will always be: Let facts direct our policy, and let hope be our guide.

So the policy remains: full disclosure, full disclosure of all relevant information to families. We're going to continue to cooperate fully with congressional committees to ensure the access they must have to perform their oversight role.

But there are some things we're not going to do. However loud the critics may complain, we will not publicly release any information that would jeopardize ongoing intelligence or negotiating efforts to account for your missing loved ones.

Let the critics complain. We have got to get this job done. As President, I take it to

ally. The U.N.-sponsored Cambodia, the historians that used to be opened the way for We will push hard to answers.

through hopes and before. Unfortunately, to see this happen, reporting. I think we have been some scam manpower and sap our not fathom the cruelty exploit that issue for per-

re determined not to discourage us. We're pursue and openly reveal all sources and context, every report, as just might end the orican family. We've produced some results, the uncertainty has so many others, the y day now, it seems, nearh some great new that you've known for e shared with you for

one we all agree on: who did not return stilities and Americans. Accounting for these est priority. Although any Americans are now of firm answers, our asse: Let facts direct our our guide.

ns: full disclosure, full at information to fami-ontinue to cooperate al committees to en-ust have to perform

things we're not going the critics may com-licly release any infor-pardize ongoing intel-efforts to account for s.

plain. We have got to President, I take it to

be an article of faith, a solemn covenant with those who serve this country: The United States will make every possible effort always, take every possible action to account for those taken prisoner or missing in action. Our aim remains the fullest possible accounting for our POW's and MIA's and nothing less. And I want you to know that comes to you with conviction.

Let me just say something about this gentleman sitting here. Tell me your name again—Jeff. I can't pretend to know the grief that you carry in your heart. My experience in combat was a little different. My wingman was shot down the first—disappeared the first mission I was on. We had maybe something like 7 out of our squadron of 15 killed.

I understand what combat is, but because of the way Barbara and I feel about our family, I can't try to say that I understand the grief that you carry with you every day, the anguish of uncertainty. So I don't want to try to put myself with everybody here who has suffered for a long time on an equal plane in that sense. That's not what I'm trying to do.

But I can remember that day that I mentioned to you 50 years ago, when I was a scared kid, 20 years old, I think, floating around just a couple of miles off a Japanese-held island. I remember the uncertainty at that moment. I can remember, when I wasn't wondering if anyone would find me at all, my worry was who's going to find me.

So what I'm trying to say is, I can identify with those who served. I can identify with their sacrifice. I can identify as a father who lost a child with the family implications, but again I'm not trying to put myself on the same plane with those who have suffered a lot.

But what I want to tell you is—I mean what I tell you in terms of priority—I know there's doubt here, and I know people are saying, as this gentleman said right from the heart, "Go over there and bring them back." Do you think if I knew of one single person and where he is and how it was that I wouldn't do that? Of course, I'd do that.

So all I'm asking—all I'm here to say is I am the President, and I am the Commander in Chief. Some of you believe it, and some of you may not, but we are going to get this job done, and we are going to account for every single person who is missing. I'm going to keep on it. I don't care how long it takes.

Thank you very, very much. Thank you.

Note: The President spoke at 9:35 a.m. at the Stouffer Concourse Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Sue Scott, chairman of the board, and Ann Mills Griffiths, executive director of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia.

Points of Light Recognition Program

The President named the following individuals and institutions as exemplars of his commitment to making community service central to the life and work of every American.

July 18

Thomas Floyd, of Spartanburg, SC

July 19

Joseph Thompson, of Topeka, KS

July 20

Volunteers of Reaching the Youth of San Antonio, Inc., (RTYOSA), of San Antonio, TX

July 21

Barbara Catherine Connelly, of Shirley, NY

July 22

Volunteers of Ginghamburg United Methodist Church, of Tipp City, OH

July 23

Volunteers of Frontline Outreach, Inc., of Orlando, FL

July 24

Don Davidson, of Lupton, MI

NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN
PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA
STOUFFER CONCOURSE HOTEL
JULY 24, 1992
9:30 A.M.

SUE. ANN. MEMBERS OF THE BOARD, FAMILY MEMBERS
AND FRIENDS. LET ME SALUTE TWO OLD N.S.C. HANDS -- BUD
MCFARLAND AND DICK CHILDRESS. AND ALSO MY OLD FRIEND,
YOUR CHAIRMAN EMERITUS, MR. GEORGE BROOKS.

LET ME BEGIN BY THANKING YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO
SPEAK AGAIN TO ONE OF THE BRAVEST AND MOST DEDICATED
GROUPS OF AMERICANS IN THIS COUNTRY.

WE LIVE AT A TIME OF TREMENDOUS OPPORTUNITY. WE'VE
SEEN THE END OF THE COLD WAR -- THE COLLAPSE OF
IMPERIAL COMMUNISM -- AND A NEW BIRTH OF FREEDOM, FROM
MOSCOW TO MANAGUA. AMERICA'S COURAGE -- AMERICA'S
VISION -- AMERICA'S VALUES -- HAVE CHANGED THE WORLD.

YES, THE COLD WAR MAY BE OVER, BUT THE NOBLE CAUSE
THAT TOOK YOUR FATHERS, YOUR SONS, YOUR HUSBANDS AWAY
FROM HOME ... IS WITH US STILL.

OUR WORK MUST NOT END. OUR WORK WILL NOT END --
UNTIL YOU HAVE ANSWERS ABOUT YOUR LOVED ONES. //

OVER THE PAST 20 YEARS, THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES HAS SEEN THE ISSUE OF YOUR MISSING RELATIVES SWEEPED UP IN INTERNATIONAL OR DOMESTIC POLITICS, MANIPULATED BY FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS / EXPLOITED BY CON MEN / SENSATIONALIZED BY THE MEDIA. ALL THAT TIME, YOU NEVER LOST SIGHT OF WHAT YOU WERE LOOKING FOR: GOOD FAITH -- AN HONEST EFFORT TO RESOLVE YOUR UNCERTAINTY, TO FIND ANSWERS TO THE AGONIZING QUESTION YOU LIVE WITH EVERY DAY.

SOMETIMES YOU MAY HAVE EVEN WONDERED WHETHER YOUR GOVERNMENT HAD FORGOTTEN YOU. / WHEN RONALD REAGAN AND I TOOK OFFICE IN 1981, WE MADE YOUR ORDEAL ... OUR PRIORITY. WE KNEW THAT -- WITH ALL THE UNCERTAINTIES YOU LIVE WITH -- THE ONE THING YOU SHOULD BE SURE OF ... IS THAT YOUR GOVERNMENT CARES.

SO WE SET OUT TO MEET WITH YOU -- TO ASK YOUR ADVICE.

WHEN WE TOOK OFFICE, NO POLICY-LEVEL NEGOTIATIONS WITH VIETNAM, LAOS OR CAMBODIA HAD BEEN HELD FOR SEVERAL YEARS. DESPITE THE FEARS OF SOME THAT NEGOTIATING WITH VIETNAM IMPLIED RECOGNITION -- DESPITE THE FEARS OF OTHERS THAT THE POW/MIA ISSUE WAS A COLD WAR FANTASY -- WE TOOK YOUR ADVICE / AND ENTERED HIGH-LEVEL NEGOTIATIONS.

WHEN WE TOOK OFFICE, SOME SAW THIS ISSUE AS A MATTER BETWEEN THIS NATION AND VIETNAM -- NOT PART OF THE BROADER RELATIONS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND SOVIET UNION, CHINA AND OUR FRIENDS IN ASEAN. WE TOOK YOUR ADVICE / AND URGED OUR FRIENDS AS WELL AS OUR ADVERSARIES TO HELP US FIND ANSWERS.

AND LET ME ADD THAT I'M GRATIFIED TO HEAR THE ASEAN AMBASSADORS ARE HERE TODAY. THE ASEAN COUNTRIES DESERVE CREDIT FOR THEIR UNDERSTANDING, FOR THEIR HELP -- AND FOR THEIR FELLOWSHIP WITH YOU, THE FAMILIES.

MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL: WHEN WE TOOK OFFICE, WE
CAME UP AGAINST A STRING OF OFFICIAL STATEMENTS,
PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSIONS AND CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES
INDICATING THAT THEY FELT VIETNAM HAD DONE ALL IT
COULD. ONCE AGAIN, WE TOOK YOUR ADVICE -- AND REFUSED
TO ACCEPT THE FACT THAT THE BOOK WAS CLOSED.

IT IS NO SECRET TO ANY OF YOU THAT FOR MANY YEARS
NOW, SIGNIFICANT LOBBYING HAS TAKEN PLACE IN OPPOSITION
TO OUR POLICY. SOME OF IT COMES FROM THOSE SAME VOICES
WE'VE HEARD SINCE THE '70'S -- PEOPLE WHO WANT US TO
PRETEND VIETNAM NEVER HAPPENED. SOME COMES FROM PEOPLE
WHO SEEK TO SMOOTH OVER STICKING POINTS THAT STAND IN
THE WAY OF COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES.

OTHERS SIMPLY SAY, "THE WAR IS OVER. / LET'S MOVE
ON." //

THAT IS SOMETHING WE CAN NEVER SAY. ///

FOR US, THE POW/MIA ISSUE IS NOT A STICKING POINT.
NOT SOME BAD DREAM WE SHAKE OFF. NOT A FOOTNOTE FROM A
FORGOTTEN TIME WE CAN SIMPLY IGNORE.

THE POW/MIA ISSUE IS SOMETHING DIFFERENT --
SOMETHING MORE: IT IS ... A QUESTION OF JUSTICE. OF
OATHS SWORN -- AND COMMITMENTS KEPT: A NATION'S TEST
OF ITS OWN WORTH -- MEASURED IN THE LIFE OF ONE, LONE
INDIVIDUAL.

THIS WE KNOW: THE WOUNDS WON'T HEAL -- THE
AMERICAN FAMILY WILL NOT BE WHOLE -- SO LONG AS BRAVE
MEN REMAIN MISSING. //

IN MY INAUGURAL ADDRESS AS PRESIDENT, I SAID THAT
"GOODWILL BEGETS GOODWILL." IN THE SPIRIT OF THAT
STATEMENT, WE DEVELOPED A DETAILED ROADMAP FOR VIETNAM
-- A ROADMAP THAT ADDRESSES OUR OBJECTIVES, AS WELL AS
THAT GOVERNMENT'S DESIRES IN TERMS OF DIPLOMATIC AND
ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. LET ME BE
CLEAR: WITHOUT ^{FURTHER} POSITIVE MOVEMENT ON POW'S AND MIA'S,
WE CANNOT AND WILL NOT ^{CONTINUE TO} MOVE FORWARD WITH HANOI. //

WHERE VIETNAM HAS MOVED, WE'VE RESPONDED. WHEN THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM PLEDGED GREATER COOPERATION -- INCLUDING FIELD OPERATIONS -- WE GREATLY INCREASED OUR MANPOWER, EVEN OPENED A PERMANENT OFFICE IN HANOI. AND WHILE WE'VE SEEN AN UNPRECEDENTED LEVEL OF JOINT INVESTIGATIONS -- THESE ACTIVITIES HAVE NOT PROVIDED THE CONCRETE RESULTS WE SEEK. MAKE NO MISTAKE: WE WANT TO CONTINUE AND EXPAND OUR JOINT EFFORTS. I WILL NEVER ACCEPT JOINT ACTIVITIES AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR REAL RESULTS. YOUR LONG YEARS OF UNCERTAINTY MUST END. //

AS A MEASURE OF SIMPLE HUMAN DECENCY -- I CALL ON THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM TO REPATRIATE ALL RECOVERED AND READILY RECOVERABLE REMAINS. I CALL ON THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM TO ACT -- WITHOUT DELAY. //

I CAN SAY, IN RETURN, THE UNITED STATES STANDS READY TO MOVE FORWARD ON THE ROADMAP WE'VE LAID OUT.

MY MESSAGE IS THE SAME TO THE OTHER NATIONS OF INDOCHINA. IN LAOS, OUR JOINT FIELD OPERATIONS HAVE PRODUCED DEFINITIVE ANSWERS, BUT THE PROCESS REMAINS PAINFULLY SLOW AND CUMBERSOME. WE RECOGNIZE THE REALITY THAT MOST OF OUR MEN UNACCOUNTED FOR IN LAOS WERE LOST IN AREAS UNDER VIETNAMESE CONTROL.

OUR RELATIONS WITH LAOS HAVE GROWN FROM WARY DISTRUST IN THE EARLY 1980'S TO A BROADER, MORE OPEN RELATIONSHIP. WE CANNOT LET THIS MOMENTUM WANE, AND I ADDRESS THE LAO LEADERS WHEN I SAY OUR RELATIONSHIP CAN GROW FURTHER, AND WILL -- IF AND WHEN THEY PROVIDE THE COOPERATION WE NOW SEEK.

OUR YEARS OF ATTEMPTING TO SEEK COOPERATION FROM CAMBODIA AND THE SOVIETS WERE NOT REWARDED -- UNTIL JUST RECENTLY. THE U.N.-SPONSORED SETTLEMENT PLAN IN CAMBODIA -- THE HISTORIC CHANGES IN THE LANDS OF THE OLD SOVIET UNION -- HAVE OPENED THE WAY FOR UNPRECEDENTED ACCESS. WE WILL PUSH HARD TO TRANSLATE THIS ACCESS INTO ANSWERS.

I KNOW YOU'VE LIVED THROUGH ALL THIS BEFORE.
UNFORTUNATELY -- AND IT BREAKS MY HEART TO SEE THIS
HAPPEN -- WE HAVE SEEN FALSE REPORTING, EVEN SCAM
OPERATIONS, THAT DIVERT MANPOWER AND SAP OUR RESOURCES.
I SIMPLY CANNOT FATHOM THE CRUELTY OF THOSE WHO WOULD
EXPLOIT THIS ISSUE FOR PERSONAL GAIN. NEVERTHELESS, WE
ARE DETERMINED NOT TO ALLOW SUCH INCIDENTS TO
DISCOURAGE US. WE WILL CONTINUE TO PURSUE AND OPENLY
RECEIVE INFORMATION FROM ALL SOURCES. WE WILL CONTINUE
TO TREAT EACH REPORT -- EVERY REPORT -- AS THE
BREAKTHROUGH THAT JUST MIGHT END ONE FAMILY'S ORDEAL.

OUR EFFORTS SINCE 1981 HAVE PRODUCED RESULTS. FOR
241 FAMILIES, THE UNCERTAINTY HAS ENDED. FOR OTHERS -
- TOO MANY OTHERS -- THE QUESTIONS LINGER. AND EVERY
DAY NOW, IT SEEMS, THE NEWS PURPORTS TO UNEARTH SOME
GREAT NEW REVELATION OF FACT -- FACTS YOU'VE KNOWN FOR
20 YEARS. FACTS WE'VE SHARED WITH YOU FOR A DECADE.

WELL, THE KEY FACT IS ONE WE ALL AGREE ON:

THERE ARE AMERICANS WHO DID NOT RETURN HOME AT THE
END OF HOSTILITIES -- AMERICANS LAST KNOWN TO BE ALIVE.

//

ACCOUNTING FOR THESE MEN REMAINS OUR HIGHEST
PRIORITY. // AND ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT YET HAVE PROOF
THAT ANY AMERICANS ARE NOW ALIVE, IN THE ABSENCE OF
FIRM ANSWERS -- OUR ASSUMPTION WILL ALWAYS BE: LET
FACTS DIRECT OUR POLICY. AND LET HOPE BE OUR GUIDE.

//

OUR POLICY REMAINS: FULL DISCLOSURE -- FULL
DISCLOSURE OF ALL RELEVANT INFORMATION TO FAMILIES. WE
WILL CONTINUE TO COOPERATE FULLY WITH CONGRESSIONAL
COMMITTEES -- TO ENSURE THE ACCESS THEY MUST HAVE TO
PERFORM THEIR IMPORTANT OVERSIGHT ROLE.

BUT THERE ARE SOME THINGS WE WILL NOT DO -- HOWEVER
LOUD THE CRITICS MAY COMPLAIN. WE WILL NOT PUBLICLY
RELEASE ANY INFORMATION THAT WOULD JEOPARDIZE ONGOING
INTELLIGENCE OR NEGOTIATING EFFORTS TO ACCOUNT FOR YOUR
MISSING LOVED ONES -- AMERICA'S MISSING HEROES.

I REPEAT: LET THE CRITICS COMPLAIN. WE HAVE A JOB TO DO. //

AS PRESIDENT, I TAKE IT TO BE AN ARTICLE OF FAITH -
- A SOLEMN COVENANT WITH THOSE WHO SERVE THIS COUNTRY:
THE UNITED STATES WILL ALWAYS MAKE EVERY POSSIBLE
EFFORT -- TAKE EVERY POSSIBLE ACTION -- TO ACCOUNT FOR
THOSE TAKEN PRISONER OR MISSING IN ACTION. OUR AIM
REMAINS: THE FULLEST POSSIBLE ACCOUNTING FOR OUR POW'S
AND MIA'S -- NOTHING LESS. //

LET ME CLOSE TODAY WITH A FEW WORDS FROM THE HEART.
//

NO, I DON'T KNOW THE GRIEF YOU CARRY WITH YOU. I
CAN'T CLAIM TO UNDERSTAND THE ANGUISH OF UNCERTAINTY -
- OR THE SOLACE OF HOPE.

BUT I CAN REMEMBER THE DAY -- ALMOST FIFTY YEARS
AGO NOW -- WHEN I WAS A SCARED KID, ALONE IN A RAFT,
PADDLING AGAINST THE CURRENT TO KEEP FROM WASHING
ASHORE ON AN ENEMY ISLAND. I CAN REMEMBER -- WHEN I
WASN'T WONDERING IF ANYONE WOULD FIND ME AT ALL --
WORRYING ABOUT WHO MIGHT FIND ME FIRST. //

I WAS FORTUNATE. / I KNOW THAT.

AND I LEARNED FIRST-HAND WHAT IT MEANS TO KNOW THAT
AMERICA WILL NEVER ABANDON ITS FIGHTING MEN, WHATEVER
THEIR FATE. ///

YOU HAVE MY WORD: AMERICA WILL NEVER FORGET.
AMERICA WILL STAND WITH YOU -- UNTIL AMERICA'S HEROES
HAVE COME HOME. //

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR HAVING ME WITH YOU. GOD BLESS
YOU -- AND MAY GOD BLESS THE GREATEST COUNTRY ON EARTH,
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

#

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 7/23/92 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: ---SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: NAT'L LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA - 7/24/92 - 9:30am

	ACTION	FYI		ACTION	FYI
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	HORNER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SKINNER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCBRIDE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MOORE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PETERSMEYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
BRADY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
BROMLEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROVOST	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CALIO	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SMITH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	YEUTTER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>FINDLAY</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>KAUFMAN</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
HOLIDAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>MCGROARTY</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

The attached has been forwarded to the President.

RESPONSE:

PHILLIP D. BRADY
Assistant to the President
and Staff Secretary
Ext. 2702

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

2 JUL 23 11:05

July 23, 1992

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: DAN MC GROARTY *DMG*

SUBJECT: PROPOSED REMARKS TO NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

I. SUMMARY

On Friday, July 24 at 9:30 a.m., in the Grand Ballroom of the Stouffer Concourse Hotel in Alexandria, Virginia, you will deliver remarks to 600 members of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia.

II. DISCUSSION

Your remarks (approximately 12 minutes / teleprompter) focus on this Administration's efforts for full accounting of each American POW and MIA.

McGroarty/Bunton
July 23, 1992
10:00 a.m.
[POW-MIA]

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN
PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA
Stouffer Concourse Hotel
JULY 24, 1992
9:30 A.M.

Sue, Ann, members of the board, family members and friends,
and also my old friend, [[your Chairman Emeritus, Mr. George
Brooks.]]

Let me begin by thanking you for the opportunity to speak
again to one of the bravest and most dedicated groups of
Americans in this country.

We live at a time of tremendous opportunity. We've seen the
end of the Cold War -- the collapse of imperial communism -- and
a new birth of freedom, from Moscow to Managua. America's
courage -- America's vision -- America's values -- have changed
the world.

Yes, the Cold War may be over, but the war that took your
fathers, your sons, your husbands away from home ... did not end.
Must not end. Will not end -- until you learn the fate of your
loved ones. //

Over the past 20 years, the National League of Families has
seen the issue of your missing relatives swept up in
international or domestic politics, manipulated by foreign
governments / exploited by con men / sensationalized by the
media. All that time, you never lost sight of what you were
looking for: good faith -- an honest effort to resolve your

uncertainty, to find answers to the question you live with every day.

Many times you've wondered whether your government had forgotten you. When Ronald Reagan and I took office in 1981, we made your ordeal ... our priority. We knew that, after years of neglect -- with all the uncertainties you live with -- the one thing you should be sure of ... is that your government cares.

So we set out to meet with you -- to ask your advice.

When we took office, no policy-level negotiations with Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia had been held for several years. Despite the fears of some that negotiating with Vietnam implied recognition -- despite the fears of others that the POW/MIA issue was a Cold War fantasy -- we took your advice and entered high-level negotiations.

When we took office, some saw this issue as a matter between this nation and Vietnam -- not part of the broader relations between the U.S. and Soviet Union, China and our friends in ASEAN. We took your advice, and urged our friends as well as our adversaries to help us find answers.

And let me just add that I'm gratified to hear the ASEAN ambassadors are here to meet with you today. The ASEAN countries deserve credit for their understanding, for their help -- and for their fellowship with you, the families.

When we took office, we came up against a string of official statements, Presidential commissions and Congressional committees indicating that they felt Vietnam had done all it could. Once

again, we took your advice -- and refused to accept indifference as an answer.

It is no secret to any of you that for many years now, significant lobbying has taken place in opposition to our policy. Some of it comes from those same voices we've heard since the '70's -- people who want us to pretend Vietnam never happened. Some comes from people who seek to smooth over sticking points that stand in the way of commercial opportunities.

Others simply say, "The war is over. / Let's move on." //
That is something we can never say. ///

For us, the POW/MIA issue is not a sticking point. Not some bad dream we shake off. Not a footnote from a forgotten time we can simply ignore. The POW/MIA issue is something different -- something more: it is a question of justice. A nation's test of its own worth -- measured in the life of one, lone individual.

This we know: The wounds won't heal -- the war won't end -- so long as even one brave American remains missing.

In my inaugural address as President, I said that "goodwill begets goodwill." In the spirit of that statement, we developed a detailed roadmap for Vietnam -- a roadmap that addresses our objectives, as well as that government's desires in terms of diplomatic and economic relations with the United States. Let me be clear: without that kind of positive movement on POW's and MIA's, we cannot and will not move forward with Hanoi. //

Where Vietnam has moved, we've responded. When the Government of Vietnam pledged greater cooperation -- including

field operations -- we greatly increased our manpower. And while we've seen an unprecedented level of joint investigations -- these activities have not provided the concrete results we seek. Make no mistake: We want to continue and expand our joint efforts. I will never accept joint efforts as a substitute for real results. Your long years of uncertainty must end. //

As a measure of simple human decency -- I call on the Government of Vietnam to repatriate all recovered and readily recoverable remains. I call on the Government of Vietnam to act -- without delay. //

I can say, in return, the United States stands ready to move forward on the roadmap we've laid out.

My message is the same to the other nations of Indochina. In Laos, our joint field operations have produced definitive answers, but the process remains painfully slow and cumbersome. We recognize the reality that most of our men unaccounted for in Laos were lost in areas under Vietnamese control.

Our relations with Laos have grown from wary distrust in the early 1980's to a broader, more open relationship. We cannot let this momentum wane, and I address the Lao leaders when I say our relationship can grow further, and will -- and when they provide the cooperation we now seek.

Our years of attempting to seek cooperation from Cambodia and the Soviets were not rewarded -- until just recently. The UN-sponsored settlement in Cambodia -- and the historic changes in the lands of the old Soviet Union -- have opened the way for

unprecedented access. We will push hard to translate this access into answers.

I know you've lived through all this before. Unfortunately -- and it breaks my heart to see this happen -- we have seen false reporting, even scam operations, that divert manpower and sap our resources. I simply cannot fathom the cruelty of those who would exploit this issue for personal gain. Nevertheless, we are determined not to allow such incidents to discourage us. We will continue to pursue and openly receive information from all sources. We will continue to treat each report -- every report -- as the breakthrough that just might end one family's ordeal.

Our efforts since 1981 have produced results. For 241 families, the uncertainty has ended. For others -- too many others -- the questions linger. And every day now, it seems, the news purports to unearth some great new revelation of fact -- facts you've known for 20 years. Facts we've shared with you for a decade.

Well, the key fact is one we all agree on:

There are Americans who did not return home at the end of hostilities -- Americans last known to be alive. //

Accounting for these men remains our highest priority. //

And although we do not yet have proof that any Americans are now alive, in the absence of fact or firm answers -- our assumption will always be: Let hope be our guide.

Our policy remains: full disclosure -- full disclosure of all relevant information to families. We will continue to cooperate fully with Congressional committees -- to ensure the access they must have to perform their important oversight role.

But there are some things we will not do -- however loud the critics may complain. We will not publicly release any information that would jeopardize ongoing intelligence efforts or negotiations to account for your missing loved ones -- America's missing heroes.

I repeat: let the critics complain. We have a job to do.

//

As President, I take it to be an article of faith -- a solemn covenant with those who serve this country: The United States will always make every possible effort -- take every possible action -- to learn the fate of those taken prisoner or missing in action. Our aim remains: the fullest possible accounting for every POW and MIA -- nothing less. //

Let me close today with a few words from the heart. //

No, I don't know the grief you carry with you. I can't claim to understand the anguish of uncertainty -- or the solace of hope.

But I can remember the day -- almost fifty years ago now -- when I was a scared kid, alone in a raft, paddling against the current to keep from washing ashore on an enemy island. I can remember -- when I wasn't wondering if anyone would find me at all -- worrying about who might find me first. //

I was fortunate. / I know that.

And I learned first-hand what it means to know that America will never abandon its fighting men, whatever their fate. ///

You have my word: America will never forget. America will stand with you -- until America's heroes have come home. //

Thank you again for having me with you. God bless you -- and may God bless the greatest country on earth, the United States of America.

#

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 23, 1992

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: DAN MC GROARTY *DMG*

SUBJECT: PROPOSED REMARKS TO NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

I. SUMMARY

On Friday, July 24 at 9:30 a.m., in the Grand Ballroom of the Stouffer Concourse Hotel in Alexandria, Virginia, you will deliver remarks to 600 members of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia.

II. DISCUSSION

Your remarks (approximately 12 minutes / teleprompter) focus on this Administration's efforts for full accounting of each American POW and MIA.

McGroarty/Bunton
July 23, 1992 .
10:00 a.m.
[POW-MIA]

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN
PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA
Stouffer Concourse Hotel
JULY 24, 1992
9:30 A.M.

Sue, Ann, members of the board, family members and friends,
and also my old friend, [[your Chairman Emeritus, Mr. George
Brooks.]]

Let me begin by thanking you for the opportunity to speak
again to one of the bravest and most dedicated groups of
Americans in this country.

We live at a time of tremendous opportunity. We've seen the
end of the Cold War -- the collapse of imperial communism -- and
a new birth of freedom, from Moscow to Managua. America's
courage -- America's vision -- America's values -- have changed
the world.

Yes, the Cold War may be over, but the war that took your
fathers, your sons, your husbands away from home ... did not end.
Must not end. Will not end -- until you learn the fate of your
loved ones. //

Over the past 20 years, the National League of Families has
seen the issue of your missing relatives swept up in
international or domestic politics, manipulated by foreign
governments / exploited by con men / sensationalized by the
media. All that time, you never lost sight of what you were
looking for: good faith -- an honest effort to resolve your

uncertainty, to find answers to the question you live with every day.

Many times you've wondered whether your government had forgotten you. When Ronald Reagan and I took office in 1981, we made your ordeal ... our priority. We knew that, after years of neglect -- with all the uncertainties you live with -- the one thing you should be sure of ... is that your government cares.

So we set out to meet with you -- to ask your advice.

When we took office, no policy-level negotiations with Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia had been held for several years. Despite the fears of some that negotiating with Vietnam implied recognition -- despite the fears of others that the POW/MIA issue was a Cold War fantasy -- we took your advice and entered high-level negotiations.

When we took office, some saw this issue as a matter between this nation and Vietnam -- not part of the broader relations between the U.S. and Soviet Union, China and our friends in ASEAN. We took your advice, and urged our friends as well as our adversaries to help us find answers.

And let me just add that I'm gratified to hear the ASEAN ambassadors are here to meet with you today. The ASEAN countries deserve credit for their understanding, for their help -- and for their fellowship with you, the families.

When we took office, we came up against a string of official statements, Presidential commissions and Congressional committees indicating that they felt Vietnam had done all it could. Once

again, we took your advice -- and refused to accept indifference as an answer.

It is no secret to any of you that for many years now, significant lobbying has taken place in opposition to our policy. Some of it comes from those same voices we've heard since the '70's -- people who want us to pretend Vietnam never happened. Some comes from people who seek to smooth over sticking points that stand in the way of commercial opportunities.

Others simply say, "The war is over. / Let's move on." //
That is something we can never say. ///

For us, the POW/MIA issue is not a sticking point. Not some bad dream we shake off. Not a footnote from a forgotten time we can simply ignore. The POW/MIA issue is something different -- something more: it is a question of justice. A nation's test of its own worth -- measured in the life of one, lone individual.

This we know: The wounds won't heal -- the war won't end -
- so long as even one brave American remains missing.

In my inaugural address as President, I said that "goodwill begets goodwill." In the spirit of that statement, we developed a detailed roadmap for Vietnam -- a roadmap that addresses our objectives, as well as that government's desires in terms of diplomatic and economic relations with the United States. Let me be clear: without that kind of positive movement on POW's and MIA's, we cannot and will not move forward with Hanoi. //

Where Vietnam has moved, we've responded. When the Government of Vietnam pledged greater cooperation -- including

field operations -- we greatly increased our manpower. And while we've seen an unprecedented level of joint investigations -- these activities have not provided the concrete results we seek. Make no mistake: We want to continue and expand our joint efforts. I will never accept joint efforts as a substitute for real results. Your long years of uncertainty must end. //

As a measure of simple human decency -- I call on the Government of Vietnam to repatriate all recovered and readily recoverable remains. I call on the Government of Vietnam to act -- without delay. //

I can say, in return, the United States stands ready to move forward on the roadmap we've laid out.

My message is the same to the other nations of Indochina. In Laos, our joint field operations have produced definitive answers, but the process remains painfully slow and cumbersome. We recognize the reality that most of our men unaccounted for in Laos were lost in areas under Vietnamese control.

Our relations with Laos have grown from wary distrust in the early 1980's to a broader, more open relationship. We cannot let this momentum wane, and I address the Lao leaders when I say our relationship can grow further, and will -- and when they provide the cooperation we now seek.

Our years of attempting to seek cooperation from Cambodia and the Soviets were not rewarded -- until just recently. The UN-sponsored settlement in Cambodia -- and the historic changes in the lands of the old Soviet Union -- have opened the way for

unprecedented access. We will push hard to translate this access into answers.

I know you've lived through all this before. Unfortunately -- and it breaks my heart to see this happen -- we have seen false reporting, even scam operations, that divert manpower and sap our resources. I simply cannot fathom the cruelty of those who would exploit this issue for personal gain. Nevertheless, we are determined not to allow such incidents to discourage us. We will continue to pursue and openly receive information from all sources. We will continue to treat each report -- every report -- as the breakthrough that just might end one family's ordeal.

Our efforts since 1981 have produced results. For 241 families, the uncertainty has ended. For others -- too many others -- the questions linger. And every day now, it seems, the news purports to unearth some great new revelation of fact -- facts you've known for 20 years. Facts we've shared with you for a decade.

Well, the key fact is one we all agree on:

There are Americans who did not return home at the end of hostilities -- Americans last known to be alive. //

Accounting for these men remains our highest priority. //

And although we do not yet have proof that any Americans are now alive, in the absence of fact or firm answers -- our assumption will always be: Let hope be our guide.

Our policy remains: full disclosure -- full disclosure of all relevant information to families. We will continue to cooperate fully with Congressional committees -- to ensure the access they must have to perform their important oversight role.

But there are some things we will not do -- however loud the critics may complain. We will not publicly release any information that would jeopardize ongoing intelligence efforts or negotiations to account for your missing loved ones -- America's missing heroes.

I repeat: let the critics complain. We have a job to do.

//

As President, I take it to be an article of faith -- a solemn covenant with those who serve this country: The United States will always make every possible effort -- take every possible action -- to learn the fate of those taken prisoner or missing in action. Our aim remains: the fullest possible accounting for every POW and MIA -- nothing less. //

Let me close today with a few words from the heart. //

No, I don't know the grief you carry with you. I can't claim to understand the anguish of uncertainty -- or the solace of hope.

But I can remember the day -- almost fifty years ago now -- when I was a scared kid, alone in a raft, paddling against the current to keep from washing ashore on an enemy island. I can remember -- when I wasn't wondering if anyone would find me at all -- worrying about who might find me first. //

I was fortunate. / I know that.

And I learned first-hand what it means to know that America will never abandon its fighting men, whatever their fate. ///

You have my word: America will never forget. America will stand with you -- until America's heroes have come home. //

Thank you again for having me with you. God bless you -- and may God bless the greatest country on earth, the United States of America.

#

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 23, 1992

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: DAN MC GROARTY *DMG*

SUBJECT: PROPOSED REMARKS TO NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF
AMERICAN PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

I. SUMMARY

On Friday, July 24 at 9:30 a.m., in the Grand Ballroom of the Stouffer Concourse Hotel in Alexandria, Virginia, you will deliver remarks to 600 members of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia.

II. DISCUSSION

Your remarks (approximately 12 minutes / teleprompter) focus on this Administration's efforts for full accounting of each American POW and MIA.

McGroarty/Bunton
July 23, 1992 .
10:00 a.m.
[POW-MIA]

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN
PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA
Stouffer Concourse Hotel
JULY 24, 1992
9:30 A.M.

Sue, Ann, members of the board, family members and friends,
and also my old friend, [[your Chairman Emeritus, Mr. George
Brooks.]]

Let me begin by thanking you for the opportunity to speak
again to one of the bravest and most dedicated groups of
Americans in this country.

We live at a time of tremendous opportunity. We've seen the
end of the Cold War -- the collapse of imperial communism -- and
a new birth of freedom, from Moscow to Managua. America's
courage -- America's vision -- America's values -- have changed
the world.

Yes, the Cold War may be over, but the war that took your
fathers, your sons, your husbands away from home ... did not end.
Must not end. Will not end -- until you learn the fate of your
loved ones. //

Over the past 20 years, the National League of Families has
seen the issue of your missing relatives swept up in
international or domestic politics, manipulated by foreign
governments / exploited by con men / sensationalized by the
media. All that time, you never lost sight of what you were
looking for: good faith -- an honest effort to resolve your

uncertainty, to find answers to the question you live with every day.

Many times you've wondered whether your government had forgotten you. When Ronald Reagan and I took office in 1981, we made your ordeal ... our priority. We knew that, after years of neglect -- with all the uncertainties you live with -- the one thing you should be sure of ... is that your government cares.

So we set out to meet with you -- to ask your advice.

When we took office, no policy-level negotiations with Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia had been held for several years. Despite the fears of some that negotiating with Vietnam implied recognition -- despite the fears of others that the POW/MIA issue was a Cold War fantasy -- we took your advice and entered high-level negotiations.

When we took office, some saw this issue as a matter between this nation and Vietnam -- not part of the broader relations between the U.S. and Soviet Union, China and our friends in ASEAN. We took your advice, and urged our friends as well as our adversaries to help us find answers.

And let me just add that I'm gratified to hear the ASEAN ambassadors are here to meet with you today. The ASEAN countries deserve credit for their understanding, for their help -- and for their fellowship with you, the families.

When we took office, we came up against a string of official statements, Presidential commissions and Congressional committees indicating that they felt Vietnam had done all it could. Once

again, we took your advice -- and refused to accept indifference as an answer.

It is no secret to any of you that for many years now, significant lobbying has taken place in opposition to our policy. Some of it comes from those same voices we've heard since the '70's -- people who want us to pretend Vietnam never happened. Some comes from people who seek to smooth over sticking points that stand in the way of commercial opportunities.

Others simply say, "The war is over. / Let's move on." //

That is something we can never say. ///

For us, the POW/MIA issue is not a sticking point. Not some bad dream we shake off. Not a footnote from a forgotten time we can simply ignore. The POW/MIA issue is something different -- something more: it is a question of justice. A nation's test of its own worth -- measured in the life of one, lone individual.

This we know: The wounds won't heal -- the war won't end - - so long as even one brave American remains missing.

In my inaugural address as President, I said that "goodwill begets goodwill." In the spirit of that statement, we developed a detailed roadmap for Vietnam -- a roadmap that addresses our objectives, as well as that government's desires in terms of diplomatic and economic relations with the United States. Let me be clear: without that kind of positive movement on POW's and MIA's, we cannot and will not move forward with Hanoi. //

Where Vietnam has moved, we've responded. When the Government of Vietnam pledged greater cooperation -- including

field operations -- we greatly increased our manpower. And while we've seen an unprecedented level of joint investigations -- these activities have not provided the concrete results we seek. Make no mistake: We want to continue and expand our joint efforts. I will never accept joint efforts as a substitute for real results. Your long years of uncertainty must end. //

As a measure of simple human decency -- I call on the Government of Vietnam to repatriate all recovered and readily recoverable remains. I call on the Government of Vietnam to act -- without delay. //

I can say, in return, the United States stands ready to move forward on the roadmap we've laid out.

My message is the same to the other nations of Indochina. In Laos, our joint field operations have produced definitive answers, but the process remains painfully slow and cumbersome. We recognize the reality that most of our men unaccounted for in Laos were lost in areas under Vietnamese control.

Our relations with Laos have grown from wary distrust in the early 1980's to a broader, more open relationship. We cannot let this momentum wane, and I address the Lao leaders when I say our relationship can grow further, and will -- if and when they provide the cooperation we now seek.

Our years of attempting to seek cooperation from Cambodia and the Soviets were not rewarded -- until just recently. The UN-sponsored settlement in Cambodia -- and the historic changes in the lands of the old Soviet Union -- have opened the way for

unprecedented access. We will push hard to translate this access into answers.

I know you've lived through all this before. Unfortunately -- and it breaks my heart to see this happen -- we have seen false reporting, even scam operations, that divert manpower and sap our resources. I simply cannot fathom the cruelty of those who would exploit this issue for personal gain. Nevertheless, we are determined not to allow such incidents to discourage us. We will continue to pursue and openly receive information from all sources. We will continue to treat each report -- every report -- as the breakthrough that just might end one family's ordeal.

Our efforts since 1981 have produced results. For 241 families, the uncertainty has ended. For others -- too many others -- the questions linger. And every day now, it seems, the news purports to unearth some great new revelation of fact -- facts you've known for 20 years. Facts we've shared with you for a decade.

Well, the key fact is one we all agree on:

There are Americans who did not return home at the end of hostilities -- Americans last known to be alive. //

Accounting for these men remains our highest priority. //

And although we do not yet have proof that any Americans are now alive, in the absence of fact or firm answers -- our assumption will always be: Let hope be our guide.

Our policy remains: full disclosure -- full disclosure of all relevant information to families. We will continue to cooperate fully with Congressional committees -- to ensure the access they must have to perform their important oversight role.

But there are some things we will not do -- however loud the critics may complain. We will not publicly release any information that would jeopardize ongoing intelligence efforts or negotiations to account for your missing loved ones -- America's missing heroes.

I repeat: let the critics complain. We have a job to do.

//

As President, I take it to be an article of faith -- a solemn covenant with those who serve this country: The United States will always make every possible effort -- take every possible action -- to learn the fate of those taken prisoner or missing in action. Our aim remains: the fullest possible accounting for every POW and MIA -- nothing less. //

Let me close today with a few words from the heart. //

No, I don't know the grief you carry with you. I can't claim to understand the anguish of uncertainty -- or the solace of hope.

But I can remember the day -- almost fifty years ago now -- when I was a scared kid, alone in a raft, paddling against the current to keep from washing ashore on an enemy island. I can remember -- when I wasn't wondering if anyone would find me at all -- worrying about who might find me first. //

I was fortunate. / I know that.

And I learned first-hand what it means to know that America will never abandon its fighting men, whatever their fate. ///

You have my word: America will never forget. America will stand with you -- until America's heroes have come home. //

Thank you again for having me with you. God bless you -- and may God bless the greatest country on earth, the United States of America.

#



**Office of Strategic Information
Facsimile Transmittal**

TO: STEVE PROUST

COMPANY: _____

FROM: Fred Steeper _____ David Hansen

Debra Keel _____ Jennifer Averbuch _____

Steve Kelsey _____ Laura Miller _____

DATE: 7/23/92

PHONE NUMBER: (202) 336-7944

NUMBER OF PAGES (including cover sheet) 2

FAX NUMBER: 456-2983

Comments and Instructions

Confidentiality Notice

The document accompanying this telecopy transmission contains information belonging to the sender which is confidential and may be legally privileged. The information is intended only for the use of the individual or entity named above. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any disclosure, copying, distribution or the taking of any action in reliance on the contents of this telecopied information is strictly prohibited. If you have received this telecopy in error, please immediately notify us by telephone to arrange for return of the original document to us.

July 23, 1992

MEMORANDUM

TO: David Hansen
 FROM: Jake Jacobson

TO: Steve Provost

From: Hansen

RE: Comments on the President's Remarks to the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Action in Southeast Asia

Overall, I think these remarks are well constructed to highlight the President's strongpoints and specific areas of credibility we identified. My specific comments are:

- The historic "Roadmap" for normalization is mentioned, but nowhere is it specifically tied to resolution of the POW-MIA issue. The first time the roadmap is mentioned, it is worth mentioning that the **first step** in that roadmap is cooperation on this issue. It is probably also worth mentioning that, despite slow progress, the Administration is hanging tough on this point.
- The President refers to our "joint field operations", which might be too vague or jargony a term. The description that received such an overwhelmingly positive response in our survey was "opened a permanent investigative office in Hanoi, and conducted fifteen separate on-the-ground investigations".
- A concept that could be brought forth more clearly is the idea that the country has a **commitment** to these soldiers and their families, that we **owe** them nothing but our maximum efforts, and that morally we have no **choice** but to honor that commitment.
- When the President says that he "can not fathom the cruelty of those who would exploit this issue for personal gain" he also has an opportunity to **pledge** to do everything in his power to **protect** these families against that kind of cruelty.

I'd check this -

*we took
 someone's
 word
 on this*

*this tests well with all
 vets - we'd like to
 inoculate ourselves
 with them as level-core
 MIA-POW - types will be
 difficult to satisfy.*

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

Dan McGrath

- See pp 3, 5, 6

- I think we will box ourselves in w/ "every one." There are

cases of soldiers/air men lost

in circumstances (such as our

war) in which we'll

not likely ever get further

information: "fastest possible"

isn't every one.

- I tried a fix on p. 5 of PE

last known address - Report may have its own thoughts on that point.

Jim

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

92 JUL 23 P12:17

July 23, 1992

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

DAN MC GROARTY *DMG*

SUBJECT:

PROPOSED REMARKS TO NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF
AMERICAN PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

I. SUMMARY

On Friday, July 24 at 9:30 a.m., in the Grand Ballroom of the Stouffer Concourse Hotel in Alexandria, Virginia, you will deliver remarks to 600 members of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia.

II. DISCUSSION

Your remarks (approximately 12 minutes / teleprompter) focus on this Administration's efforts for full accounting of each American POW and MIA.

McGroarty/Bunton
July 23, 1992 .
10:00 a.m.
[POW-MIA]

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN
PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA
Stouffer Concourse Hotel
JULY 24, 1992
9:30 A.M.

Sue, Ann, members of the board, family members and friends,
and also my old friend, [[your Chairman Emeritus, Mr. George
Brooks.]]

Let me begin by thanking you for the opportunity to speak
again to one of the bravest and most dedicated groups of
Americans in this country.

We live at a time of tremendous opportunity. We've seen the
end of the Cold War -- the collapse of imperial communism -- and
a new birth of freedom, from Moscow to Managua. America's
courage -- America's vision -- America's values -- have changed
the world.

Yes, the Cold War may be over, but the war that took your
fathers, your sons, your husbands away from home ... did not end.
Must not end. Will not end -- until you learn the fate of your
loved ones. //

Over the past 20 years, the National League of Families has
seen the issue of your missing relatives swept up in
international or domestic politics, manipulated by foreign
governments / exploited by con men / sensationalized by the
media. All that time, you never lost sight of what you were
looking for: good faith -- an honest effort to resolve your

uncertainty, to find answers to the question you live with every day.

Many times you've wondered whether your government had forgotten you. When Ronald Reagan and I took office in 1981, we made your ordeal ... our priority. We knew that, after years of neglect -- with all the uncertainties you live with -- the one thing you should be sure of ... is that your government cares.

So we set out to meet with you -- to ask your advice.

When we took office, no policy-level negotiations with Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia had been held for several years. Despite the fears of some that negotiating with Vietnam implied recognition -- despite the fears of others that the POW/MIA issue was a Cold War fantasy -- we took your advice and entered high-level negotiations.

When we took office, some saw this issue as a matter between this nation and Vietnam -- not part of the broader relations between the U.S. and Soviet Union, China and our friends in ASEAN. We took your advice, and urged our friends as well as our adversaries to help us find answers.

And let me just add that I'm gratified to hear the ASEAN ambassadors are here to meet with you today. The ASEAN countries deserve credit for their understanding, for their help -- and for their fellowship with you, the families.

When we took office, we came up against a string of official statements, Presidential commissions and Congressional committees indicating that they felt Vietnam had done all it could. Once

again, we took your advice -- and refused to accept indifference as an answer.

It is no secret to any of you that for many years now, significant lobbying has taken place in opposition to our policy. Some of it comes from those same voices we've heard since the '70's -- people who want us to pretend Vietnam never happened. Some comes from people who seek to smooth over sticking points that stand in the way of commercial opportunities.

Others simply say, "The war is over. / Let's move on." //
That is something we can never say. ///

For us, the POW/MIA issue is not a sticking point. Not some bad dream we shake off. Not a footnote from a forgotten time we can simply ignore. The POW/MIA issue is something different -- something more: it is a question of justice. A nation's test of its own worth -- measured in the life of one, lone individual.

This we know: The wounds won't heal -- the war won't end -
- so long as [even one] brave American^s remain^s missing.

In my inaugural address as President, I said that "goodwill begets goodwill." In the spirit of that statement, we developed a detailed roadmap for Vietnam -- a roadmap that addresses our objectives, as well as that government's desires in terms of diplomatic and economic relations with the United States. Let me be clear: without that kind of positive movement on POW's and MIA's, we cannot and will not move forward with Hanoi. //

Where Vietnam has moved, we've responded. When the Government of Vietnam pledged greater cooperation -- including

field operations -- we greatly increased our manpower. And while we've seen an unprecedented level of joint investigations -- these activities have not provided the concrete results we seek. Make no mistake: We want to continue and expand our joint efforts. I will never accept joint efforts as a substitute for real results. Your long years of uncertainty must end. //

As a measure of simple human decency -- I call on the Government of Vietnam to repatriate all recovered and readily recoverable remains. I call on the Government of Vietnam to act -- without delay. //

I can say, in return, the United States stands ready to move forward on the roadmap we've laid out.

My message is the same to the other nations of Indochina. In Laos, our joint field operations have produced definitive answers, but the process remains painfully slow and cumbersome. We recognize the reality that most of our men unaccounted for in Laos were lost in areas under Vietnamese control.

Our relations with Laos have grown from wary distrust in the early 1980's to a broader, more open relationship. We cannot let this momentum wane, and I address the Lao leaders when I say our relationship can grow further, and will -- if and when they provide the cooperation we now seek.

Our years of attempting to seek cooperation from Cambodia and the Soviets were not rewarded -- until just recently. The UN-sponsored settlement in Cambodia -- and the historic changes in the lands of the old Soviet Union -- have opened the way for

unprecedented access. We will push hard to translate this access into answers.

I know you've lived through all this before. Unfortunately -- and it breaks my heart to see this happen -- we have seen false reporting, even scam operations, that divert manpower and sap our resources. I simply cannot fathom the cruelty of those who would exploit this issue for personal gain. Nevertheless, we are determined not to allow such incidents to discourage us. We will continue to pursue and openly receive information from all sources. We will continue to treat each report -- every report -- as the breakthrough that just might end one family's ordeal.

Our efforts since 1981 have produced results. For 241 families, the uncertainty has ended. For others -- too many others -- the questions linger. And every day now, it seems, the news purports to unearth some great new revelation of fact -- facts you've known for 20 years. Facts we've shared with you for a decade.

Well, the key fact is one we all agree on:

There are Americans who did not return home at the end of hostilities -- Americans last known to be alive. //

Accounting for these men remains our highest priority. //

And although we do not yet have proof that any Americans are now alive, in the absence of fact or firm answers -- our assumption will always be: Let hope be our guide, *and facts direct our policy.*

when they passed out of American control.

Our policy remains: full disclosure -- full disclosure of all relevant information to families. We will continue to cooperate fully with Congressional committees -- to ensure the access they must have to perform their important oversight role.

But there are some things we will not do -- however loud the critics may complain. We will not publicly release any information that would jeopardize ongoing intelligence efforts or negotiations to account for your missing loved ones -- America's missing heroes.

I repeat: let the critics complain. We have a job to do.

//

As President, I take it to be an article of faith -- a solemn covenant with those who serve this country: The United States will always make every possible effort -- take every possible action -- to learn the fate of those taken prisoner or missing in action. Our aim remains: the fullest possible accounting for [every]^{our} POWs and MIAs -- nothing less. //

Let me close today with a few words from the heart. //

No, I don't know the grief you carry with you. I can't claim to understand the anguish of uncertainty -- or the solace of hope.

But I can remember the day -- almost fifty years ago now -- when I was a scared kid, alone in a raft, paddling against the current to keep from washing ashore on an enemy island. I can remember -- when I wasn't wondering if anyone would find me at all -- worrying about who might find me first. //

I was fortunate. / I know that.

And I learned first-hand what it means to know that America will never abandon its fighting men, whatever their fate. ///

You have my word: America will never forget. America will stand with you -- until America's heroes have come home. //

Thank you again for having me with you. God bless you -- and may God bless the greatest country on earth, the United States of America.

#

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 22, 1992

MEMORANDUM FOR DAN MCGROARTY

FROM: ROGER B. PORTER *RBP*

SUBJECT: Presidential Remarks: National League of
Families of American Prisoners and Missing in
Southeast Asia

We have reviewed the attached presidential remarks and have no suggested changes from a policy standpoint. We approve of the draft in its present form.

cc: Phillip D. Brady

92 JUL 24 9:32

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 7/22/92 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: THURS. 7/23 9:00am

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN PRISONERS & MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA - 7/24/92 - 9:30am

	ACTION	FYI		ACTION	FYI
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	HORNER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SKINNER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCBRIDE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MOORE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PETERSMEYER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BRADY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BROMLEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROVOST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CALIO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SMITH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	YEUTTER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	FINDLAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	KAUFMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
HOLIDAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MCGR RTY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

Please forward your comments directly to Dan Mc Party, Rm. 122, x2930, no later than 9:00 a.m., THURSDAY, JULY 23, with a copy to this office. Thank you.

RESPONSE:

PHILLIP D. BRADY
 Assistant to the President
 and Staff Secretary
 Ext. 2702

McGroarty/Bunton
July 21, 1992
6:00 p.m.
[POW-MIA]

02 JUL 22 11:03

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN
PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA
Stouffer Concourse Hotel
JULY 24, 1992
9:30 A.M.

Sue, Anne, members of the board, family members and friends,
and also my old friend, [[your Chairman Emeritus, Mr. George
Brooks.]]

Let me begin by thanking you for the opportunity to speak
again to one of the bravest and most dedicated groups of
Americans in this country.

Over the past 20 years, the National League of Families has
seen the issue of your missing relatives swept up in
international or domestic politics, manipulated by foreign
governments / exploited by con men / sensationalized by the
media. All that time, you never lost sight of what you were
looking for: good faith -- an honest effort to resolve your
uncertainty, to find answers to the question you live with every
day.

Many times you've wondered whether your government had
forgotten you. When Ronald Reagan and I took office in 1981, we
made your ordeal our priority. After years of neglect -- with
all the uncertainties you live with -- the one thing you should
be sure of is that your government cares.

So we set out to meet with you -- to ask your advice.

When we took office, no policy-level negotiations with
Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia had been held for several years.

Despite fears from the right that negotiating with Vietnam implied recognition, and from the left that the POW/MIA issue was a Cold War fantasy -- we took your advice and entered high-level negotiations.

When we took office, some saw this issue as a matter between this nation and Vietnam -- not part of the broader relations between the U.S. and Soviet Union, China and our friends in ASEAN. We took your advice, and urged our friends as well as our adversaries to help us find answers.

When we took office, we came up against a string of official statements, Presidential commissions and Congressional committees indicating that they felt Vietnam had done all it could. Once again, we took your advice -- and refused to accept indifference as an answer.

It is no secret to any of you that for many years now, significant lobbying has taken place in opposition to our policy. Some of it comes from those same voices we've heard since the '70's -- people who want us to pretend Vietnam never happened. Some comes from people who seek to smooth over sticking points that stand in the way of commercial opportunities.

Others simply say, "The war is over. Let's move on." //

But for us, the POW/MIA issue is not a sticking point. Not some bad dream we shake off. Not a footnote from a forgotten time we can simply ignore. The POW/MIA issue is something different -- something more: it is a question of justice. A

nation's test of its own worth -- measured in the life of one, lone individual.

This we know: The wounds won't heal -- the war won't end -- so long as even one brave American remains unaccounted for.

In my inaugural address as President, I said that "goodwill begets goodwill." In the spirit of that statement, we developed a detailed roadmap for Vietnam -- a roadmap that addresses our objectives, as well as that government's desires in terms of diplomatic and economic relations with the United States. Let me be clear: without that kind of positive movement on POW's and MIA's, we cannot and will not move forward with Hanoi. //

Where Vietnam has moved, we've responded. When the Government of Vietnam pledged greater cooperation -- including field operations -- we greatly increased our manpower. And while we've seen an unprecedented level of joint investigations -- these activities have not provided the concrete results we seek. Make no mistake: We want to continue and expand our joint efforts. But joint efforts can never be a substitute for real results that end your uncertainty. //

I continue to believe: Our own information suggests that Vietnam can resolve hundreds of cases, unilaterally and instantly. Once more, I call on the Government of Vietnam to act -- without delay. //

I can say, in return, the United States stands ready to move forward on the roadmap we've laid out.

My message is the same to the other nations of Indochina. In Laos, our joint field operations have produced definitive answers, but the process remains painfully slow and cumbersome. We recognize the reality that most of our men unaccounted for in Laos were lost in areas under Vietnamese control.

Our relations with Laos have grown from wary distrust in the early 1980's to a broader, more open relationship. We cannot let this momentum wane, and I address the Lao leaders when I say our relationship can grow further, and will, if they provide the cooperation we now seek.

Our years of attempting to seek cooperation from Cambodia and the Soviets were not rewarded -- until just recently. The ^{UNITED NATIONS} UN-sponsored settlement in Cambodia -- and the historic changes in the lands of the old Soviet Union -- have opened the way for unprecedented access. We will push hard to translate this access into answers.

I know you've lived through all this before. We have, unfortunately -- and it breaks my heart to see this happen -- seen false reporting, even scam operations, that divert manpower and sap our resources. I simply cannot fathom the cruelty of those who would exploit this issue for personal gain.

Nevertheless, we are determined not to allow such incidents to discourage us. We will continue to pursue and openly receive information from all sources. We will continue to treat each report -- every report -- as the breakthrough that just might end one family's ordeal.

Our efforts since 1981 have produced results. For 241 families, the uncertainty has ended. For others -- too many others -- the questions linger. And every day now, it seems, the news purports to unearth some great new revelation of fact -- facts you've known for 20 years. Facts we've shared with you for a decade.

Well, the key fact is one we all agree on:

There are Americans who did not return home at the end of hostilities -- Americans last known to be alive in captivity.

Learning the fate of these men remains our highest priority.

And although we do not yet have proof that any Americans are now alive, in the absence of firm answers -- our assumption will always be: Let hope be our guide.

Our policy remains: full disclosure -- full disclosure of all relevant information to families. We will continue to cooperate fully with Congressional committees -- to ensure the access they must have to perform their important oversight role.

But there are some things we will not do -- however loud the critics may complain. We will not publicly release any information that would jeopardize ongoing intelligence efforts or negotiations to account for your missing loved ones -- America's missing heroes.

I repeat: let the critics complain. We have a job to do.

As President, I take it to be an article of faith -- a solemn covenant with those who serve this country: The United States will always make every possible effort -- take every

possible action -- to learn the fate of those taken prisoner or missing in action. Our aim remains: a full accounting for every POW and MIA -- nothing less. //

Let me close today with a few words from the heart. //

No, I don't know the grief you carry with you. I can't claim to understand the anguish of uncertainty -- or the solace of hope.

But I can remember the day -- almost fifty years ago now -- when I was a scared kid, alone in a raft, paddling against the current to keep from washing ashore on an enemy island. I can remember -- when I wasn't wondering if anyone would find me at all -- worrying about who might find me first. //

I was fortunate. / I know that.

And I learned first-hand what it means that America will never abandon its fighting men, whatever their fate. ///

You have my word: America will never forget. America will stand with you -- until every hero has come home. //

Thank you again for having me with you. God bless you -- and may God bless the greatest country on earth, the United States of America.

#

NATIONAL SECURITY CO

To: Dan McGroarty
From: Jim Keith

Dan, attached please
find Brent's additional
fixes: p. 1, p. 2, p. 3,
p. 4. The others are
comments I had already
passed to you, which
Brent encloses.

Thanks,
JK

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 23, 1992

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

DAN MC GROARTY *DMG*

SUBJECT:

PROPOSED REMARKS TO NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF
AMERICAN PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

I. SUMMARY

On Friday, July 24 at 9:30 a.m., in the Grand Ballroom of the Stouffer Concourse Hotel in Alexandria, Virginia, you will deliver remarks to 600 members of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia.

II. DISCUSSION

Your remarks (approximately 12 minutes / teleprompter) focus on this Administration's efforts for full accounting of each American POW and MIA.

92 JUL 23 P 3: 36

McGroarty/Bunton
July 23, 1992
10:00 a.m.
[POW-MIA]

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN
PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA
Stouffer Concourse Hotel
JULY 24, 1992
9:30 A.M.

Sue, Ann, members of the board, family members and friends,
and also my old friend, [[your Chairman Emeritus, Mr. George
Brooks.]]

Let me begin by thanking you for the opportunity to speak
again to one of the bravest and most dedicated groups of
Americans in this country.

We live at a time of tremendous opportunity. We've seen the
end of the Cold War -- the collapse of imperial communism -- and
a new birth of freedom, from Moscow to Managua. America's
courage -- America's vision -- America's values -- have changed
the world.

Yes, the Cold War may be over, but ^{have been taken} the war that took your
fathers, your sons, your husbands away from home ... ^{not} did not end.

^{We efforts to resolve that} Must not end. Will not end -- until you learn the fate of your
loved ones. //

Over the past 20 years, the National League of Families has
seen the issue of your missing relatives swept up in
international or domestic politics, manipulated by foreign
governments / exploited by con men / sensationalized by the
media. All that time, you never lost sight of what you were
looking for: good faith -- an honest effort to resolve your

The war is still on

uncertainty, to find answers to the ² *agony* question you live with every day.

Some *never* *may have*
[Many] times you [ve] wondered whether your government had forgotten you. When Ronald Reagan and I took office in 1981, we made your ordeal ... our priority. We knew that, [after years of neglect] -- with all the uncertainties you live with -- the one thing you should be sure of ... is that your government cares.

So we set out to meet with you -- to ask your advice.

When we took office, no policy-level negotiations with Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia had been held for several years. Despite the fears of some that negotiating with Vietnam implied recognition -- despite the fears of others that the POW/MIA issue was a Cold War fantasy -- we took your advice and entered high-level negotiations.

When we took office, some saw this issue as a matter between this nation and Vietnam -- not part of the broader relations between the U.S. and Soviet Union, China and our friends in ASEAN. We took your advice, and urged our friends as well as our adversaries to help us find answers.

And let me just add that I'm gratified to hear the ASEAN ambassadors are here to meet with you today. The ASEAN countries deserve credit for their understanding, for their help -- and for their fellowship with you, the families.

When we took office, we came up against [a string of] official statements, Presidential commissions and Congressional committees indicating that they felt Vietnam had done all it could. Once

again, we took your advice -- and refused to accept ^{that the book} indifference
as an answer. ^{was closed}

It is no secret to any of you that for many years now, significant lobbying has taken place in opposition to our policy. Some of it comes from those same voices we've heard since the '70's -- people who want us to pretend Vietnam never happened. Some comes from people who seek to smooth over sticking points that stand in the way of commercial opportunities.

Others simply say, "The war is over. / Let's move on." // That is something we can never say. ///

For us, the POW/MIA issue is not a sticking point. Not some bad dream we shake off. Not a footnote from a forgotten time we can simply ignore. The POW/MIA issue is something different -- something more: it is a question of justice. A nation's test of its own worth -- measured in the life of one, lone individual.

This we know: The wounds won't heal -- ^{our efforts} the war won't end -
 - so long as even one brave American^s remains missing.

In my inaugural address as President, I said that "goodwill begets goodwill." In the spirit of that statement, we developed a detailed roadmap for Vietnam -- a roadmap that addresses our objectives, as well as that government's desires in terms of diplomatic and economic relations with the United States. Let me be clear: without that kind of positive movement on POW's and MIA's, we cannot and will not move forward with Hanoi. //

Where Vietnam has moved, we've responded. When the Government of Vietnam pledged greater cooperation -- including

field operations -- we greatly increased our manpower. And while we've seen an unprecedented level of joint investigations -- these activities have not provided the concrete results we seek. Make no mistake: We want to continue and expand our joint efforts. I will never accept joint efforts as a substitute for real results. Your long years of uncertainty must end. //

As a measure of simple human decency -- I call on the Government of Vietnam to repatriate all recovered and readily recoverable remains. I call on the Government of Vietnam to act -- without delay. //

I can say, in return, the United States stands ready to move forward on the roadmap we've laid out.

My message is the same to the other nations of Indochina. In Laos, our joint field operations have produced definitive answers, but the process remains painfully slow and cumbersome. We recognize the reality that most of our men unaccounted for in Laos were lost in areas under Vietnamese control.

Our relations with Laos have grown from wary distrust in the early 1980's to a broader, more open relationship. We cannot let this momentum wane, and I address the Lao leaders when I say our relationship can grow further, and will -- ~~be~~ and when they provide the cooperation we now seek.

Our years of attempting to seek cooperation from Cambodia and the Soviets were not rewarded -- until just recently. The UN-sponsored ² settlement ^{plan} in Cambodia -- and the historic changes TOD
Stoney in the lands of the old Soviet Union -- have opened the way for

unprecedented access. We will push hard to translate this access into answers.

I know you've lived through all this before. Unfortunately -- and it breaks my heart to see this happen -- we have seen false reporting, even scam operations, that divert manpower and sap our resources. I simply cannot fathom the cruelty of those who would exploit this issue for personal gain. Nevertheless, we are determined not to allow such incidents to discourage us. We will continue to pursue and openly receive information from all sources. We will continue to treat each report -- every report -- as the breakthrough that just might end one family's ordeal.

Our efforts since 1981 have produced results. For 241 families, the uncertainty has ended. For others -- too many others -- the questions linger. And every day now, it seems, the news purports to unearth some great new revelation of fact -- facts you've known for 20 years. Facts we've shared with you for a decade.

Well, the key fact is one we all agree on:

There are Americans who did not return home at the end of hostilities -- Americans last known to be alive. // *when they passed out of American control.*

Accounting for these men remains our highest priority. //

And although we do not yet have proof that any Americans are now alive, in the absence of fact or firm answers -- our assumption will always be: Let hope be our guide. // *and let facts direct our policy*

Our policy remains: full disclosure -- full disclosure of all relevant information to families. We will continue to cooperate fully with Congressional committees -- to ensure the access they must have to perform their important oversight role.

But there are some things we will not do -- however loud the critics may complain. We will not publicly release any information that would jeopardize ongoing intelligence efforts or negotiations to account for your missing loved ones -- America's missing heroes.

I repeat: let the critics complain. We have a job to do.

//

As President, I take it to be an article of faith -- a solemn covenant with those who serve this country: The United States will always make every possible effort -- take every possible action -- to learn the fate of those taken prisoner or missing in action. Our aim remains: the fullest possible accounting for {every}^{our} POWs and MIA^s -- nothing less. //

Let me close today with a few words from the heart. //

No, I don't know the grief you carry with you. I can't claim to understand the anguish of uncertainty -- or the solace of hope.

But I can remember the day -- almost fifty years ago now -- when I was a scared kid, alone in a raft, paddling against the current to keep from washing ashore on an enemy island. I can remember -- when I wasn't wondering if anyone would find me at all -- worrying about who might find me first. //

I was fortunate. / I know that.

And I learned first-hand what it means to know that America will never abandon its fighting men, whatever their fate. ///

You have my word: America will never forget. America will stand with you -- until America's heroes have come home. //

Thank you again for having me with you. God bless you -- and may God bless the greatest country on earth, the United States of America.

#

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 7/22/92 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: THURS. 7/23 9:00am

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN PRISONERS & MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA - 7/24/92 - 9:30am

	ACTION	FYI		ACTION	FYI
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	HORNER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SKINNER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCBRIDE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X MOORE <i>to SP.</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PETERSMEYER <i>N/C</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BRADY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BROMLEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROVOST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CALIO <i>N/C</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SMITH <i>N/C</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	YEUTTER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	FINDLAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
GRAY <i>N/C</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	KAUFMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
HOLIDAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MCGRO RTY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

Please forward your comments directly to Dan McGoarty, Rm. 122, x2930, no later than 9:00 a.m., THURSDAY, JULY 23, with a copy to this office. Thank you.

*POW
MIA*

RESPONSE:

PHILLIP D. BRADY
Assistant to the President
and Staff Secretary
Ext. 2702

McGroarty/Bunton
July 21, 1992
6:00 p.m.
[POW-MIA]

22 JUL 22 11:03

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN
PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA
Stouffer Concourse Hotel
JULY 24, 1992
9:30 A.M.

Sue, Anne, members of the board, family members and friends,
and also my old friend, [[your Chairman Emeritus, Mr. George
Brooks.]]

Let me begin by thanking you for the opportunity to speak
again to one of the bravest and most dedicated groups of
Americans in this country.

Over the past 20 years, the National League of Families has
seen the issue of your missing relatives swept up in
international or domestic politics, manipulated by foreign
governments / exploited by con men / sensationalized by the
media. All that time, you never lost sight of what you were
looking for: good faith -- an honest effort to resolve your
uncertainty, to find answers to the question you live with every
day.

Many times you've wondered whether your government had
forgotten you. When Ronald Reagan and I took office in 1981, we
made your ordeal our priority. After years of neglect -- with
all the uncertainties you live with -- the one thing you should
be sure of is that your government cares.

So we set out to meet with you -- to ask your advice.

When we took office, no policy-level negotiations with
Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia had been held for several years.

Despite fears from the right that negotiating with Vietnam implied recognition, and from the left that the POW/MIA issue was a Cold War fantasy -- we took your advice and entered high-level negotiations.

When we took office, some saw this issue as a matter between this nation and Vietnam -- not part of the broader relations between the U.S. and Soviet Union, China and our friends in ASEAN. We took your advice, and urged our friends as well as our adversaries to help us find answers.

When we took office, we came up against a string of official statements, Presidential commissions and Congressional committees indicating that they felt Vietnam had done all it could. Once again, we took your advice -- and refused to accept indifference as an answer.

It is no secret to any of you that for many years now, significant lobbying has taken place in opposition to our policy. Some of it comes from those same voices we've heard since the '70's -- people who want us to pretend Vietnam never happened. Some comes from people who seek to smooth over sticking points that stand in the way of commercial opportunities.

Others simply say, "The war is over. Let's move on." //

But for us, the POW/MIA issue is not a sticking point. Not some bad dream we shake off. Not a footnote from a forgotten time we can simply ignore. The POW/MIA issue is something different -- something more: it is a question of justice. A

nation's test of its own worth -- measured in the life of one, lone individual.

This we know: The wounds won't heal -- the war won't end -- so long as even one brave American remains unaccounted for.

In my inaugural address as President, I said that "goodwill begets goodwill." In the spirit of that statement, we developed a detailed roadmap for Vietnam -- a roadmap that addresses our objectives, as well as that government's desires in terms of diplomatic and economic relations with the United States. Let me be clear: without that kind of positive movement on POW's and MIA's, we cannot and will not move forward with Hanoi. //

Where Vietnam has moved, we've responded. When the Government of Vietnam pledged greater cooperation -- including field operations -- we greatly increased our manpower. And while we've seen an unprecedented level of joint investigations -- these activities have not provided the concrete results we seek. Make no mistake: We want to continue and expand our joint efforts. But joint efforts can never be a substitute for real results that end your uncertainty. //

I continue to believe: Our own information suggests that Vietnam can resolve hundreds of cases, unilaterally and instantly. Once more, I call on the Government of Vietnam to act -- without delay. //

I can say, in return, the United States stands ready to move forward on the roadmap we've laid out.

My message is the same to the other nations of Indochina. In Laos, our joint field operations have produced definitive answers, but the process remains painfully slow and cumbersome. We recognize the reality that most of our men unaccounted for in Laos were lost in areas under Vietnamese control.

Our relations with Laos have grown from wary distrust in the early 1980's to a broader, more open relationship. We cannot let this momentum wane, and I address the Lao leaders when I say our relationship can grow further, and will, if they provide the cooperation we now seek.

Our years of attempting to seek cooperation from Cambodia and the Soviets were not rewarded -- until just recently. The UN-sponsored settlement in Cambodia -- and the historic changes in the lands of the old Soviet Union -- have opened the way for unprecedented access. We will push hard to translate this access into answers.

I know you've lived through all this before. We have, unfortunately -- and it breaks my heart to see this happen -- seen false reporting, even scam operations, that divert manpower and sap our resources. I simply cannot fathom the cruelty of those who would exploit this issue for personal gain.

Nevertheless, we are determined not to allow such incidents to discourage us. We will continue to pursue and openly receive information from all sources. We will continue to treat each report -- every report -- as the breakthrough that just might end one family's ordeal.

Our efforts since 1981 have produced results. For 241 families, the uncertainty has ended. For others -- too many others -- the questions linger. And every day now, it seems, the news purports to unearth some great new revelation of fact -- facts you've known for 20 years. Facts we've shared with you for a decade.

Well, the key fact is one we all agree on:

There are Americans who did not return home at the end of hostilities -- Americans last known to be alive in captivity.

Learning the fate of these men remains our highest priority.

And although we do not yet have proof that any Americans are now alive, in the absence of firm answers -- our assumption will always be: Let hope be our guide.

Our policy remains: full disclosure -- full disclosure of all relevant information to families. We will continue to cooperate fully with Congressional committees -- to ensure the access they must have to perform their important oversight role.

But there are some things we will not do -- however loud the critics may complain. We will not publicly release any information that would jeopardize ongoing intelligence efforts or negotiations to account for your missing loved ones -- America's missing heroes.

I repeat: let the critics complain. We have a job to do.

As President, I take it to be an article of faith -- a solemn covenant with those who serve this country: The United States will always make every possible effort -- take every

possible action -- to learn the fate of those taken prisoner or missing in action. Our aim remains: a full accounting for every POW and MIA -- nothing less. //

Let me close today with a few words from the heart. //

No, I don't know the grief you carry with you. I can't claim to understand the anguish of uncertainty -- or the solace of hope.

But I can remember the day -- almost fifty years ago now -- when I was a scared kid, alone in a raft, paddling against the current to keep from washing ashore on an enemy island. I can remember -- when I wasn't wondering if anyone would find me at all -- worrying about who might find me first. //

I was fortunate. / I know that.

And I learned first-hand what it means that America will never abandon its fighting men, whatever their fate. ///

You have my word: America will never forget. America will stand with you -- until every hero has come home. //

Thank you again for having me with you. God bless you -- and may God bless the greatest country on earth, the United States of America.

#

7-5672

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 7/22/92 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: THURS. 7/23 9:00am

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN PRISONERS & MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA - 7/24/92 - 9:30am

	ACTION	FYI		ACTION	FYI
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	HORNER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SKINNER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCBRIDE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MOORE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PETERSMEYER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BRADY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BROMLEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROVOST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CALIO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SMITH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	YEUTTER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>FINDLAY</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>KAUFMAN</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
HOLIDAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>MCGROARTY</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

Please forward your comments directly to Dan McGroarty, Rm. 122, x2930, no later than 9:00 a.m., THURSDAY, JULY 23, 1992, with a copy to this office. Thank you.

RESPONSE:

July 23, 1992

TO: Dan McGroarty

The NSC staff concurs with changes as noted.

Brent Scowcroft
Brent Scowcroft

Please release next draft for review by General S. 7/22

PHILLIP D. BRADY
Assistant to the President and Staff Secretary
Ext. 2702

McGroarty/Bunton
July 21, 1992
6:00 p.m.
[POW-MIA]

02 JUL 22 11:03

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN
PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA
Stouffer Concourse Hotel
JULY 24, 1992
9:30 A.M.

Sue, Anne, members of the board, family members and friends,
and also my old friend, [[your Chairman Emeritus, Mr. George
Brooks.]]

Let me begin by thanking you for the opportunity to speak
again to one of the bravest and most dedicated groups of
Americans in this country.

Over the past 20 years, the National League of Families has
seen the issue of your missing relatives swept up in
international or domestic politics, manipulated by foreign
governments / exploited by con men / sensationalized by the
media. All that time, you never lost sight of what you were
looking for: good faith -- an honest effort to resolve your
uncertainty, to find answers to the question you live with every
day.

Many times you've wondered whether your government had
forgotten you. When Ronald Reagan and I took office in 1981, we
made your ordeal our priority. After years of neglect -- with
all the uncertainties you live with -- the one thing you should
be sure of is that your government cares.

So we set out to meet with you -- to ask your advice.

When we took office, no policy-level negotiations with
Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia had been held for several years.

✓
Despite fears ^{by some} from ~~the right~~ ² that negotiating with Vietnam implied recognition, and from ~~the left~~ ^{others} that the POW/MIA issue was a Cold War fantasy -- we took your advice and entered high-level negotiations.

When we took office, some saw this issue as a matter between this nation and Vietnam -- not part of the broader relations between the U.S. and Soviet Union, China and our friends in ASEAN. We took your advice, and urged our friends as well as our adversaries to help us find answers.

I was gratified to learn of the presence of ASEAN Ambassadors here today in support of the National League of Families. The ASEAN countries deserve credit for their understanding, their help, and their friendship with you and the United States.

When we took office, we came up against a string of official statements, Presidential commissions and Congressional committees indicating that they felt Vietnam had done all it could. Once again, we took your advice -- and refused to accept indifference as an answer.

It is no secret to any of you that for many years now, significant lobbying has taken place in opposition to our policy. Some of it comes from those same voices we've heard since the '70's -- people who want us to pretend Vietnam never happened. Some comes from ^{our businessmen pursuing} people who seek to smooth over sticking points that stand in the way of commercial opportunities.

smooth over sticking points that stand in the way and

Others simply say, "The war is over. Let's ^{move on.}" //

✗
But for us, the POW/MIA issue is not a sticking point. Not some bad dream we shake off. Not a footnote from a forgotten time we can simply ignore. The POW/MIA issue is something different -- something more: it is a question of justice. A

nation's test of its own worth -- measured in the life of one, lone individual.

✓ This we know: The wounds won't heal -- the war won't end -
 - so long as ^{these} even one brave American ^{s, your missing loved ones} remains unaccounted for. ^{MISSING}

In my inaugural address as President, I said that "goodwill begets goodwill." In the spirit of that statement, we developed a detailed roadmap for Vietnam -- a roadmap that addresses our objectives, as well as that government's desires in terms of diplomatic and economic relations with the United States. Let me be clear: without that kind of positive movement on POW's and MIA's, we cannot and will not move forward with Hanoi. //

Where Vietnam has moved, we've responded. When the Government of Vietnam pledged greater cooperation -- including field operations -- we greatly increased our manpower. And while we've seen an unprecedented level of joint investigations -- these activities have not provided the concrete results we seek. Make no mistake: We want to continue and expand our joint efforts. But joint efforts can never be a substitute for real results that end your uncertainty. //

✓ [I continue to believe: Our own information suggests that Vietnam can resolve hundreds of cases, unilaterally and instantly.]
 ? ✓ Once more, I call on the Government of Vietnam to act
 -- without delay. // ^{rapidly repatriate all recovered and readily recoverable remains.}

I can say, in return, the United States stands ready to move forward on the roadmap we've laid out.

My message is the same to the other nations of Indochina. In Laos, our joint field operations have produced definitive answers, but the process remains painfully slow and cumbersome. We recognize the reality that most of our men unaccounted for in Laos were lost in areas under Vietnamese control.

Our relations with Laos have grown from wary distrust in the early 1980's to a broader, more open relationship. We cannot let this momentum wane, and I address the Lao leaders when I say our relationship can grow further, and will, if they provide the cooperation we now seek.

Our years of attempting to seek cooperation from Cambodia and the Soviets were not rewarded -- until just recently. The UN-sponsored settlement in Cambodia -- and the historic changes in the lands of the old Soviet Union -- have opened the way for unprecedented access. We will push hard to translate this access into answers.

I know you've lived through all this before. We have, unfortunately -- and it breaks my heart to see this happen -- seen false reporting, even scam operations, that divert manpower and sap our resources. I simply cannot fathom the cruelty of those who would exploit this issue for personal gain.

Nevertheless, we are determined not to allow such incidents to discourage us. We will continue to pursue and openly receive information from all sources. We will continue to treat each report -- every report -- as the breakthrough that just might end one family's ordeal.

Our efforts since 1981 have produced results. For 241 families, the uncertainty has ended. For others -- too many others -- the questions linger. And every day now, it seems, the news purports to unearth some great new revelation of fact -- facts you've known for 20 years. Facts we've shared with you for a decade.

Well, the key fact is one we all agree on:

There are Americans who did not return home at the end of hostilities -- Americans last known to be alive in captivity.

Learning the fate of ^{Accounting for} these men remains our highest priority.

And although we do not yet have proof that any Americans are now alive, in the absence of firm answers -- our assumption will always be: Let ^{facts} hope be our guide.

Our policy remains: full disclosure -- full disclosure of all relevant information to families. We will continue to cooperate fully with Congressional committees -- to ensure the access they must have to perform their important oversight role.

But there are some things we will not do -- however loud the critics may complain. We will not publicly release any information that would jeopardize ongoing intelligence efforts or negotiations to account for your missing loved ones -- America's missing heroes.

I repeat: let the critics complain. We have a job to do.

As President, I take it to be an article of faith -- a solemn covenant with those who serve this country: The United States will always make every possible effort -- take every

possible action -- to learn the fate of those taken prisoner or missing in action. Our aim remains: ^{the} a full^{est possible} accounting for every POW and MIA -- nothing less. //

Let me close today with a few words from the heart. //

No, I don't ^{fully} know the grief you carry with you. I can't claim to understand the anguish of uncertainty -- or the solace of hope.

But I can remember the day -- almost fifty years ago now -- when I was a scared kid, alone in a raft, paddling against the current to keep from washing ashore on an enemy island. I can remember -- when I wasn't wondering if anyone would find me at all -- worrying about who might find me first. //

I was fortunate. / I know that.

And I learned first-hand what it means that America will never abandon its fighting men, whatever their fate. ///

You have my word: America will never forget. America will stand with you -- until every hero's ^{possible effort to bring out} ~~has come~~ ^{nothing has been made.} ~~home~~ //

Thank you again for having me with you. God bless you -- and may God bless the greatest country on earth, the United States of America.

#



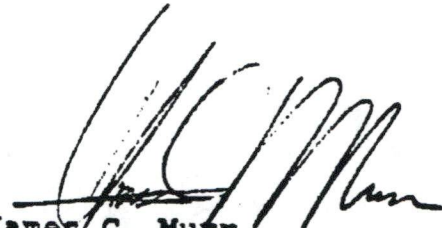
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

7-23-92

92 JUL 23 A10:40

NOTICE:

Enclosed are comments from staff members of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Such comments do not necessarily represent the official position of the Director of OMB or of the Office of Management and Budget. If you wish to have the Director's personal comments, please let me know -- and contact me if you have any questions.



James C. Murr
Associate Director for
Legislative Reference
and Administration

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 7/22/92 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: THURS. 7/23 9:00am

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN PRISONERS & MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA - 7/24/92 - 9:30am

	ACTION	FYI		ACTION	FYI
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	HORNER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SKINNER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCBRIDE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MOORE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PETERSMEYER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BRADY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BROMLEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROVOST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CALIO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SMITH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	YEUTTER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>FINDLAY</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>KAUFMAN</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
HOLIDAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>MCGRARTY</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

Please forward your comments directly to Dan McGroarty, Rm. 122, x2930, no later than 9:00 a.m., THURSDAY, JULY 23, with a copy to this office. Thank you.

RESPONSE:

*See comments
(K. Brady may respond at a later time)*

PHILLIP D. BRADY
Assistant to the President
and Staff Secretary
Ext. 2702

McGroarty/Bunton
July 21, 1992
6:00 p.m.
[POW-MIA]

02 JUL 22 11:03

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA
Stouffer Concourse Hotel
JULY 24, 1992
9:30 A.M.

Sue, Anne, members of the board, family members and friends, and also my old friend, [[your Chairman Emeritus, Mr. George Brooks.]]

Let me begin by thanking you for the opportunity to speak again to one of the bravest and most dedicated groups of Americans in this country.

Over the past 20 years, the National League of Families has seen the issue of your missing relatives swept up in international or domestic politics, manipulated by foreign governments / exploited by con men / sensationalized by the media. All that time, you never lost sight of what you were looking for: good faith -- an honest effort to resolve your uncertainty, to find answers to the question you live with every day.

Many times you've wondered whether your government had forgotten you. When Ronald Reagan and I took office in 1981, we made your ordeal our priority. ~~[After years of neglect --]~~ with all the uncertainties you live with -- the one thing you should be sure of is that your government cares.

So we set out to meet with you -- to ask your advice.

When we took office, no policy-level negotiations with Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia had been held for several years.

(TAYLOR 4790)

ISN'T THIS AN ADMISSION BY THE ADMINISTRATION?

?

Despite fears from the right that negotiating with Vietnam implied recognition, and from the left that the POW/MIA issue was a Cold War fantasy -- we took your advice and entered high-level negotiations.

When we took office, some saw this issue as a matter between this nation and Vietnam -- not part of the broader relations between the U.S. and Soviet Union, China and our friends in ASEAN. We took your advice, and urged our friends as well as our adversaries to help us find answers.

When we took office, we came up against a string of official statements, Presidential commissions and Congressional committees indicating that they felt Vietnam had done all it could. Once again, we took your advice -- and refused to accept indifference as an answer.

It is no secret to any of you that for many years now, significant lobbying has taken place in opposition to our policy. Some of it comes from those same voices we've heard since the '70's -- people who want us to pretend Vietnam never happened. Some comes from people who seek to smooth over sticking points that stand in the way of commercial opportunities.

Others simply say, "The war is over. Let's move on." //

But for us, the POW/MIA issue is not a sticking point. Not some bad dream we shake off. Not a footnote from a forgotten time we can simply ignore. The POW/MIA issue is something different -- something more: it is a question of justice. A

nation's test of its own worth -- measured in the life of one, lone individual.

This we know: The wounds won't heal -- the war won't end -- so long as even one brave American remains unaccounted for.

In my inaugural address as President, I said that "goodwill begets goodwill." In the spirit of that statement, we developed a detailed roadmap for Vietnam -- a roadmap that addresses our objectives, as well as that government's desires in terms of diplomatic and economic relations with the United States. Let me be clear: without that kind of positive movement on POW's and MIA's, we cannot and will not move forward with Hanoi. //

Where Vietnam has moved, we've responded. When the Government of Vietnam pledged greater cooperation -- including field operations -- we greatly increased our manpower. And while we've seen an unprecedented level of joint investigations -- these activities have not provided the concrete results we seek. Make no mistake: We want to continue and expand our joint efforts. But joint efforts can never be a substitute for real results that end your uncertainty. //

I continue to believe: Our own information suggests that Vietnam can resolve hundreds of cases, unilaterally and instantly. Once more, I call on the Government of Vietnam to act -- without delay. //

I can say, in return, the United States stands ready to move forward on the roadmap we've laid out.

My message is the same to the other nations of Indochina. In Laos, our joint field operations have produced definitive answers, but the process remains painfully slow and cumbersome. We recognize the reality that most of our men unaccounted for in Laos were lost in areas under Vietnamese control.

Our relations with Laos have grown from wary distrust in the early 1980's to a broader, more open relationship. We cannot let this momentum wane, and I address the Lao leaders when I say our relationship can grow further, and will, if they provide the cooperation we now seek.

Our years of attempting to seek cooperation from Cambodia and the Soviets were not rewarded -- until just recently. The UN-sponsored settlement in Cambodia -- and the historic changes in the lands of the old Soviet Union -- have opened the way for unprecedented access. We will push hard to translate this access into answers.

I know you've lived through all this before. We have, unfortunately -- and it breaks my heart to see this happen -- seen false reporting, even scam operations, that divert manpower and sap our resources. I simply cannot fathom the cruelty of those who would exploit this issue for personal gain.

Nevertheless, we are determined not to allow such incidents to discourage us. We will continue to pursue and openly receive information from all sources. We will continue to treat each report -- every report -- as the breakthrough that just might end one family's ordeal.

Our efforts since 1981 have produced results. For 241 families, the uncertainty has ended. For others -- too many others -- the questions linger. And every day now, it seems, the news purports to unearth some great new revelation of fact -- facts you've known for 20 years. Facts we've shared with you for a decade.

Well, the key fact is one we all agree on:

There are Americans who did not return home at the end of hostilities -- Americans last known to be alive in captivity.

Learning the fate of these men remains our highest priority.

And although we do not yet have proof that any Americans are now alive, in the absence of firm answers -- our assumption will always be: Let hope be our guide.

Our policy remains: full disclosure -- full disclosure of all relevant information to families. We will continue to cooperate fully with Congressional committees -- to ensure the access they must have to perform their important oversight role.

But there are some things we will not do -- however loud the critics may complain. We will not publicly release any information that would jeopardize ongoing intelligence efforts or negotiations to account for your missing loved ones -- America's missing heroes.

I repeat: let the critics complain. We have a job to do.

As President, I take it to be an article of faith -- a solemn covenant with those who serve this country: The United States will always make every possible effort -- take every

possible action -- to learn the fate of those taken prisoner or missing in action. Our aim remains: a full accounting for every POW and MIA -- nothing less. //

Let me close today with a few words from the heart. //

No, I don't know the grief you carry with you. I can't claim to understand the anguish of uncertainty -- or the solace of hope.

But I can remember the day -- almost fifty years ago now -- when I was a scared kid, alone in a raft, paddling against the current to keep from washing ashore on an enemy island. I can remember -- when I wasn't wondering if anyone would find me at all -- worrying about who might find me first. //

I was fortunate. / I know that.

And I learned first-hand what it means that America will never abandon its fighting men, whatever their fate. ///

You have my word: America will never forget. America will stand with you -- until every hero has come home. //

Thank you again for having me with you. God bless you -- and may God bless the greatest country on earth, the United States of America.

#

NATIONAL SECURITY CIL

To: Dan McGowan
From: Jim Keith
x5672

92 J

Please see attached comments.
I think it is a solid
speech + will be
well-received.

JK

Wed 1:00 pm

McGroarty/Bunton
July 21, 1992
6:00 p.m.
[POW-MIA]

UL 22 P2:05

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA
Stouffer Concourse Hotel
JULY 24, 1992
9:30 A.M.

Sue, Anne, members of the board, family members and friends, and also my old friend, [[your Chairman Emeritus, Mr. George Brooks.]]

Let me begin by thanking you for the opportunity to speak again to one of the bravest and most dedicated groups of Americans in this country.

Over the past 20 years, the National League of Families has seen the issue of your missing relatives swept up in international or domestic politics, manipulated by foreign governments / exploited by con men / sensationalized by the media. All that time, you never lost sight of what you were looking for: good faith -- an honest effort to resolve your uncertainty, to find answers to the question you live with every day.

Many times you've wondered whether your government had forgotten you. When Ronald Reagan and I took office in 1981, we made your ordeal our priority. After years of neglect -- with all the uncertainties you live with -- the one thing you should be sure of is that your government cares.

So we set out to meet with you -- to ask your advice.

When we took office, no policy-level negotiations with Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia had been held for several years.

Despite fears from the right that negotiating with Vietnam implied recognition, and from the left ^{others} that the POW/MIA issue was a Cold War fantasy -- we took your advice and entered high-level negotiations.

When we took office, some saw this issue as a matter between this nation and Vietnam -- not part of the broader relations between the U.S. and Soviet Union, China and our friends in ASEAN. We took your advice, and urged our friends as well as our adversaries to help us find answers.

4 or 5 out
6 at least

~~ASEAN~~ I was gratified to learn that several of the ASEAN Ambassadors are here today in support of the National League of Families. I applaud them for their understanding.

When we took office, we came up against a string of official statements, Presidential commissions and Congressional committees indicating that they felt Vietnam had done all it could. Once again, we took your advice -- and refused to accept indifference as an answer.

Vietnam's intransigence

(the conventional wisdom at the time)

their help, and their friendship with you and the United States.

It is no secret to any of you that for many years now, significant lobbying has taken place in opposition to our policy. Some of it comes from those same voices we've heard since the '70's -- people who want us to pretend Vietnam never happened. Some comes from people who seek to smooth over sticking points that stand in the way of commercial opportunities.

our businessmen legitimately seeking

smooth over sticking points that stand in the way and

Others simply say, "The war is over. Let's move on." //

But for us, the POW/MIA issue is not a sticking point. Not some bad dream we shake off. Not a footnote from a forgotten time we can simply ignore. The POW/MIA issue is something different -- something more: it is a question of justice. A

nation's test of its own worth -- measured in the life of one, lone individual.

This we know: The wounds won't heal -- the war won't end -
 - so long as ^{these} even one brave American ^{, your missing loved ones,} remains ^{MISSING.} unaccounted for.

In my inaugural address as President, I said that "goodwill begets goodwill." In the spirit of that statement, we developed a detailed roadmap for Vietnam -- a roadmap that addresses our objectives, as well as that government's desires in terms of diplomatic and economic relations with the United States. Let me be clear: without that kind of positive movement on POW's and MIA's, we cannot and will not move forward with Hanoi. //

Where Vietnam has moved, we've responded. When the Government of Vietnam pledged greater cooperation -- including field operations -- we greatly increased our manpower. And while we've seen an unprecedented level of joint investigations -- these activities have not provided the concrete results we seek. Make no mistake: We want to continue and expand our joint efforts. But joint efforts can never be a substitute for real results that end your uncertainty. //

[I continue to believe: Our own information suggests that Vietnam can resolve hundreds of cases, unilaterally and instantly.] I call on the Government of Vietnam to act
~~== without delay.~~ // ^{rapidly repatriate all recovered and readily recoverable}
^{American remains.}

I can say, in return, the United States stands ready to move forward on the roadmap we've laid out.

My message is the same to the other nations of Indochina. In Laos, our joint field operations have produced definitive answers, but the process remains painfully slow and cumbersome. We recognize the reality that most of our men unaccounted for in Laos were lost in areas under Vietnamese control.

Our relations with Laos have grown from wary distrust in the early 1980's to a broader, more open relationship. We cannot let this momentum wane, and I address the Lao leaders when I say our relationship can grow further, and will, if they provide the cooperation we now seek.

Our years of attempting to seek cooperation from Cambodia and the Soviets were not rewarded -- until just recently. The UN-sponsored settlement in Cambodia -- and the historic changes in the lands of the old Soviet Union -- have opened the way for unprecedented access. We will push hard to translate this access into answers.

I know you've lived through all this before. We have, unfortunately -- and it breaks my heart to see this happen -- seen false reporting, even scam operations, that divert manpower and sap our resources. I simply cannot fathom the cruelty of those who would exploit this issue for personal gain.

Nevertheless, we are determined not to allow such incidents to discourage us. We will continue to pursue and openly receive information from all sources. We will continue to treat each report -- every report -- as the breakthrough that just might end one family's ordeal.

Our efforts since 1981 have produced results. For 241 families, the uncertainty has ended. For others -- too many others -- the questions linger. And every day now, it seems, the news purports to unearth some great new revelation of fact -- facts you've known for 20 years. Facts we've shared with you for a decade.

Well, the key fact is one we all agree on:

There are Americans who did not return home at the end of hostilities -- Americans last known to be alive in captivity.

[Learning the fate of ^{Accounting for Americans} these ~~men~~ ^{is} remains our highest priority.

And although we do not yet have proof that any Americans are now alive, in the absence of firm answers -- our assumption will always be: Let ~~hope~~ ^{facts} be our guide.

Our policy remains: full disclosure -- full disclosure of all relevant information to families. We will continue to cooperate fully with Congressional committees -- to ensure the access they must have to perform their important oversight role.

But there are some things we will not do -- however loud the critics may complain. We will not publicly release any information that would jeopardize ongoing intelligence efforts or negotiations to account for your missing loved ones -- America's missing heroes.

I repeat: let the critics complain. We have a job to do.

As President, I take it to be an article of faith -- a solemn covenant with those who serve this country: The United States will always make every possible effort -- take every

evokes Clinton ^{use of the} word?

possible action -- to learn the fate of those taken prisoner or missing in action. Our aim remains: ^{the} a full^{est possible} accounting for every POW and MIA -- nothing less. //

Let me close today with a few words from the heart. //

No, I don't know the grief you carry with you. I can't claim to understand the anguish of uncertainty -- or the solace of hope.

But I can remember the day -- almost fifty years ago now -- when I was a scared kid, alone in a raft, paddling against the current to keep from washing ashore on an enemy island. I can remember -- when I wasn't wondering if anyone would find me at all -- worrying about who might find me first. //

I was fortunate. / I know that.

And I learned first-hand what it means that America will never abandon its fighting men, whatever their fate. ///

You have my word: America will never forget. America will stand with you -- until every ^{possible one of our} hero^s has come home. //

Thank you again for having me with you. God bless you -- and may God bless the greatest country on earth, the United States of America.

#

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 7/21/92 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: WED. 7/22/92 COB

SUBJECT: PROPOSED EXECUTIVE ORDER ENTITLED "DECLASSIFICATION AND RELEASE OF MATERIALS PERTAINING TO PRISONERS OF WAR AND MISSING IN ACTION"

	ACTION	FYI		ACTION	FYI
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	HORNER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SKINNER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCBRIDE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MOORE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PETERSMEYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BRADY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BROMLEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROVOST	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CALIO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SMITH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	YEUTTER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	FINDLAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	CLERK	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
HOLIDAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

Please forward your comments directly to this office no later than COB, WEDNESDAY, JULY 22. Thank you.

RESPONSE:

Hold for League speech Friday!

PHILLIP D. BRADY
Assistant to the President
and Staff Secretary
Ext. 2702



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

THE DIRECTOR

July 20, 1992

2 JUL 21 P 1: 32

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Richard Darman *Richard Darman*

SUBJECT: Proposed Executive Order Entitled
"Declassification and Release of Materials
Pertaining to Prisoners of War and Missing in
Action"

SUMMARY: This memorandum forwards for your consideration a proposed Executive order that was prepared by the National Security Council. The proposed order would direct Executive agencies to declassify and release all materials pertaining to Vietnam era prisoners of war and those missing in action.

BACKGROUND: On July 2, 1992, the Senate issued Resolution No. 324. The resolution requested that the President "expeditiously issue an Executive order requiring all executive branch . . . agencies to declassify and publicly release without compromising United States national security all documents, files, and other materials pertaining to POWs and MIAs."

The proposed order would carry out the resolution's request. It would direct Executive agencies to review expeditiously materials pertaining to POWs and MIAs from the Vietnam era for declassification in accordance with Executive Order No. 12356. (That order sets out the procedures for declassifying national security information.)

The proposed order also directs the agencies to make the declassified materials publicly available. Exceptions would be permitted where disclosure would invade the privacy of family members of POWs and MIAs or impair the integrity of the Executive branch deliberative process.

None of the affected agencies objects to the proposed Executive order.

RECOMMENDATION: I recommend that you sign the proposed Executive order.



U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Legal Counsel

Office of the
Assistant Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20530

July 21, 1992

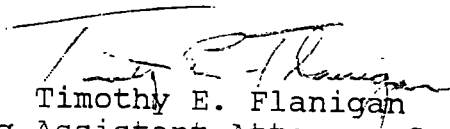
MEMORANDUM

Re: Proposed Executive Order Entitled
"Declassification and Release of Materials
Pertaining to Prisoners of War and Missing in Action"

The attached proposed Executive Order was prepared by the National Security Council. The Office of Management and Budget, with the approval of the Director, forwarded it to this Department for review with respect to form and legality.

The proposed Order would direct Executive departments and agencies expeditiously to review documents and materials pertaining to Vietnam-era POWs and MIAs for declassification in accordance with established procedures. It also would require public disclosure of declassified documents and materials unless such disclosure would constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy or would impair the deliberative processes of the Executive Branch.

The proposed Order is approved with respect to form and legality.


Timothy E. Flanigan
Acting Assistant Attorney General
Office of Legal Counsel



U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Legal Counsel

Office of the
Assistant Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20530

July 21, 1992

The President,

The White House.

My dear Mr. President:

I am herewith transmitting a proposed Executive Order entitled "Declassification and Release of Materials Pertaining to Prisoners of War and Missing in Action." This proposed Executive Order was prepared by the National Security Council. The Office of Management and Budget, with the approval of the Director, forwarded it to this Department for review with respect to form and legality.

The proposed Executive Order is approved with respect to form and legality.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy E. Flanigan", is written above the typed name.

Timothy E. Flanigan
Acting Assistant Attorney General
Office of Legal Counsel



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

JUL 21 1992

Honorable William P. Barr
United States Attorney General
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Mr. Attorney General:

Enclosed in accordance with the provisions of Executive Order No. 11030, as amended, is a proposed Executive order entitled "Declassification and Release of Materials Pertaining to Prisoners of War and Missing in Action." The proposed order, which was prepared by the National Security Council, would direct Executive agencies to declassify and release all materials pertaining to Vietnam era prisoners of war and those missing in action.

On July 2, 1992, the Senate issued Resolution No. 324. The resolution requested that the President "expeditiously issue an Executive order requiring all executive branch . . . agencies to declassify and publicly release without compromising United States national security all documents, files, and other materials pertaining to POWs and MIAs."

The proposed order would carry out the resolution's request. It would direct Executive agencies to review expeditiously materials pertaining to POWs and MIAs from the Vietnam era for declassification in accordance with Executive Order No. 12356. (That order sets out the procedures for declassifying national security information.)

The proposed order also directs the agencies to make the declassified materials publicly available. Exceptions would be permitted where disclosure would invade the privacy of family members of POWs and MIAs or impair the integrity of the Executive branch deliberative processes.

Your staff may direct any questions concerning this proposed Executive order to Mac Reed of this office (202-395-5600).

This proposed Executive order has the approval of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

Robert G. Damus
Acting General Counsel

Enclosure

EXECUTIVE ORDER

- - - - -

DECLASSIFICATION AND RELEASE OF MATERIALS
PERTAINING TO PRISONERS OF WAR AND MISSING IN ACTION

Whereas, the Senate by S. Res. 324 of July 2, 1992, has asked that I "expeditiously issue an Executive order requiring all executive branch departments and agencies to declassify and publicly release without compromising United States national security all documents, files, and other materials pertaining to POWs and MIAs;" and

Whereas, indiscriminate release of classified material could jeopardize continuing U.S. Government efforts to achieve the fullest possible accounting of Vietnam-era POWs and MIAs; and

Whereas, I have concluded that the public interest would be served by the declassification and public release of materials pertaining to Vietnam-era POWs and MIAs as provided below;

~~Now, Therefore, by the authority vested in me as President~~
by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, I hereby order as follows:

Section 1. All Executive departments and agencies shall expeditiously review all documents, files, and other materials pertaining to American POWs and MIAs lost in Southeast Asia for the purposes of declassification in accordance with the standards and procedures of Executive Order No. 12356.

Sec. 2. All Executive departments and agencies shall make publicly available documents, files and other materials declassified pursuant to section 1, except for those the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy of returnees, family members of POWs and MIAs, or other persons, or would impair the deliberative processes of the Executive Branch.

Sec. 2. This order is not intended to create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by a party against the United States, its agencies or instrumentalities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

THE WHITE HOUSE.

Senate -
"wants all
declassified."

McGroarty/Bunton
July 21, 1992
6:00 p.m.
[POW-MIA]

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN
PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA
Stouffer Concourse Hotel
JULY 24, 1992
9:30 A.M.

Sue, Anne, members of the board, family members and friends,
and also my old friend, [[your Chairman Emeritus, Mr. George
Brooks.]]

Let me begin by thanking you for the opportunity to speak
again to one of the bravest and most dedicated groups of
Americans in this country.

Over the past 20 years, the National League of Families has
seen the issue of your missing relatives swept up in
international or domestic politics, manipulated by foreign
governments / exploited by con men / sensationalized by the
media. All that time, you never lost sight of what you were
looking for: good faith -- an honest effort to resolve your
uncertainty, to find answers to the question you live with every
day.

Many times you've wondered whether your government had
forgotten you. When Ronald Reagan and I took office in 1981, we
made your ordeal our priority. After years of neglect -- with
all the uncertainties you live with -- the one thing you should
be sure of is that your government cares.

So we set out to meet with you -- to ask your advice.

When we took office, no policy-level negotiations with
Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia had been held for several years.

Despite fears from the right that negotiating with Vietnam implied recognition, and from the left that the POW/MIA issue was a Cold War fantasy -- we took your advice and entered high-level negotiations.

When we took office, some saw this issue as a matter between this nation and Vietnam -- not part of the broader relations between the U.S. and Soviet Union, China and our friends in ASEAN. We took your advice, and urged our friends as well as our adversaries to help us find answers.

When we took office, we came up against a string of official statements, Presidential commissions and Congressional committees indicating that they felt Vietnam had done all it could. Once again, we took your advice -- and refused to accept indifference as an answer.

It is no secret to any of you that for many years now, significant lobbying has taken place in opposition to our policy. Some of it comes from those same voices we've heard since the '70's -- people who want us to pretend Vietnam never happened. Some comes from people who seek to smooth over sticking points that stand in the way of commercial opportunities.

Others simply say, "The war is over. Let's move on." //

But for us, the POW/MIA issue is not a sticking point. Not some bad dream we shake off. Not a footnote from a forgotten time we can simply ignore. The POW/MIA issue is something different -- something more: it is a question of justice. A

nation's test of its own worth -- measured in the life of one, lone individual.

This we know: The wounds won't heal -- the war won't end -- so long as even one brave American remains unaccounted for.

In my inaugural address as President, I said that "goodwill begets goodwill." In the spirit of that statement, we developed a detailed roadmap for Vietnam -- a roadmap that addresses our objectives, as well as that government's desires in terms of diplomatic and economic relations with the United States. Let me be clear: without that kind of positive movement on POW's and MIA's, we cannot and will not move forward with Hanoi. //

Where Vietnam has moved, we've responded. When the Government of Vietnam pledged greater cooperation -- including field operations -- we greatly increased our manpower. And while we've seen an unprecedented level of joint investigations -- these activities have not provided the concrete results we seek. Make no mistake: We want to continue and expand our joint efforts. But joint efforts can never be a substitute for real results that end your uncertainty. //

I continue to believe: Our own information suggests that Vietnam can resolve hundreds of cases, unilaterally and instantly. Once more, I call on the Government of Vietnam to act -- without delay. //

I can say, in return, the United States stands ready to move forward on the roadmap we've laid out.

My message is the same to the other nations of Indochina. In Laos, our joint field operations have produced definitive answers, but the process remains painfully slow and cumbersome. We recognize the reality that most of our men unaccounted for in Laos were lost in areas under Vietnamese control.

Our relations with Laos have grown from wary distrust in the early 1980's to a broader, more open relationship. We cannot let this momentum wane, and I address the Lao leaders when I say our relationship can grow further, and will, if they provide the cooperation we now seek.

Our years of attempting to seek cooperation from Cambodia and the Soviets were not rewarded -- until just recently. The UN-sponsored settlement in Cambodia -- and the historic changes in the lands of the old Soviet Union -- have opened the way for unprecedented access. We will push hard to translate this access into answers.

I know you've lived through all this before. We have, unfortunately -- and it breaks my heart to see this happen -- seen false reporting, even scam operations, that divert manpower and sap our resources. I simply cannot fathom the cruelty of those who would exploit this issue for personal gain.

Nevertheless, we are determined not to allow such incidents to discourage us. We will continue to pursue and openly receive information from all sources. We will continue to treat each report -- every report -- as the breakthrough that just might end one family's ordeal.

Our efforts since 1981 have produced results. For 241 families, the uncertainty has ended. For others -- too many others -- the questions linger. And every day now, it seems, the news purports to unearth some great new revelation of fact -- facts you've known for 20 years. Facts we've shared with you for a decade.

Well, the key fact is one we all agree on:

There are Americans who did not return home at the end of hostilities -- Americans last known to be alive in captivity.

Learning the fate of these men remains our highest priority.

And although we do not yet have proof that any Americans are now alive, in the absence of firm answers -- our assumption will always be: Let hope be our guide.

Our policy remains: full disclosure -- full disclosure of all relevant information to families. We will continue to cooperate fully with Congressional committees -- to ensure the access they must have to perform their important oversight role.

But there are some things we will not do -- however loud the critics may complain. We will not publicly release any information that would jeopardize ongoing intelligence efforts or negotiations to account for your missing loved ones -- America's missing heroes.

I repeat: let the critics complain. We have a job to do.

As President, I take it to be an article of faith -- a solemn covenant with those who serve this country: The United States will always make every possible effort -- take every

possible action -- to learn the fate of those taken prisoner or missing in action. Our aim remains: a full accounting for every POW and MIA -- nothing less. //

Let me close today with a few words from the heart. //

No, I don't know the grief you carry with you. I can't claim to understand the anguish of uncertainty -- or the solace of hope.

But I can remember the day -- almost fifty years ago now -- when I was a scared kid, alone in a raft, paddling against the current to keep from washing ashore on an enemy island. I can remember -- when I wasn't wondering if anyone would find me at all -- worrying about who might find me first. //

I was fortunate. / I know that.

And I learned first-hand what it means that America will never abandon its fighting men, whatever their fate. ///

You have my word: America will never forget. America will stand with you -- until every hero has come home. //

Thank you again for having me with you. God bless you -- and may God bless the greatest country on earth, the United States of America.

#