

FOIA MARKER

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

Folder Title:

Korea, July-December, 1995 [6]

Staff Office-Individual:

Asian Affairs-Kristoff, Sandra

Original OA/ID Number:

1040

Row:	Section:	Shelf:	Position:	Stack:
30	2	10	2	V

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001a. briefing paper	Meeting with President Kim Young Sam. Record ID: 9505453. (4 pages)	07/25/1995	P1/b(1)
001b. talking points	Points to be Made. (4 pages)	07/25/1995	P1/b(1)
001c. agenda	The State Visit to Washington, D.C. of President Kim Young Sam. (3 pages)	08/26/1995	P1/b(1)
001d. report	U.S. Government Report. (1 page)	07/13/1995	P1/b(1)
001e. report	U.S. Government Report. (1 page)	07/14/1995	P1/b(1)
001f. report	U.S. Government Report. (1 page)	07/18/1995	P1/b(1)
001g. report	U.S. Government Report. (1 page)	07/17/1995	P1/b(1)
001h. paper	Trends Leading to ROKG Proposal. (1 page)	n.d.	P1/b(1)
001i. memo	For the President from Strobe Talbott. Subject: State Visit. (2 pages)	07/20/1995	P1/b(1)
002a. cover sheet	Lino to NSC. Regarding ROKG Proposal. (1 page)	07/21/1995	P1/b(1)
002b. cable	re: ROKG proposal. (4 pages)	07/19/1995	P1/b(1)
003a. letter	Home Address. [partial] (1 page)	07/26/1995	P6/b(6)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Asian Affairs (Sandra Kristoff)
OA/Box Number: 1040

FOLDER TITLE:

Korea, July - December, 1995 [6]

2009-0528-F
vz1449

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
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P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
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Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
003b. letter	Phone Numbers. [partial] (1 page)	06/18/1995	P6/b(6)

COLLECTION:

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National Security Council
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TO: PRESIDENT

FROM: LAKE
TYSON, L

DOC DATE: 25 JUL 95
SOURCE REF:

KEYWORDS: KOREA SOUTH

AP

FB

PERSONS: KIM YOUNG SAM

SUBJECT: PRES MTG W/ SOUTH KOREAN PRES KIM YOUNG SAM ON 27 JUL

ACTION: NOTED BY PRESIDENT

DUE DATE: 22 JUL 95 STATUS: C

STAFF OFFICER: ROTH

LOGREF: 9505683

FILES: WH

NSCP:

CODES:

D O C U M E N T D I S T R I B U T I O N

FOR ACTION

FOR CONCURRENCE

FOR INFO
NSC CHRON
ROTH

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 13526

White House Guidelines, September 11, 2006

By V2 NARA, Date 7/2/2012

2009-0524-F

COMMENTS: _____

DISPATCHED BY _____ DATE _____ BY HAND W/ATTCH

OPENED BY: NSMEC

CLOSED BY: NSASK

DOC 2 OF 2

ACTION DATA SUMMARY REPORT

DOC ACTION OFFICERCAO ASSIGNED ACTION REQUIRED

001 LAKE	Z 95072415 FWD TO PRESIDENT FOR INFORMATION
002 PRESIDENT	Z 95072519 FOR INFORMATION
002	X 95072809 NOTED BY PRESIDENT

DISPATCH DATA SUMMARY REPORT

<u>DOC</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>DISPATCH FOR ACTION</u>	<u>DISPATCH FOR INFO</u>
002	950725		VICE PRESIDENT
002	950725		WH CHIEF OF STAFF
002	950725		STEPHANOPOULOS, G

7/25 10:10am

National Security Council
The White House

PROOFED BY: _____ LOG # 5453
 URGENT NOT PROOFED: _____ SYSTEM PRS NSC INT
 BYPASSED WW DESK: _____ DOCLOG VB A/O _____

	SEQUENCE TO	INITIAL/DATE	DISPOSITION
Harmon	_____	_____	_____
Dohse	<u>1</u>	<u>D</u>	_____
Sens	<u>2</u>	<u>ADP</u>	_____
Soderberg	_____	_____	_____
Berger	<u>3</u>	<u>mlr</u>	_____
Lake	<u>4</u>	<u>Natl Sec Advisor has seen</u>	_____
Situation Room	_____	_____	_____
West Wing Desk	<u>5</u>	<u>VB 7/25</u>	<u>Tyson POTUS</u>
Records Mgt.	<u>6</u>	<u>VB 7/25</u>	<u>POTUS</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

A = Action I = Information D = Dispatch R = Retain N = No Further Action

cc:

See reviews VB

COMMENTS:

Mtg w/ President Ken
7/27

Exec Sec Office has diskette yes

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001a. briefing paper	Meeting with President Kim Young Sam. Record ID: 9505453. (4 pages)	07/25/1995	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Asian Affairs (Sandra Kristoff)
OA/Box Number: 1040

FOLDER TITLE:

Korea, July - December, 1995 [6]

2009-0528-F

vz1449

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001b. talking points	Points to be Made. (4 pages)	07/25/1995	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Asian Affairs (Sandra Kristoff)
OA/Box Number: 1040

FOLDER TITLE:

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001c. agenda	The State Visit to Washington, D.C. of President Kim Young Sam. (3 pages)	08/26/1995	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Asian Affairs (Sandra Kristoff)
OA/Box Number: 1040

FOLDER TITLE:

Korea, July - December, 1995 [6]

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001d. report	U.S. Government Report. (1 page)	07/13/1995	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Asian Affairs (Sandra Kristoff)
OA/Box Number: 1040

FOLDER TITLE:

Korea, July - December, 1995 [6]

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001e. report	U.S. Government Report. (1 page)	07/14/1995	P1/b(1)

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001f. report	U.S. Government Report. (1 page)	07/18/1995	P1/b(1)

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001h. paper	Trends Leading to ROKG Proposal. (1 page)	n.d.	P1/b(1)

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001i. memo	For the President from Strobe Talbott. Subject: State Visit. (2 pages)	07/20/1995	P1/b(1)
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7/26/95, 6 pm

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN
7-27-95

95 JUL 26 P7:10

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON
REMARKS AT PRESS CONFERENCE WITH
PRESIDENT KIM OF SOUTH KOREA
THE WHITE HOUSE
JULY 27, 1995**

On this day -- as we remember the sacrifice of those who built the great alliance between the United States and Korea -- President Kim has come back to the White House to look forward.

In our discussions, we have focused on the clear and common goals that our nations have pursued for decades: to strengthen our alliance, to stand together against threats to our shared ideals and goals, and to increase the safety and prosperity of our peoples.

Over the past three years, President Kim and I have worked closely together to advance these goals; and in him I have found an ally whose courage is matched only by his commitment to freedom.

Our talks centered on the critical strategic challenges facing Korea and the United States. Forty-two years have passed since the Korean War ended, but for the people of South Korea -- as I learned firsthand during my visit two years ago -- the threat lingers every day.

For decades now, the people of South Korea have faced constant threats from those who rule the North: dark warnings of battles ahead, skirmishes along the border, and an army of one million able to rain destruction on Seoul and beyond.

Through all these years, America's commitment to South Korea has not wavered -- and today I reaffirmed our nation's pledge to keep American forces in Korea as long as they are needed and the Korean people want them to remain.

President Kim and I spent much of our time discussing the strategy our nations, along with Japan, are using to confront a new, but no less terrible, threat to his people: North Korea's dangerous nuclear program. Already, thanks to our efforts, North Korea has frozen its existing program under the terms of the Agreed Framework.

Today, President Kim reaffirmed his strong support for the Framework, and for the understanding reached in Kuala Lumpur that confirms South Korea's central role in helping the North acquire less dangerous light water reactors.

Our goal is to end the threat of nuclear proliferation on the Korean Peninsula -- part of my Administration's worldwide effort to curb the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

I also told President Kim that the United States regards North Korea's commitment to resume dialogue with the South as an essential component of the Framework.

President Kim expressed to me his determination to enter into meaningful dialogue with the North, and the United States stands ready to support his efforts.

I emphasized to President Kim, however, that until South and North Korea negotiate a peace agreement, the armistice regime will remain in place and cannot be abrogated unilaterally by the North.

President Kim and I also touched on a number of regional and global security issues: efforts to ensure stability in Northeast Asia; Korea's commitment to peacekeeping, including its forces in Somalia, the Western Sahara and now Angola; and our commitment to work together on issues facing the United Nations Security Council.

Finally, President Kim and I reviewed a wide range of economic issues, including those that we will take up at the meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in Osaka this fall. And we talked about efforts to expand our bilateral trade -- Korea is already our country's sixth largest export market and its dynamic economic growth holds great promise for the future.

One hour from now, President Kim and I will look to the past as we dedicate the new Korean War Veterans Memorial on the Mall. The monument is a long overdue reminder of what Americans, fighting alongside the people of South Korea, sacrificed in the defense of freedom. In the years since, as today's meetings remind us, the people of South Korea have built a nation worthy of that sacrifice. It is a country that America is proud to claim as equal partner and ally.... a thriving reminder of the strength of democracy and the power of a people free to pursue their dreams.

Let me now invite President Kim to speak.

7/26/95 4 p.m.

7-27-95

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON
STATE VISIT OF PRESIDENT KIM OF SOUTH KOREA
ARRIVAL STATEMENT
THE WHITE HOUSE
JULY 27, 1995**

95 JUL 26 P7:10

President and Mrs. Kim; members of the Korean delegation: welcome to Washington. Let me extend a special greeting to the many Korean-Americans who are with us today. You represent a prosperous and proud community that contributes so much to America's strength and diversity. Thank you for being here.

The Republic of Korea and the United States are joined by a history of shared sacrifice and a future of common purpose. Today, President Kim and I will pay tribute to that past and continue our work toward that future.

Mr. President, your great personal sacrifice and single-mindedness of purpose helped return democracy to your country for the first time in three decades. Since your election two and a half years ago, South Korea has matched economic success with remarkable political progress. And in so many areas -- from regional security to expanded trade... from peacekeeping to diplomacy -- you have strengthened the partnership between our nations.

Today, I reaffirm America's pledge to stand by that partnership. Our forces will remain in Korea as long as the Korean people want them to. Ultimately, the North-South dialogue and the future of the Korean peninsula are in the hands of the Korean people. But they will always have a helping hand from the United States as they work toward lasting peace, reconciliation and security in Korea and throughout Asia.

Together, we have made great progress toward those goals. With Japan, we secured an agreement from North Korea to end its dangerous nuclear program -- which already is frozen under international inspection. With other Northeast Asian nations, we are strengthening our security alliances so that a region too often torn apart by war knows a future of peace. And we are taking historic steps to make trade and investment more free throughout the Asia Pacific area so that our people know a future of prosperity.

South Korea is and must remain a vital leader in these efforts -- all of which are on our agenda today.

President Kim and I also will commemorate the foundation of the partnership between our nations when we dedicate the Korean War Veterans Memorial. The monument pays tribute to those Americans who fought with the sons and daughters of South Korea in defense of their land. It reminds us of all that we sacrificed, together, for freedom. And it stands as evidence of an unshakable alliance between our nations -- an alliance that today is stronger than ever.

Mr. President, we are glad to have you with us. Welcome back to the White House. Welcome back to America.

7.27.95

7/26/95 11 a.m.

PRESIDENT WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON
STATE DINNER TOAST IN HONOR OF
PRESIDENT KIM OF SOUTH KOREA
THE WHITE HOUSE
JULY 27, 1995

President Kim; Mrs. Kim; members of the delegation of the Republic of Korea; distinguished guests: Hillary and I are pleased to welcome you to the White House.

And I have been especially pleased to spend today working with a man whose extraordinary resilience is matched only by his deep commitment to democracy: President Kim Young Sam.

Mr. President, this is our fourth meeting, and if you'll permit me a personal note, I am struck by how much we have in common. We both were elected to office at an early age -- you won a seat in the National Assembly when you were 25. You entered the Blue House just a month after I came to the White House -- or, put another way, we've both spent the past 20,000 hours or so dealing with our respective congresses and fielding questions from the press. And we're both enthusiastic joggers -- and let me suggest that after this meal, we both may need to run an extra mile in the morning.

Mr. President, for all that brings us together, I must also comment on something that sets you apart from most of the leaders of the free world. And that is the extraordinary hardship you endured and courage you displayed to help bring democracy to your country. Your years in opposition were marked by jail terms, house arrest, an assassination attempt and a 23-day hunger strike that almost took your life. As you once put it, "A short life of integrity is better than a long life in disgrace."

But you persisted -- and you prevailed. At your inauguration, you said "Deep in my heart, I have a vision of a new Korea... a freer and more mature democracy... At last we have established a government by the people and of the people of this land." Now, under your leadership, Korea is taking its rightful place in the world as both a thriving economy and a dynamic democracy.

Mr. President, the bonds between our people, forged in the fires of a war on your land, have only grown stronger with time. We are united by a history of shared sacrifice, and a future of common purpose. Lasting peace, security and reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula. A stable, prosperous Asia Pacific region fueled by free and open trade and investment. A rising tide of democracy around the world. These are our common goals. Working together, the Republic of Korea and the United States can help achieve them.

Mr. President, when I visited you two years ago, you presented me with a beautiful work of calligraphy with your favorite saying "Taedo Mumun" [Tay-eh-DO Moo-moon] -- "Righteousness Overcomes All Obstacles." Tonight, I ask everyone in this room to raise a glass to a man who, through his own righteousness, has overcome all obstacles -- Kim Young Sam. To you, Mr. President, and to the friendship between our two countries.

7/27/95, 9 am

REVISED

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN
7 27 95
95 JUL 27 A10:28

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON
REMARKS AT PRESS CONFERENCE WITH
PRESIDENT KIM OF SOUTH KOREA
THE WHITE HOUSE
JULY 27, 1995**

On this day -- as we remember the sacrifice of those who built the great alliance between the United States and Korea -- President Kim has come back to the White House to look forward.

In our discussions, we have focused on the clear and common goals that our nations have pursued for decades: to strengthen our alliance, to stand together against threats to our shared ideals and interests, and to increase the safety and prosperity of our peoples.

Over the past three years, President Kim and I have worked closely together to advance these goals; and in him I have found an ally whose courage is matched only by his commitment to freedom.

Our talks centered on the critical strategic challenges facing Korea and the United States. Forty-two years have passed since the Korean War ended, but for the people of South Korea ~~as I learned firsthand during my visit two years ago~~ the threat is present every day.

~~For decades now, the people of South Korea have faced
constant threats from those who rule the North: dark
warnings of battles ahead, skirmishes along the border,
and an army of one million able to rain destruction on
South and beyond.~~

Through all these years, America's commitment to South Korea has not wavered -- and today I reaffirmed our nation's pledge to keep American forces in Korea as long as they are needed and the Korean people want them to remain.

President Kim and I ~~spent much of our time discussing~~ ^{discussed} the strategy our nations, along with Japan, are using to confront a new, but no less terrible, threat to his people: North Korea's dangerous nuclear program. Already, thanks to our efforts, North Korea has frozen its existing program under international inspection.

Today, President Kim reaffirmed his strong support for the Framework, and for the understanding reached in Kuala Lumpur that confirms South Korea's central role in helping the North acquire less dangerous light water reactors.

~~Our goal is to end the threat of nuclear proliferation on the Korean Peninsula part of my Administration's global effort to curb the spread of weapons of mass destruction.~~

I also told President Kim that the United States regards North Korea's commitment to resume dialogue with the South as an integral component of the Framework.

President Kim expressed to me his determination to enter into meaningful dialogue with the North, and the United States stands ready to support his efforts. As North Korea fulfills its nuclear commitments and addresses other concerns, it can look forward to better relations with the community of nations.

I emphasized to President Kim, however, that until South and North Korea negotiate a peace agreement, the armistice regime will remain in place ~~and cannot be~~
~~abrogated unilaterally by the North.~~

President Kim and I also touched on a number of regional and global security issues: efforts to ensure stability in Northeast Asia; Korea's commitment to peacekeeping, ~~including its forces in Somalia, the Western Sahara and~~
~~now Angola~~; and our commitment to work together on issues facing the United Nations Security Council.

Finally, President Kim and I reviewed a wide range of economic issues, including ^{APEC} ~~those that we will take up at the meeting of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in Osaka this fall.~~ And we talked about efforts to expand our bilateral trade -- Korea is already our country's sixth largest export market, ~~and its dynamic economic growth holds great promise for the future.~~

One hour from now, President Kim and I will look to the past as we dedicate the new Korean War Veterans Memorial on the Mall. The monument is a long overdue reminder of what Americans, fighting alongside the people of South Korea, sacrificed in the defense of freedom. ~~In the years since,~~ as today's meetings remind us, the people of South Korea have built a nation worthy of that sacrifice. It is a country that America is proud to claim as equal partner and ally.... a thriving reminder of the strength of democracy and the power of a people free to pursue their dreams.

Let me now invite President Kim to speak.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

5453

July 24, 1995

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR ANTHONY LAKE

FROM:

STANLEY ROTH *SR*

SUBJECT:

Meeting with the President and President Kim of Korea on July 27, 1995

Attached at Tab I is a Memorandum for the President concerning his meeting with President Kim of Korea who will be here on July 27 for the dedication of the Korean War Memorial.

Concurrences by: Dan *Doneman*, Bob Kyle *RK*, Bo Cutter *B*

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign the Memorandum for the President at Tab I.

Attachments

Tab I Memorandum for the President
Tab A Points to be Made
Tab B Sequence
Tab C Biographies
Tab D Background - Troop Incidents in South Korea
Tab E Memo to the President from Acting Secretary of State

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 13526
White House Guidelines, September 11, 2006
By *VS* NARA, Date *7/2/2012*
2009-0528-F

Attachments may have
been edited for format
by Exec Sec

~~SECRET~~

Declassify on: OADR

~~SECRET~~

Before I begin, I want to say a word about the meetings on Bosnia that have taken place in London.

All of us who are concerned about the future of Bosnia and have been outraged by the tragic events of recent weeks should welcome the statement of Foreign Secretary Rifkind that an attack by the Bosnian Serbs on the United Nations safe area of Gorazde will be met by “a substantial and decisive response.” The conference also agreed that the United Nations mission should be strengthened and that access to Sarajevo should be ensured by the Rapid Reaction Force.

~~Today's meeting strengthens the international community's determination to deal with this extremely difficult and destructive problem.~~ There is more work to be done -- and the United States is determined to do everything it can not only to deal with the problems in Gorazde and Sarajevo but also to find a peaceful end to the war.

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
002a. cover sheet	Lino to NSC. Regarding ROKG Proposal. (1 page)	07/21/1995	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Asian Affairs (Sandra Kristoff)
OA/Box Number: 1040

FOLDER TITLE:

Korea, July - December, 1995 [6]

2009-0528-F
vz1449

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
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- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
002b. cable	re: ROKG proposal. (4 pages)	07/19/1995	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Asian Affairs (Sandra Kristoff)
OA/Box Number: 1040

FOLDER TITLE:

Korea, July - December, 1995 [6]

2009-0528-F
vz1449

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

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TO: RIORDAN, THOMAS

FROM: LAKE

DOC DATE: 26 JUL 95
SOURCE REF:

KEYWORDS: VIETNAM
MIAS

POWS

File

PERSONS:

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO RIORDAN RE POW / MIA & NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS W/
VIETNAM

ACTION: LAKE SGD LTR

DUE DATE: 30 JUN 95 STATUS: C

STAFF OFFICER: ROTH

LOGREF:

FILES: WH

NSCP:

CODES:

D O C U M E N T D I S T R I B U T I O N

FOR ACTION

FOR CONCURRENCE

FOR INFO
NSC CHRON
ROTH

COMMENTS:

DISPATCHED BY _____ DATE _____ BY HAND W/ATTCH

OPENED BY: NSGP

CLOSED BY: NSASK

DOC 3 OF 3

UNCLASSIFIED
ACTION DATA SUMMARY REPORT

RECORD ID: 9504951

DOC ACTION OFFICER

CAO ASSIGNED ACTION REQUIRED

001 ROTH	Z 95062715 PREPARE MEMO FOR LAKE
002 LAKE	Z 95072521 FOR SIGNATURE
003	X 95072711 LAKE SGD LTR

DISPATCH DATA SUMMARY REPORT

DOC DATE DISPATCH FOR ACTION

DISPATCH FOR INFO

003	950726	RIORDAN, THOMAS
-----	--------	-----------------

UNCLASSIFIED

National Security Council
The White House

Rec'd 7/26

2:30pm

PROOFED BY: _____

LOG # 4951

URGENT NOT PROOFED: _____

SYSTEM RBS NSC INT

BYPASSED WW DESK: _____

DOCLOG WA A/O _____

	SEQUENCE TO	INITIAL/DATE	DISPOSITION
Harmon	<u>1</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>	_____
Dohse	_____	_____	_____
Sens	<u>2</u>	<u>AD 5</u>	_____
Soderberg	<u>Cosby</u>	<u>✓</u>	_____
Berger	<u>3</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>	_____
Lake	<u>4</u>	Natl Sec Advisor has seen	_____
Situation Room	_____	_____	_____
West Wing Desk	<u>5</u>	<u>MC 7/26</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
Records Mgt.	<u>6</u>	_____	<u>D</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

A = Action I = Information D = Dispatch R = Retain N = No Further Action

CC:

COMMENTS:

Exec Sec Office has diskette [Signature]

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
003a. letter	Home Address. [partial] (1 page)	07/26/1995	P6/b(6)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Asian Affairs (Sandra Kristoff)
OA/Box Number: 1040

FOLDER TITLE:

Korea, July - December, 1995 [6]

2009-0528-F
vz1449

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 26, 1995

Dear Mr. Riordan:

Thank you for your recent letter concerning the normalization of relations with Vietnam.

Although we differ on the tactics for achieving the fullest possible POW/MIA accounting, we share the same objective. I believe that the President's decision to normalize relations with Vietnam will help us to accomplish this objective. I note, for example, that Vietnam's cooperation in the past two years has enabled us to determine the fate of all but 55 of the 196 Americans last known alive in Vietnam.

I am hopeful that following the decision to normalize, we will make additional progress in determining the fate not only of these 55 Americans but also the last known alive cases in Laos and Cambodia.

Sincerely,



Anthony Lake
Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs

Mr. Thomas F. Riordan



[003a]

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

4951

July 25, 1995

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR ANTHONY LAKE

FROM: STANLEY ROTH *SR*
SUBJECT: Letter from Mr. Thomas Riordan

Attached at Tab A is a letter to Mr. Thomas Riordan who wrote you concerning the normalization of relations with Vietnam.

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign the letter to Mr. Riordan at Tab A.

Attachment

Tab A Letter to Mr. Thomas Riordan

Tab B Incoming Correspondence from Mr. Thomas Riordan

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
003b. letter	Phone Numbers. [partial] (1 page)	06/18/1995	P6/b(6)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Asian Affairs (Sandra Kristoff)
OA/Box Number: 1040

FOLDER TITLE:

Korea, July - December, 1995 [6]

2009-0528-F
vz1449

RESTRICTION CODES

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Staff to Stanley
Both

[003b]



Mr. Anthony Lake
National Security Adviser
The White House

June 26, 1995

4951

Dear Mr. Lake,

There were American servicemen who were known to have been captured alive in Southeast Asia and who have not yet been returned! What has happened to these men?

Will we find out about these men after we normalize diplomatic relations with Vietnam? I doubt it.

We have had diplomatic relations with Laos for many years and of the 505 POW/MIAs in Laos, only 9 came home in 1973.

What happened to the rest of these men? How did normalization of relations with Laos help us account for these men?

It didn't.

BEFORE AMERICA RECOGNIZES VIETNAM
AS A LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT WORTHY
OF DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION, TRADE AND AID

Please advise President Clinton
not to normalize relations with
Vietnam until we have an honest
accounting of our POW/MIAs.

Thank you.



Respectfully yours,
Thomas F. Riordan
THOMAS F. RIORDAN

Sunday, June 18, 1995 07:18:02 PM O'SHEA-NATL ALLIANCE OF FAMILIES

Page 1 of 3

NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF FAMILIES
FOR THE RETURN OF AMERICAS MISSING SERVICEMEN
WORLD WAR II - KOREA - COLD WAR - VIETNAM

FROM: DOLORES ALFOND - (206) 881-1499 BARB SWORSKI - (612) 378-1947
LYNN O'SHEA ----- (718) 846-4358

TO: ALL POW/MIA FAMILY MEMBERS JUNE 17, 1995
CONCERNED CITIZENS
THE MEDIA

ALL THOSE AS FRUSTRATED AND ANGRY AS WE ARE, GO TO YOUR WINDOW, OPEN IT, STICK YOUR HEAD OUT AND SCREAM "I 'M MAD AS HELL." SINCE MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND, THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF FAMILIES HAS BEEN REVIEWING SOME 400 PAGES OF DOCUMENTS RELATING TO OUR POW/MIAS.

WE DON'T KNOW WHO TO BE MORE ANGRY WITH, THE VIETNAMESE OR THE U.S. GOVERNMENT. TODAY, THE ALLIANCE RELEASED A LIST OF NAMES. RIGHT NOW IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO GIVE THE INTELLIGENCE CORRELATIONS FOR ALL NAMED. HOWEVER, WE WOULD LIKE TO SHARE A FEW WITH YOU.

THE FIRST IS BRUCE C. DUCAT. HIS NAME APPEARED IN "CATEGORY D PROBABLY CAPTURED." THE REPORTS STATES "SUBJECT WAS IDENTIFIED AS A POW BY RETURNEES. HANOI REPORTED CAPTURE OF PILOT WHICH CORRELATED WITH THE SHOOT DOWN OF SUBJECT. RETURNEE SAW HELMET WITH DUCAT'S NAME ON IT."

A SECOND MEMO, TITLED "U.S. PERSONNEL BELIEVED TO BE IN A CAPTURED STATUS, (WE WILL RELEASE THE NAMES CONTAINED IN THIS MEMO SHORTLY) DATED JULY 14, 1973. REPORTED THE SAME INFORMATION, STATING THAT THEREPORT "DIRECTLY CORRELATES TO SUBJ."

BRUCE DUCAT DID NOT COME HOME IN 1973. HIS NAME WAS NOT ON THE DIED IN CAPTIVITY LIST. BRUCE DUCAT'S REMAINS WERE RETURNED AND IDENTIFIED MARCH 3, 1978. WHERE WAS BRUCE DUCAT BETWEEN THE TIME HE WAS LAST SEEN AND 1978?

ACCORDING TO THE JULY 14TH 1973 MEMO, CHARLES PUTNAM WAS "LAST SEEN BY RETURNEE. SUBJECT WAS BEING LED AWAY BY CAPTORS." CHARLES PUTNAM'S NAME IS NOT ON THE DIED IN CAPTIVITY LIST. HIS REMAINS WERE RETURNED AND IDENTIFIED NOVEMBER 3, 1988. WHERE WAS CHARLES PUTNAM BETWEEN MARCH 9, 1967 AND 1988?

WE ALL KNOW THE STORY OF EDWIN TUCKER AND HOW HIS REMAINS WERE PUT ON DISPLAY AT A MEDICAL SCHOOL. CAPT. ROBERT GREGORY WAS SHOT DOWN DECEMBER 2, 1966. THE JULY 3RD, 1973 MEMO PUTS HIM IN "CATEGORY C - PROBABLY DIED IN INCIDENT - COMMENTS: "RETURNEE REPORTED ESTABLISHING VOICE CONTACT WITH SUBJECT AFTER EJECTION. RETURNEE HEARD CRASHING SOUNDS AND BELIEVES SUBJECT WAS HUNG UP IN TREES. RETURNEE INFORMED BY NVA THAT SUBJECT HAD DIED. HIS NAME WAS NOT ON THE DIED IN CAPTIVITY LIST. CAPT. GREGORY'S REMAINS WERE RETURNED AND IDENTIFIED IN 1988. WHAT FOLLOWS IS DIRECTLY FROM BACKUP DOCUMENTATION TO MEMO DATED 22 JANUARY 1992. THE MEMO IS SIGNED BY THAT STELLAR CITIZEN, BRIGADIER GENERAL THOMAS "THE SHREDDER" NEEDHAM. UNDER THE HEADING FORENSIC ANALYSIS: "REMAINS 80 TO 90 PERCENT COMPLETE WITH EVIDENCE OF BURIAL AND STORAGE. SIGNS OF EROSION, CUT MARKS ON BONES AND DRILLED HOLES IN JOINTS WERE EVIDENT. REMAINS ALSO CONTAINED EVIDENCE OF AN AUTOPSY AND INDICATIONS THEY WERE USED AS AN ANATOMICAL SPECIMEN."

FROM THE SAME DOCUMENT, WE HAVE A REPORT ON MAJOR STANLEY HORNE. OUR JULY 3RD REPORTS PUTS MAJOR HORNE IN THE "LAST SEEN ALIVE CATEGORY." THE COMMENTS - AIRCRAFT HIT BY AIR TO AIR MISSILE FIRED BY MIG. A GOOD CHUTE WAS SEEN WITH BEEPERS. SAR NEGATIVE." MAJOR HORNE'S REMAINS WERE RETURNED ON APRIL 18, 1990. THE FORENSIC ANALYSIS

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READS " RECEIVED AS UNIDENTIFIED. REMAINS WERE 80 PERCENT COMPLETE WITH SIGNS OF BURIAL AND STORAGE. COMMINGLED BONES CONTAINED IMPACTED DIRT, DISINFECTANT, AND BROWN STAIN. POST-MORTEM FRACTURES OF VERTEBRAE, ONE RIB, AND BOTH FEMORAS WERE EVIDENT. REMAINS CONTAINED UNUSUAL ALTERATION OF LONGITUDINALLY- ORIENTED, NARROW GROOVES IN ALL LONG BONES, CRANIUM, SCAPULA AND HIP BONES INCONSISTENT WITH ANIMAL OR POST-DEPOSITIONAL DAMAGE." NEED WE SAY, MAJOR HORNE'S NAME WAS NOT ON THE LIST AS DIED IN CAPTIVITY.

IF THE VIETNAMESE CAN'T TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT REMAINS HOW THE HELL, CAN WE EXPECT THEM TO TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT OUR LIVE POW'S.

THIS BRINGS US TO DANIEL U. BORAH - A PRIME EXAMPLE OF VIETNAMESE LIES. THE JULY 3RD MEMO PUTS DAN BORAH IN "CATEGORY A - LAST SEEN ALIVE." THAT IS AN INTERESTING CHOICE OF WORDS. WE WONDER LAST SEEN BY WHOM? OF DAN BORAH THE MEMO STATES "AIRCRAFT HIT BY AAA NEAR QUANG TRI, SUBJECT HAD A GOOD CHUTE WITH BEEPERS AND VOICE CONTACT ON THE GROUND. LAST TRANSMISSION WAS "GOMER ALL AROUND." VIETNAM, WHERE IS DAN BORAH?

GERALD AYERS, ACCORDING TO THE JULY 14TH 1973 MEMO: "PROBABLY CAPTURED" (EVIDENCE SUPPORTS ANALYSIS INDICATES CAPTURE.) OF GERALD AYERS THE MEMO STATES "BEEPER CONTACT WAS ESTABLISHED SHORTLY AFTER DOWNING OF AIRCRAFT. RETURNEE STATES THAT SUBJECT WAS PW IN HA LO PRISON IN NORTH VIETNAM FROM 1 JULY TO 4 SEP 72."

GERALD AYERS WAS ONE OF 12 MEN ON BOARD AN AC130A SHOT DOWN OVER SOUTH VIETNAM ON JUNE 19, 1972. OTHERS ON BOARD WERE MARK DANIELSON, LARRY NEWMAN, JACOB MERCER, PAUL GILBERT, LEON HUNT, ROBERT NYHOF, ROBERT HARRISON, DONALD KLINKE, STANLEY LEHRKE, AND RICHARD COLE. SEVERAL MONTHS BACK THE MILITARY HELD A MASS BURIAL AT ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY. THEY BURIED SEVERAL TEETH AND BONE FRAGMENTS - SAID TO BE THE CREW OF THE AC130A. WE GUESS THE REPORT OF A RETURNED POW, SAYING THAT GERALD AYERS WAS IN A POW CAMP FROM JULY 1 - SEPT 4TH, 1972, DIDN'T MEAN MUCH TO U.S. INVESTIGATORS. JUST GET THOSE CASES CLOSED, FAST. RIGHT GUYS? THE VIETNAMESE AND U.S. GOVERNMENTS WOULD LIKE US TO BELIEVE GERALD AYERS TO BE DEAD. WE WONDER?

BOTH THE JULY 3RD AND JULY 14TH 1973 REPORTS MENTIONED: JOHN GRAF IN THE CAPTURED STATUS. BOTH REPORTS CARRY THE SAME COMMENTS. OF GRAF THE REPORTS STATE "SEVERAL RPTS CORRELATE WITH HIS CAPTURE. SOURCES RPT SUBJ DIED BY DROWNING IN AN ESCAPE ATTEMPT AND WAS BURIED AT XR 6567. SOURCE IDENT PHOTO OF SUBJ AS THE MAN WHO HAD DIED AND STATED THAT GRAF WAS BURIED BY LMS IN AREA OF 01. LONG TOAN AT YR 6567. RETURNEE RPT THAT HE HEARD GRAF'S NAME OVER MUN RADIO IN LATE 1971. RPTS ON FILE THAT CORRELATE WITH SUBJ WHICH INDIC THAT HE IS ALIVE AS OF 1973. OK VIETNAM, ALIVE OR DEAD, WHERE IS JOHN GRAF?

CIVILIAN JAMES SIMPSON AND BRITISH NATIONAL THOMAS CORNTHWAITE MAKE THE JULY 3RD LIST UNDER "CATEGORY D - PROBABLY CAPTURED." THE REPORT READS " SIMPSON & CORNTHWAITE LEFT QUI NOHM FOR SGN IN A JEEP AND WERE CAPTURED DURING AN AMBUSH. RALLIERS REPORTED CORNTHWAITE ALLEGEDLY WAS KILLED DURING ESCAPE ATTEMPT. RETURNEES REPORTED HEARING CORNTHWAITE'S NAME ON HANOI RADIO IN LATE 1971. CORNTHWAITE'S NAME WAS FOUND ON THE WALL AND A SCRAP OF PAPER AT THE CITADEL IN JAN 73. OK VIETNAM, WHERE ARE THEY?

THE NAMES GO ON AND ON, WITH DESCRIPTIONS, AFTER DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF AMERICANS IN THE CUSTODY OF THE VIETNAMESE. MANY OF THEM, YET TO COME HOME.

IN OUR POSSESSION IS A BRIGHT LIGHTS REPORT. IT IS OF INTEREST THAT THE DATE OF THE REPORT IS REDACTED, NO DOUBT TO PROTECT NATIONAL SECURITY. WE CAN TELL THE REPORT WAS ISSUED PRIOR TO JULY 10, 1972 AS THAT IS THE DATE A TYPED COMMENT WAS ADDED TO THE REPORT. THAT

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COMMENT MADE BY MAJ. C.W. WATSON, STATES "SPECIFICS OF PHYSICAL DESCRIPTIONS DO NOT TALLY, HOWEVER GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION, DATE OF CAPTURE AND RACIAL DERIVATION (CAUCASIAN/NEGRO) INDICATES THIS IS ALMOST CERTAINLY NAME AND NAME LOST 31 MARCH 1971. SOURCE PUTS THE REPORTED DATE AND PLACE OF CAPTURE ALMOST ON THE MONEY FOR NAME."

SO WHO ARE NAME AND NAME7. THEY ARE JAMES SALLEY AND PHILIP TERRILL. THE JULY 3RD 1973 MEMO PUTS THEM IN "CATEGORY B - PROBABLY DIED IN CAPTIVITY." THE COMMENT READS "REPORTS ON HAND THAT CORRELATE TO THIS INCIDENT. RETURNEE (ALLWINE) REPORTED THAT HE RECEIVED INFORMATION FROM SALLEY (DIED IN PW CAMP) THAT SUBJECT (TERRILL) DIED ON THE TRAIL TO NUN." JAMES SALLEY'S NAME IS ON THE DIED IN CAPTIVITY LIST. HIS REMAINS HAVE YET TO BE RETURNED. JAMES SALLEY IS BUT ONE OF THE MANY HOSTAGES ALIVE AND DEAD, HELD BY THE VIETNAMESE.

WAS WARTIME INTELLIGENCE GOOD? IT WAS GOOD, DAMN GOOD. JUST AS TODAY'S INTELLIGENCE ABOUT LIVE POW'S IS DAMN GOOD. DURING THE WAR, INTELLIGENCE WAS USED TO TRACE POWS. TODAY, INTELLIGENCE ON POW'S IS IGNORED, OR DEBUNKED. THE RULE OF THUMB, ANY INFORMATION ON DEAD AMERICANS IS ACCURATE, ANY INFORMATION ON LIVE AMERICANS IS A FABRICATION. OVERHEAD SATELLITE IMAGERY DOESN'T PHOTOGRAPH MESSAGES FROM POW'S, IT PICKS UP GEOGRAPHICAL ANOMALIES. SOUTHEAST ASIA MUST HOLD THE RECORD FOR GEOGRAPHICAL ANOMALIES THAT CORRELATE TO AMERICAN POW'S.

WHAT WE PRESENTED HERE, IS A SMALL FRACTION OF INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON AMERICAN POWS, ALIVE AND DEAD. VIETNAM KNOWS WHERE THESE MEN ARE AND SO DO U.S. OFFICIALS. YET, BOTH SIDES DO NOTHING TO CORRECT MISTAKES MADE OVER TWENTY YEARS AGO.

JUST READING THESE DOCUMENTS, TURNS OUR STOMACHS. TURNING STOMACHS BRINGS US TO SENATORS JOHN MCCAIN AND JOHN KERRY. PRESENT AND FORMER GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL SUCH AS CHUCK TROWBRIDGE, JOE HARVEY, JOE SCHLATTER AND THAT ILK. TO THEM WE ASK, HOW DO YOU SLEEP AT NIGHT?

AFTER READING THIS, ARE YOU AS ANGRY AS WE ARE? WELL SHOUT, STAMP YOUR FEET OR PUNCH A WALL, THEN GET DOWN TO BUSINESS.

WE MUST STOP NORMALIZATION. VIETNAM HAS NOT COOPERATED ON THE POW ISSUE AND THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS DOING NOTHING TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO DO SO. GIVING VIETNAM ACCESS TO THE WORLD BANK DIDN'T INCREASE COOPERATION. LIFTING THE TRADE EMBARGO, DIDN'T INCREASE COOPERATION.

VIETNAM HAS NOT EARNED NORMALIZATION. NORMALIZATION WILL NOT INCREASE ACCESS TO POW INFORMATION. THAT IS AN EXCUSE POLITICIANS LIKE JOHN (HANOI) KERRY AND JOHN (HAVE YOU HUGGED A COMMUNIST TODAY) MCCAIN LIKE TO USE TO HIDE THEIR TRUE MOTIVES - - GREED.

PRESIDENT CLINTON, IF YOU DO NORMALIZE RELATIONS WITH VIETNAM, DON'T USE THE POW'S TO JUSTIFY YOUR ACTIONS. THE FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF OUR POW'S SIMPLY DON'T BUY IT. MR. PRESIDENT, WHEN YOU SELL OUT THOSE WHO FOUGHT IN YOUR PLACE, HAVE THE GUTS TO SAY YOUR DECISION IS BASED ON PROFITS NOT MORALITY.

PATRICIA PLUMADORE, SISTER OF POW/MIA KENNETH PLUMADORE, SAYS IT BEST "I THINK IT'S WRONG TO RECOGNIZE VIETNAM. WHY DON'T THEY JUST ADMIT THAT THEY'RE DOING THIS TO GO OVER THERE AND MAKE MONEY? WHY ARE THEY LYING AND SAYING WE'RE DOING THIS FOR THE MIA'S?"

TO ADMIT THE REAL REASON FOR THE RUSH TO NORMALIZE, THOSE IN FAVOR OF THIS STEP WOULD HAVE TO SPEAK THE TRUTH AND THAT MY FRIENDS IS A FOREIGN CONCEPT TO 99.9999% OF THOSE IN WASHINGTON DECEIT.

GET MAD, AND STAY MAD. PASS THIS FAX TO YOUR FRIENDS AND ANY ORGANIZATIONS YOU BELONG TO. CONTACT YOUR SENATORS AND THE PRESIDENT. SEND THE MESSAGE LOUD AND CLEAR. NO NORMALIZATION WITH VIETNAM.

Facing Up to the Dirty Secret of Vietnam

YES, IT'S time to restore diplomatic relations with Vietnam.

I And it's also time to tell Americans the whole truth about the prisoners of war who didn't come home.

For more than 20 years, Hanoi and Washington have sought to suppress the shameful secret that not all the American POWs were returned after the peace accords were signed in early 1973. The two governments, of course, had dissimilar motives for hiding the truth, but they shared one common desire — to save face.

A large and still-growing body of evidence shows that the Vietnamese held back prisoners — possibly hundreds of them — in order to bargain for war reparations. As the years passed, and Hanoi's secret overtures to get the United States to pay the ransom either fell apart through bungling or were met with rejection in Washington, it became harder and harder for both sides to tell the truth.

The Vietnamese sorely wanted acceptance into the international community and the economic aid that would follow. A confession that they had held prisoners in violation of a peace treaty — and probably executed many of them — could, they feared, undermine Hanoi's rehabilitation and was thus shunned as a truth-telling gesture that could not be risked.

The American government faced a similar risk. How do you admit that you knew from the start that significant numbers of U.S. POWs had not been repatriated by Hanoi in 1973? And that since then you had committed yourself to obscuring, distorting, ignoring and sometimes even falsifying the evidence? The public outrage could be enormous, enough perhaps to bring down a president and all his men. As a result, six successive American presidents, from Richard Nixon to Bill Clinton, have chosen to deal with the issue in secret, ultimately with no result. They too could not confess to what they knew, for fear of the dishonor it could bring to them and to the nation's reputation.

So here we are, more than two decades later, with a certain and overdue need to end the Vietnam War by exchanging ambassadors, and yet still not enough backbone and character in Washington to utter a formal apology to the American peo-

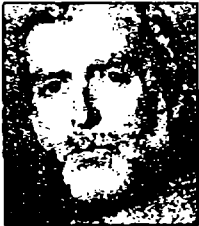
ple, and in particular to the families of the men still unaccounted for.

Cold realism dictates that we cannot expect an equivalent gesture from Hanoi, at least not at this time. We are the democracy and they are not. One-sided or not, a public admission of the historical truth about the POWs is crucial to reducing the size of the shadow that the Vietnam War continues to cast over the United States.

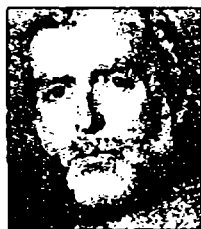
Maybe it won't happen, and both sides will sim-

SYDNEY H. SCHANBERG

Six successive



*American
presi-
dents
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ply go on lying. Some national shames fester in closets even longer than this one. The Tuskegee scandal, for instance, was hidden for 40 years. About 400 poor black sharecroppers in Alabama with syphilis were made part of a government experiment in 1932 to study "untreated syphilis in the Negro male." Blood samples were taken regularly from the men, but none was offered any treatment. That experiment didn't come to light until 1972, when stories broke in newspapers.

It took nearly 50 years before similar exposure

laid bare the government radiation tests conducted in the 1940s on people who had not given their informed consent. The purpose was to see how plutonium, the element that fuels atomic bombs, reacts on the body. That story lay buried until a reporter for The Albuquerque Tribune, Eileen Welsome, dug it out in 1993.

The lesson is, I guess, that sometimes dirty secrets don't emerge until nearly all the participants are dead and the nation can deal with the disgrace pretty much as an abstraction. That doesn't bode well for the secrets of Vietnam. Except for Nixon, all the participating presidents are alive, as are many of their best and brightest.

It isn't that the evidence of the POWs hasn't bubbled to the surface from time to time. But on each occasion, the information has been quickly surrounded by the government's debunkers, who then declare it inconclusive or call it a hoax or say that the distress-signal ground markings that appeared clearly on satellite imagery weren't really man-made symbols at all but merely "photographic anomalies."

The press, too, joined in this chorus of the deliberately blind. At times, it seemed that everyone in the opinion industry was also too ashamed to speak the truth. For example, in 1992, three former defense secretaries from the Vietnam period — Melvin Laird, Elliot Richardson and James Schlesinger — all testified before a Senate committee, under oath, that American prisoners had indeed been left behind in 1973. The Washington press corps gave it one-day treatment and never brought it up again.

When the debunkers get really desperate — that is, when revelatory documents are thrust in their faces, such as evidence that men were believed alive by intelligence officials as recently as the late 1980s — they immediately recast the issue by demanding to know if there is proof that any captives are still alive today. No one can answer yes with certainty, but in any event it's a phony challenge.

From the beginning, there has been only one question: What happened to the men who were not returned? President Clinton can bring this secret out of hiding even as he moves to normalize relations with Vietnam. Or he can turn his back and join his predecessors in ignoble silence.