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Secretary Shultz

# The U.S. and ASEAN: Partners for Peace and Development

→ ~~Children~~  
Speeches



United States Department of State  
*Bureau of Public Affairs*  
Washington, D.C.

*Following is an address by Secretary Shultz at the postministerial consultations of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, July 12, 1985.*

The United States and ASEAN have a deep and enduring partnership because we have in common basic interests and high ideals. We share a stake in security and stability in the Asia-Pacific region. We value our freedom and independence. We seek prosperity and social justice for our peoples.

Today, let me address two particular subjects of common concern: first, economic development and growth and, second, the quest for peace.

### **Economic Development and Growth**

Economic development knows no borders. The dynamics of development by which Europe and North America grew from agrarian societies into highly urbanized industrial nations, and which continue to change us today, operate with equal force the world over.

In recent years, we have seen a spreading recognition throughout the world that development and prosperity depend on the freedom of individuals to create, produce, and sell in an open market. The freest societies in the world, those whose institutions liberate the talents and energies of the individual, are also the fairest and most prosperous. Sound national policies based on these principles of freedom are the essential building blocks of a prosperous world economy.

Our challenge today is to carry out sound national policies that will protect the current world recovery and move us decisively onto the path of sustained, noninflationary growth. To free up our individual economies, and to free up the world trading system, difficult and sometimes painful political decisions are required of all of us. Here is a five-point program of action.

**First**, the United States must—and will—substantially reduce its Federal spending and fiscal deficit, while undertaking basic reform of our tax system in the interests of fairness, economic growth, and simplicity. These actions will help bring down our interest rates and help ease the international debt problem. Interest rates in the United States have, in fact, declined sharply over the past 3 months, with short-term rates down 2–2½ percentage points and long-term yields from 1¾–2 percentage points lower.

Reduction of our deficit and interest rates will also help moderate the strong net financial flows into the United States, thereby lowering the exchange rate of the U.S. dollar. A lower dollar, of course, would make the United States more competitive in world markets—I just want to put everyone on notice. But this will help correct our excessive trade imbalance, itself becoming a major engine of protectionist sentiment. We know that protection is not a cure; it is a disease. As was said at the Bonn summit: “Protectionism does not solve problems; it creates them.” The Reagan

Administration will do its part to maintain and develop further the open trading system.

**Second**, the West Europeans need economic expansion. To get it, as they noted in their statements at the Bonn summit, they must reduce labor market rigidities and other structural obstacles to growth and innovation, create conditions that stimulate savings and attract investment capital, and, to quote their own words, "encourage entrepreneurial activities" and "reduce the claims of the public sector on the economy."

**Third**, Japan, in addition to opening its markets to foreign products, should reduce the degree to which its high rate of domestic saving spills over into a disruptive trade surplus. This could be done by liberalizing capital markets and internationalizing the yen and by policies which stimulate domestic sources of growth, including investment in Japan by Japanese and foreigners alike.

**Fourth**, the developing nations, especially those heavily indebted, should continue to make the structural adjustments needed to stabilize their economies, reduce the burden of government, expand their trade, and stimulate growth. We all understand the principles of development, though our experience in adapting them to our diverse societies may vary. Key elements are: the need for political stability under the rule of law; the commanding role of private savings and investment in producing wealth; the vitality of "human capital"; and the importance of a sound currency and stable prices, as well as incentives and institutions that favor individual initiative.

**Fifth**, all nations benefit from freer international trade and, therefore, should support the preparatory work for a new GATT [General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade] round next year. Trade is the lifeblood of the world economy, and we have a solemn obligation to resist the temptations of protectionism. All of us should eliminate or reduce measures that limit trade; this Administration opposes any surtax on imports. We all know that major areas like agriculture, steel, and textiles are now heavily traded and subject to increasing protectionist measures such as import quotas, export subsidies, and other impediments. In addition, the trading system is burdened with other restrictions, such as domestic content laws, mandatory export requirements, subsidized export financing, counter- and barter-trade arrangements, and many others. Trade in services is incompletely covered by existing international rules, yet restrictions in this area are a serious distortion to the system.

This program of action calls for many hard decisions. But they are the right decisions. We stand at the threshold of what can be, if all governments meet their responsibilities, a long period of global economic expansion and a new era of unprecedented prosperity.

ASEAN is proof of the success of economic freedom. The United States values the ASEAN-U.S. dialogue, and we are pleased with the meeting held in Washington in April. Much of that dialogue focused on commodity issues. As I have said in this forum in the past, the United States is convinced that the long-term interests of both producers and consumers are best served by not interfering with market forces in the commodity field. There is no substitute for a free, well-informed market. Where particular problems arise we are, of course, prepared to address them.

- We recognize that the international rubber agreement has performed a useful function in the 4½ years of its life. We have had constructive negotiations with the producer countries on issues that concerned us. The first round yielded a good understanding of respective producer and consumer views. We will participate in good faith throughout the negotiations.

- Tin has been a longstanding source of friction between us. But we have now agreed on an important memorandum of understanding on tin.

- As you have been informed, President Reagan has decided to propose a modernization of the U.S. national defense stockpile of strategic materials. New stockpile goals are being formulated which will lead to a change in the composition of surplus commodities and 5-year program of disposals and purchases. As is current practice, any releases from the stockpile will be done so as to avoid undue market disruption. We will consult closely with you and other interested countries as this proposal is implemented.

- I know we have some differences on textiles, but let me cite some revealing figures: the textile industry is the single largest employer in the U.S. manufacturing sector. The growth in textile imports into the United States in 1984 was 32% over the 1983 level. In the case of ASEAN, in 1984, despite much criticism, U.S. textile imports grew by 74%.

- In volume, ASEAN thus far in 1985 has become our fourth largest textile supplier, exceeding Hong Kong, China, and Japan. The United States is committed to an orderly international trading regime in textiles. We support the multifiber arrangement and will be

negotiating a renewal of it in the coming months.

Our dialogue paid much-needed attention to intellectual property rights. The United States is concerned about widespread international piracy and counterfeiting of the intellectual property of American citizens. Americans also face serious obstacles in acquiring intellectual property rights in some countries. I urge those ASEAN nations not yet adhering to the major intellectual property conventions to do so. Protection for these rights is in the interest of all nations because it nurtures domestic innovation, creativity, and technological advance. Those governments that fail to protect these rights do damage to themselves, for their business environments will become increasingly unattractive to the foreign capital and technology that spur development.

### The Quest for Peace

Of the many interests we have in common, surely the most basic is our quest for peace. Conflicts in this world have many origins: national rivalries, social injustice, militant ideologies, and other causes. The Soviet Union, unfortunately, exploits local grievances for its own ends. The Soviet Union does not share our vision of a peaceful international order, and it seems prepared, all too often, to impose its own vision by the use or threat of force. In the past 20 years, the Soviets have continued a relentless military buildup, nuclear and conventional, surpassing legitimate needs of self-defense. This buildup is apparent in several regions, including Southeast Asia and the Pacific. Their nuclear arsenal, which reached parity with ours more than 10 years ago, continues to grow.

**Military Balance.** The United States, under President Reagan, has taken steps to maintain a secure military balance. We want all our friends to know that we are committed and engaged in Asia, helping our friends to assure their security. Since 1981, we have greatly strengthened our naval and air resources in the Asia-Pacific region. We have added 15 Perry-class frigates, 8 Spruance-class destroyers, and 6 Los Angeles-class submarines. The addition of a second battleship group in mid-1986, led by the U.S.S. *Missouri*, will greatly increase our surface strength. We have added to our air forces 112 F/A-18s, two squadrons of F-16s, and 116 new Blackhawk helicopters. We have also greatly expanded our stocks of munitions and spare parts. These actions demonstrate our intention and our will

to remain of paramount importance in the Pacific. Our military facilities in the Philippines enable us to protect vital lines of communication in the region and to counterbalance the growing military power of the Soviet Union and its surrogates.

These facilities are a key element in our interlocking network of bases in the Western Pacific and Indian Ocean. Thus, they are crucial not only to the United States and the Philippines but also to the security of our other friends in Asia, from Japan and Korea to the Persian Gulf. American policy toward the Soviet Union has two tracks: to deter aggression and to hold the door open to more constructive relations. Since the ASEAN meeting last year in Jakarta, our diplomatic dialogue with the Soviets has resumed. President Reagan met last September with then-Foreign Minister Gromyko and will meet Mr. Gorbachev [Soviet General Secretary] in Geneva this November. I met with Mr. Gromyko in January and again in May and will meet with his successor, Mr. Shevardnadze, in Helsinki at the end of this month. The channels of communication that the Soviets had shut down are open and working again.

We agreed to upgrade the "Hot Line." Our 10-year economic cooperation agreement has been extended. We have begun negotiations to expand cultural exchanges. There have been exchanges of views on regional issues, such as the Middle East, Afghanistan, and southern Africa. Most important, we have started new talks on the control and reduction of nuclear weapons.

For all our differences, the United States and the Soviet Union have a common interest in averting nuclear war. At Geneva, the American negotiators have instructions to explore and seek common ground on reducing nuclear arsenals and strengthening strategic stability. We also have to resolve major Soviet violations of existing agreements including the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. The illegal use of chemical weapons in Indochina was a shocking example of Soviet behavior. The United States, by contrast, has remained in strict compliance with all arms control agreements. President Reagan's decision early last month to disassemble a Poseidon submarine in order to keep within SALT II [strategic arms limitation talks] Treaty limits demonstrates that we will go the extra mile for arms control. Prevention of nuclear war is our gravest responsibility; we share with peoples all over the world hope for a successful outcome of the Geneva negotiations, and we are doing all we can to assure that

success. So far, I am sad to say, the Soviet Union has not shown a readiness to work for such an outcome.

**Nuclear Proliferation.** As we continue our dialogue with the Soviet Union, we will not forget the other potentially disastrous dimension of the spread of nuclear weapons—the emergence of additional nuclear weapon states. Here we have had some success. Both sides see the potential spread of nuclear weapons to additional states as a danger to the stability and safety of world order and are dedicated to doing everything possible to prevent that spread. Each has worked to strengthen the International Atomic Energy Agency and its vital safeguards system; and each has worked to increase the effectiveness of the guidelines observed by nuclear suppliers; and each has strongly supported the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

For our part, we have sought to foster a web of institutional arrangements, legal commitments, international safeguards, and security arrangements which would guard against and make less likely the trend toward further proliferation while at the same time assuring that the benefits of peaceful uses of nuclear energy are ever more widely available to the developing world. We have concluded new bilateral agreements that will further strengthen the non-proliferation regime. We have vigorously pursued an initiative aimed at establishing comprehensive safeguards as a universal condition for supply. At the same time we are mindful that recipients must be able to count upon reliable sources of supply. We have reestablished dialogue with suppliers and recipients alike to create the framework of cooperation essential to an effective nonproliferation regime. There is a growing awareness of the danger and responsible reaction to it. New potential suppliers—including South Africa, Argentina, Brazil, and China—are requiring safeguards as a condition for supply. In short, we have made progress, but we must be both vigilant and vigorous in our continuing pursuit of our nonproliferation language.

**Vietnam and Cambodia.** In East Asia the most immediate threat to peace comes from Vietnam. In December 1978, Vietnam invaded Cambodia, replacing a barbaric communist regime with a puppet regime backed by a brutal Vietnamese occupation. Cambodia's agony goes on as the Vietnamese rain death and destruction on the Cambodian people.

ASEAN quickly organized international opposition to Hanoi's Cambodian invasion. ASEAN has played the lead

role on this issue ever since. You organized the 1981 International Conference on Kampuchea, which laid down the basic principles for a settlement—complete withdrawal of Vietnamese forces and the restoration of Cambodian independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity under a government chosen in free elections under international auspices. ASEAN was also the midwife to the birth of the noncommunist resistance coalition led by Prince Norodom Sihanouk and Mr. Son Sann, and you continue to be their principal supporters.

The ASEAN call for proximity talks introduces a new element into the equation. There are, of course, risks. Many interests are involved, particularly those of Thailand, the front-line state. We are reassured by your statements that you would certainly not want to move in a direction which would imply recognition of the puppet Heng Samrin regime.

The main thrust of the proposal is, however, laudable. ASEAN is leaving no stone unturned in the quest for a peaceful resolution of the Cambodian conflict. This approach deserves the backing of the international community, and the United States certainly supports it.

The United States strongly backs your policy of political, economic, and military pressure on Vietnam to negotiate a settlement. Your interests in the outcome of the Cambodian problem are primary. A regional framework, led by the countries whose interests are most directly involved, is clearly the best approach to a solution. You can be sure of our support. We provide political, diplomatic, and humanitarian support to the noncommunist resistance. We, of course, provide no assistance whatever to the Khmer Rouge, whose history of atrocities we continue to abhor. We are looking at ways, consistent with your leading role, in which we might provide more support, and we will consult with you.

In support of our shared goal of a negotiated settlement in Cambodia, the United States also will maintain trade restrictions and deny Vietnam the benefits of normalized relations until Hanoi is ready to live in peace with its neighbors. Specifically, Vietnam will have to agree to a settlement in Cambodia acceptable to ASEAN, which includes the negotiated withdrawal of its forces. If Hanoi desires better relations with other countries, then let it agree to a satisfactory settlement in Cambodia. We are standing ready to play our constructive role.

The United States has its bilateral concerns with Vietnam. Foremost among these is the fate of American servicemen and civilians still missing and unaccounted for during the Indochina war. The American people have expressed their feelings quite clearly to us and to our Congress. They will accept nothing less than Vietnam's full cooperation in evidence attempting to resolve the fate of our missing men.

We greatly appreciate your own efforts to urge the Vietnamese to be more forthcoming, and we take some encouragement from recent indications that these efforts may be bearing fruit. In a POW/MIA technical meeting in Hanoi last week, the Vietnamese Government promised to return the remains of 26 Americans and to provide information on 6 others, a significant move forward. We welcome this positive development. We also welcome the recent Vietnamese expression of willingness to resolve this continuing human tragedy within 2 years, and we will follow up with the Vietnamese to explore how this can be done. We have made it clear that we will spare no efforts to resolve this issue in the shortest time possible, and we are prepared to send our technical people to Vietnam on a full-time basis if the Vietnamese are prepared to agree to a work program that would warrant such a step. At the same time we have made clear that this would in no way constitute a diplomatic presence, and the normalization of U.S.-Vietnam relations is dependent upon a negotiated settlement of the Cambodian problem. We and Vietnam agree that the issue of our missing men is a humanitarian one whose resolution should not be obstructed by other differences between us.

The communist regimes in Indochina have been responsible for the largest flood of refugees since just after World War II. More than 1.5 million people have fled Indochina since 1975, imposing a heavy burden on the countries of Southeast Asia. ASEAN's response in first offering asylum for these people has made the difference between life and death for many thousands.

The United States has accepted the greatest number of these refugees for permanent resettlement. Since 1975 the United States has admitted 743,000 refugees. We have shared this humanitarian mission with other resettlement countries. We support your search for more effective solutions, including expansion of the orderly departure program. We will also continue our strong support for international efforts to assist the 230,000 Cambodians along the Thai-

Cambodian border displaced during the recent Vietnamese offensive in that area. We will also support efforts to combat the terrible pirate attacks on refugee boats in the South China Sea.

One group of people is of particular interest to us. Those imprisoned in so-called reeducation camps because of their past service to the Republic of Vietnam or close association with the United States. Hanoi has asserted for years that it will let these political prisoners go if only we would take them all. Last autumn, President Reagan offered to bring all such persons and their families to the United States and proposed to begin by admitting 10,000 in the next 2 years. Hanoi no longer adheres to its original proposal and, despite our repeated appeals, has added conditions that are extraordinarily inflexible. We hope this is not Hanoi's final position and are prepared to meet again to resolve these differences and reach a mutually agreeable solution.

**Philippines and Thailand.** We have deep concern for the security of the ASEAN nations, particularly the Philippines, which faces a growing armed communist insurgency, and the frontline state, Thailand. For all of the ASEAN nations, our security assistance has almost tripled from \$173 million in 1980 to \$429 million last year. Security assistance to Thailand has increased from \$39 million to \$107 million over the same period. We plan to do more in view of the mounting threat from Vietnam. Our assistance to the Philippines includes a large economic component and is aimed at helping a close friend and treaty ally overcome serious political, economic, and security challenges. It supports Philippine efforts to revitalize democratic institutions, maintain stability, and lay a basis for long-term economic growth.

**Afghanistan.** In another area of Asia, the peace was brutally destroyed when Soviet forces invaded Afghanistan in 1979. Today, 5½ years later, the struggle of the Afghan people for freedom and independence not only continues but, almost miraculously, grows stronger. The Soviet Union has ignored international calls for negotiations, preferring military escalation. Soviet pressures against Pakistan have been stepped up.

None of us can remain indifferent. Our goal must remain a political solution, but, in its absence, the Soviets must pay a high price for their aggression. This is the only way to bring them to the negotiating table. The Afghan resistance has recently formed a new alliance, whose existence underscores

the reality that this is a genuine national liberation struggle. The tide of history is running with the Afghan resistance. They deserve our political and moral support.

**Narcotics.** Another matter of common interest is narcotics. Southeast Asia is a major producing region, and your countries and mine are all victims of this pernicious traffic. Annual output of opium in the Golden Triangle area of Burma, Thailand, and Laos is estimated to be 650-700 tons or more. Higher production in recent years has kept heroin prices relatively low, which, in turn, has let traffickers recapture markets in Europe and the United States while expanding their markets in Asia. Nearly a quarter of the heroin consumed in the United States now comes from Southeast Asia, double the amount of just a few years ago. We recognize and admire the efforts of the Royal Thai and other ASEAN governments to combat this scourge to society.

As many of you are aware, most of the opium and heroin produced in the region is consumed in Asian countries. Heroin addicts in several countries in the region are now more numerous in proportion to total population than they are in the United States; they include increasing numbers of young, primarily urban, addicts.

Throughout the region, drug addiction and trafficking are responsible for corruption and other illicit activities and create serious health and social problems. The proceeds of these activities are used to support terrorism and insurgency. Narcotics trafficking is an important security problem. Our united efforts are needed to combat it effectively.

**Terrorism.** Yet another matter of common interest is terrorism. The ASEAN nations and their neighbors, with several tragic exceptions, have been comparatively free of terrorism in the recent past. But there is no reason to expect that this region is immune from this scourge. All nations need to heighten their awareness and their preparedness. An avenue you might wish to consider is the establishment of a regional convention to suppress terrorism. The Organization of American States convention on terrorism and the European convention on the suppression of terrorism are two precedents. Other approaches you might consider are issuing a joint declaration condemning terrorism and hijacking or perhaps organizing an action group within the framework of ASEAN to address the subject of terrorism. We are ready to cooperate with you in antiterrorism

training. Before this vicious enemy threatens or takes the lives of your citizens, as it has ours, I urge you to become actively engaged, bilaterally and multilaterally, with other civilized nations of the world in an all-out war on international terrorism.

**China.** No discussion of the prospects for peace and stability in Asia would be complete without mention of the People's Republic of China. The United States regards China as a friendly, nonaligned country. China conducts an independent foreign policy; it has moved recently to ease tensions with the Soviet Union. On many international issues China's policy is parallel to ours; on other issues it is not. Our relationship with China is premised on the fact that the former outweigh the latter. China's emphasis on economic modernization—an emphasis that has already produced impressive achievements—should give Beijing an additional strong stake in a stable and secure international environment.

Thus we believe that a secure China, working at modernization, can be a force for peace and stability in Asia and the world. An insecure and frustrated China would not serve our interests—or yours. China's ability to defend itself against the Soviet threat is crucial to the global balance of power and to stability in East Asia. To that end, the United States and China are cooperating in selected defensive—I stress the word "defensive"—military areas. We are mindful of your interests. Our policy ensures that any upgrading of China's defensive capabilities will in no way jeopardize the security of our friends and allies in this region.

**Central America.** Let me turn briefly to another region far from here, but where values we share are at stake: Central America. In El Salvador, our policy to foster democracy through political, economic, and social reform and security assistance is succeeding. El Salvador has conducted four free elections in the last 3 years, and the roots of democracy under President Duarte's government are growing stronger.

Nicaragua, however, is a threat to its region. The hopeful revolution that overthrew Somoza in 1979 has been betrayed by the Nicaraguan communists. They made solemn promises to the Organization of American States in 1979 to bring democracy to their country, but today they seek to consolidate a totalitarian monopoly of power. That is why some 15,000 Nicaraguans have taken up arms against the regime. The Nicaraguan communists' ties to the Soviet bloc grow steadily; they are actively involved in attempting to subvert El Salvador and two other democratic neighbors, Costa Rica and Honduras. The issue has its parallel in Southeast Asia: regional bullies cannot be allowed to terrorize and intimidate their neighbors. President Reagan has called for a cease-fire and dialogue between the Nicaraguan regime and its democratic opposition. And we continue to support the Contadora process that seeks a comprehensive regional negotiated settlement.

#### **The U.S.-ASEAN Relationship**

The United States is proud to be a partner of ASEAN in the pursuit of economic development and the quest for peace. With each passing year you demonstrate new vitality and cohesion, earning the admiration of the global community.

Our relationship with you is a rich one. The United States is tied to individual countries by history, by treaty commitments, and by shared interests. These annual consultations demonstrate the ties that bind us to you collectively as well.

Deeper than this, the private contacts of thousands of individuals and enterprises are far more extensive than any government-to-government contact could possibly be. As our trade grows, the web of our interaction grows broader and thicker. In 1984, U.S.-ASEAN trade grew by 11% to reach a level of \$26 billion. That is certainly impressive when one considers that the level was only \$945 million when ASEAN was founded 18 years ago. U.S. investment in ASEAN continues to grow and in 1984 reached about \$10 billion.

The rapid growth of these private and personal relationships reflects our mutual commitments to our common humanity: the freedom of the individual to worship, to think, to speak, and to act as he chooses; to create, to produce and sell—all under the rule of law. This is what our partnership must stand for. The progress you have achieved is gratifying to us. We are always pleased to meet and consult with ASEAN, our partner in advancing freedom and peace in the world.■

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# CHILDREN

REMARKS TO THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES  
RADISSON MARK PLAZA HOTEL  
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA  
JULY 19, 1985

My fourth meeting with you at the national level, augmented by several regional meetings. As always, it is a privilege, and I promise to be as frank as always.

Some of you here this year are new. I urge you to see your Casualty Officers, seek out and speak to veteran members of the League, listen and ask questions, seek truth and join us in this national movement to resolve the issue.

Since last year, I have been to Hanoi and Laos again and met with the Vietnamese Foreign Minister in New York.

The strategy is working. We have come a long way from a dead start four years ago. Their attitudes are changing and it is evident by the fulfillment of the Vietnamese pledge to accelerate efforts and the Lao agreement announced today by the Vice President for a second crash site excavation.

Ironically, it appears that at the same time our efforts together are beginning to pay off, the more irrational some elements of the private sector are becoming. The League dealt admirably with much of this in their Misinformation Report which was helpful in signaling the Vietnamese that the families are serious.

Private cross-border forays continue to be planned. We have heard of at least two recently. Americans continue to be ripped off by those who justify fund raising on the absolute falsehood that the United States Government is doing nothing.

Crash sites or alleged crash sites continue to be trashed and that hampers identification after excavation.

People are circulating in Congressional offices from other organizations claiming they, not the League, represent the families.

A vocal minority stages confrontations in order to portray divisiveness.

They accept as proof any report, no matter how false on its face, concerning live prisoners as valid.

They plot and fabricate and delight in a domestic game. To many, the issue appears to be less important than seeing their names in print.



These immature, purposefully divisive efforts are making the issue more difficult to resolve and playing directly into the hands of Hanoi.

As during the war, should Hanoi perceive divisiveness, it provides a reason to delay in order to see if they can get improved odds. The strategy is now working -- but if Hanoi believes we are ready to abandon it for some simplistic notion, such as a special commission, they may well take the opportunity to stall.

It is incredible to witness this behavior from those who claim to care about our missing men and their families, when they play right into Hanoi's hands.

They are bringing out an element that poses great dangers to the issue, while they play silly games instead of working in unity with the League. A serious movement is underway to undermine the League's and the United States Government's positive position on the possibility of prisoners still being held.

Let me give some examples:

- Here is the July 1st edition of The New Republic -- front cover is a picture of Rambo and it says, "Sorry, Rambo, there are no POW's in Vietnam." And, inside makes a case that the Reagan Administration is holding our false hope to you concerning live prisoners -- just the words the Vietnamese told Ann Griffiths.
- February 1985 Indochina Issues breaks the numbers down to make the case about how remote is the possibility of prisoners, describes public awareness and then says, "Despite its position of influence, the League has not been able to control the forces it has unleashed." -- describing the unrealistic Hollywood approach, the private forays, etc.
- September 1985 edition of Comity magazine. "By Reagan's presidency, the issue of MIA's was a closed case to all but a few members of the League of Families. Reagan met with Ann Griffiths and it was decided to bring the issue -- the men -- back to life. To date, the Reagan Administration and the League of Families continue to accuse the Vietnamese of holding American prisoners, despite the fact that the League and the United States Government both admit that there is no proof."
- Wednesday's Washington Post by Jody Powell, former Press Secretary to President Carter, "Despite findings to the contrary by congressional and executive branch studies, the administration persists in telling MIA families that it is operating on the assumption that

American POWs are still being held in Vietnam. At the very least, the administration should consider the possibility that its assumptions about Americans still being held not only add to the misery of the MIA families but also increases Hanoi's leverage."

-- And finally, in Thursday's Washington Post, this wonderful story about divisiveness in the League which Hanoi is certainly enjoying reading. You should know that this came about due to a letter-writing campaign to the Post by those non-family members covered in the League's Misinformation Report. They engendered a story like this for no discernible reason except to undermine the League and build up themselves -- too blind to know where the real danger to the issue lies.

My point, here we have a sizable and growing body of opinion attacking the United States Government's and the League's positive position on the live prisoner issue, advocating we let the Vietnamese off the hook while those of the Rambo mentality are simultaneously undermining the United States Government and the League.

I'm not certain what is meant by "independence from the government," since the League is the most independent private organization I can think of. I'm not sure what is meant by being radical -- unless it means dropping out of the serious side of the issue to join the other hundreds of causes that talk to the trees in Lafayette Park across from the White House. I'm not sure what is meant by statements that the League doesn't represent the families unless it is an attempt by non-family members to take the action away from you.

When I entered this issue in my present position in January 1982, I could count the number of concerned citizens' organizations on one hand. Now there are scores, because it is popular. If its popularity wanes, you can be sure they will disappear and you, the families, will still be here. You are the only steady force, because it is your relatives. If you lose this, you have lost more than influence, you have endangered your own relatives.

Despite all of the above, you know the good news, the largest turnover of remains yet, now pledged, a commitment by Vietnam to resolve the issue in a specific timeframe and the new Lao commitment. We shall continue our high priority efforts -- never flagging. Our pledges to you are real.

I want to publicly thank and commend the 1984-85 Board of Directors for being the most thoughtful, intelligent, hardworking, serious and responsible Board that I've worked with yet. I never witnessed posturing for ego reasons, divisiveness for it's own sake, only steady, sure focus on the objective. We look forward to working with the new Board and hope we can make

the kind of meaningful progress together this year, and even more so, than last.

On another plane, I would like to talk a minute about who we are dealing with in Hanoi. I have had five meetings (in March the most intense direct yet) with Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach.

- Picture a room in Hanoi, where the Politburo meets. The scene is one of men in the 70s and 80s, have fought the French, the Americans and won a revolution, are now fighting the Cambodian resistance and the Chinese.
- Their watchword is patience and unity. This has carried them through what they believe are all of their successes. If they wait long enough, things will go their way.
- Their decisions are private, quiet, behind closed doors and when they emerge there is no hint of differences of opinion.
- They also watch us. Picture our process, what would Hanoi think if they had been with us last night? Would they perceive that we are so divided that perhaps they should wait -- things might shift their way? Attacks on the government, attacks on the League leadership, calls for special commissions to solve the problem another way and in six months -- are these things encouraging to Hanoi?
- When I have gone before, Ann and I have both stressed that the families, veterans and millions of Americans were backing the President's priority fully. There was no division on America's mood and quest for the fullest possible accounting. We will undoubtedly be returning soon to follow up on their pledge to solve this issue in two years. At the end of this meeting, I hope when we go we will have the confidence to say -- We are back and there are millions of Americans with us.

Thank you.

*Press Office  
Manlio Fitzgerald  
X 456-6772*  
*Spencer*

EXCERPTS OF REMARKS BY  
VICE PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH  
TO THE 16TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE  
NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES  
WASHINGTON, D.C.  
FRIDAY, JULY 19, 1985

As I was coming over here today, I got to thinking about you, the members of the National League of Families.

About how, for so many years, you were ignored and scorned within the government. About how Congressional committees and Presidential Commissions refused to take your concerns seriously. About how, several years ago, you even demonstrated in front of the White House just to get official Washington to pay attention to your cause.

I thought about the long road you've traveled and somehow I found myself thinking of the motto of the Marine Corps -- "Semper Fideles," always faithful.

Because, through long, difficult years, you always were faithful.

When those who should have known better wanted to forget the brave American men who were missing in action in the service of freedom in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, you kept the faith.

When they began to close down the office charged with investigating reports of American fighting men who might still be held in captivity in South East Asia, you kept the faith.

When they wanted to return to diplomacy as usual and forget the unfinished business of accounting for those who were lost, still you kept the faith.

Well, I believe that all Americans today join with the President and me in saying thank you. Thank you for keeping the faith all those years. Thank you, not just for helping to bring brave, lost ones home. Thank you for helping bring America home.

America has always honored the splendid men who have fought to protect liberty here and around the world. And now, in part thanks to you, those who fought in the Vietnam War are no longer an exception.

At last America honors their courage, their sacrifice and their commitment -- the valor of those who lived and those who died.

And at last America has a President -- and, may I say, a Vice President -- who has pledged that, of this war, we will write no last chapters, we will close no books, we will put away no final memories until all your questions about the missing and

about possible prisoners of war are answered. That, too, is part of America's honoring of those who fought in Vietnam.

It's part of honoring them and it's something more.

America has always acknowledged a duty and a debt to those who fight for our freedom and to their families. And both those men and their families have the right to expect that, as part of that duty and debt, their government will not abandon, will not forget the men who failed to come home.

Well, we won't abandon, and we won't forget.

The return of all POWs, the fullest possible accounting for those still missing and repatriation of the remains of those who died serving our nation -- these goals are the highest national priority.

Let's be specific about what that means.

In the area of intelligence, it means that the intelligence assets of the United States are fully focused on the matter of POWs and MIAs. And the Joint Casualty Resolution Center is fully staffed and funded.

In the area of diplomacy, it means that all parties understand the importance of the POW and MIA issue to the American people. Every government involved understands that, as a practical matter, <sup>the American people would not allow</sup> ~~it cannot enjoy~~ normalized relations with the United States until we have the fullest possible accounting for our men. *Upson*

And, finally, top priority means that we do not rule out the possibility that Americans are still alive and held captive in Indochina.

If the Vietnamese thought and acted as we do, we could all be convinced that there is no American held captive today in Vietnam. But we know ~~that~~ <sup>French experience with the</sup> the Vietnamese, ~~held French prisoners captured at Dien Bien Phu in 1954 until that late 60s.~~ And we know that Hanoi has up until now <sup>provided minimal</sup> ~~(refused the)~~ cooperation on the issue of POWs and MIAs. ~~[that the 1973 Paris agreements gave us a right to expect.]~~

Well, if we can get hard evidence that Americans are still held in Vietnamese prisons, we're pledged to do whatever's necessary to get them out.

Everyone of us here has seen this past ~~year~~ <sup>two</sup> that giving POWs and MIAs a top priority has begun to show results.



We've seen the Vietnamese, for example, take steps to fulfill the high-level commitments made during policy level discussions of the last two and a half years. And, in technical talks this month, Hanoi informed us that they would return the remains of 26 men and would give us further information on six others.

They have also said that they want to resolve the entire POW and MIA issue within two years and that they are ready for further policy-level talks. These talks will -- as all our policy-level talks have -- include on their agenda the issue of live prisoners.

We welcome these developments and will follow up on them quickly.

In Laos, we've been pursuing a mutual policy of improved relations since 1982. The Laotians know that we regard the principle measure of their sincerity progress on POWs and MIAs.

The joint excavation at Pakse in February was a major step towards a sustained pattern of progress on this issue. The cooperation shown was unprecedented.

The Lao government is interested in removal of the Congressional ban on aid to them. Well, we've told them that we are willing to request that Congress lift the ban once we're assured of continued progress on the issue of our unaccounted-for

Well, I am pleased to assume that in the last few days, the two great men. We hope they'll take concrete steps to demonstrate their intentions soon. ~~That has agreed to execution of a send each site~~

*in the city day soon. They have also accepted our invitation to visit on (invitation) London in about two years. We appreciate the cooperation of the two gov.*

*Need*

*in this country... it.*

The Administration has had a great deal of help in conveying the seriousness with which the American people take the POW and MIA issue. Some of it has come from the bipartisan work of the House Subcommittee on Asian Affairs and the House POW/MIA Task Force.

And a lot has come from you. And let me single out one in particular -- Ann Griffiths, who has helped us arrange and ~~conduct~~ *participated and own* negotiations. Ann, the President, I know, has said this, but let me repeat it: we are all grateful for everything you've given to the cause.

And I want to say, for myself, how strongly I feel about your work.

During World War II I was a Navy pilot. I was shot down and there was a little race between the Japanese and our side over who would get to me first. As things turned out, I didn't become a prisoner of war.

But as I sat in my life raft, bobbing in the Pacific, I learned what it meant to know that America would never abandon its fighting men, whatever their fate.

And so, what you've done in keeping the faith with our MIAs and POWs, in helping to make MIAs and POWs a national priority, in keeping the faith to help to move forward the process that may at last be bringing them home -- what you've done means a lot to me in ways that are very difficult for me to say.

But let me just say this -- God bless you, and God bless America.

ADDRESS BY ROBERT C. MCFARLANE  
TO THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES  
16TH ANNUAL MEETING  
JULY 20, 1985

GEORGE BROOKS, ANN GRIFFITHS, MEMBERS OF THE BOARD, FAMILY MEMBERS AND GUESTS:

ALTHOUGH THIS IS MY FIRST OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK WITH YOU AS A GROUP, I MET WITH YOUR BOARD IN 1982 AND AGAIN LAST YEAR, AND I FOLLOW PROGRESS ON THIS ISSUE CLOSELY, IT REPRESENTS ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT AND HEART-RENDING ISSUES ON OUR AGENDA.

WHEN OUR ADMINISTRATION INHERITED THIS ISSUE EIGHT YEARS AFTER OUR LAST COMBAT FORCES DEPARTED VIETNAM-WE WERE GREATLY HAMPERED BY THE PASSAGE OF TIME WHICH HAD TRANSLATED INTO AN ALMOST HOPELESS ACCEPTANCE OF THE STATUS QUO BY OUR GOVERNMENT AND A PERCEPTION BY THE VIETNAMESE AND LAO GOVERNMENTS THAT IT WAS NOT PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT TO US. THE INERTIA CREATED BY SUCH CONDITIONS HAD TO BE OVERCOME-AND IT WAS. THIS ADMINISTRATION HAS BEEN FULLY ENGAGED AND THE VIETNAMESE AND LAO GOVERNMENTS REALIZE THE PRIORITY WE PLACE ON THE POW/MIA ISSUE BACKED BY THE FAMILIES, ALL MAJOR VETERANS GROUPS, A BROAD BIPARTISAN GROUP IN THE CONGRESS AND MILLIONS OF CONCERNED CITIZENS. HANOI HAS TAKEN NOTICE AND HAS RESPONDED. SINCE 1981, IN ORDER TO GET WHERE WE ARE TODAY, IT HAS TAKEN FIVE HIGH-LEVEL POLICY MEETINGS IN BOTH HANOI AND NEW YORK, TEN TECHNICAL MEETINGS IN HANOI, INNUMERABLE SESSIONS BETWEEN ANN GRIFFITHS AND THE VIETNAMESE, SEVERAL TRIPS BY CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATIONS, SCORES OF INTERVENTIONS BY OTHER COUNTRIES AND OF COURSE THE PHENOMENAL PROGRAM TO INCREASE NATIONAL PUBLIC AWARENESS, WHICH WE ADOPTED AT THE SUGGESTION OF THE LEAGUE.

IT HAS BEEN A TOUGH ROAD AND MORE CHALLENGES LIE AHEAD OF US, BUT WE CANNOT AND WILL NOT FALTER. THE RECENT PLEDGE BY VIETNAM TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE WITHIN TWO YEARS WILL BE AGGRESSIVELY PURSUED. WE THANK THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT FOR THIS FURTHER COMMITMENT AS WELL AS THE ANNOUNCED FUTURE TURNOVER OF 26 REMAINS, A SIGNIFICANT AND WELCOME ACCELERATION IN LINE WITH PLEDGES MADE IN FEBRUARY 1984. WE LOOK FORWARD TO FURTHER HIGH-LEVEL TALKS IN THE NEAR FUTURE. WE WILL ASSUME THAT VIETNAM'S NEW COMMITMENT IS SINCERE AND WE WILL PURSUE IT IN THAT SPIRIT UNLESS EVENTS PROVE TO THE CONTRARY. THERE HAS BEEN SOME SUGGESTION THAT OUR EFFORTS WITH VIETNAM WOULD INVOLVE A PERMANENT TECHNICAL PRESENCE OF JCRC PERSONNEL IN THAT COUNTRY. IT IS TOO EARLY TO JUDGE WHETHER SUCH A PRESENCE WOULD BE REQUIRED, BUT WE WOULD WELCOME A SCHEDULE OF INTENSE AND CONTINUOUS WORK THAT WOULD MAKE THIS NECESSARY. CLEARLY, UNDER SUCH ARRANGEMENTS, WE WOULD EXPECT THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT TO CONTINUE ITS OWN ACCELERATED UNILATERAL EFFORTS SIMULTANEOUSLY. IN THE ABSENCE OF SUCH CONDITIONS, A JCRC PRESENCE COULD BE ONLY SYMBOLIC, A COURSE WE WOULD NOT CHOOSE TO FOLLOW.

INDONESIAN FOREIGN MINISTER MOCHTAR HAS INFORMED US THAT HE BELIEVES, BASED UPON HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH THE VIETNAMESE, THAT THEY ARE SINCERE IN WISHING TO SOLVE THIS MOST CRITICAL BILATERAL ISSUE ON A HUMANITARIAN BASIS. WE GREATLY APPRECIATE THE INTERVENTION MADE ON OUR BEHALF BY THE INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT. INDEED, WE SHOULD ALL BE GRATEFUL TO THE ASEAN COUNTRIES FOR

THEIR ACTIVE SUPPORT OF OUR EFFORTS AND THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE NATURE OF OUR CONTACTS WITH VIETNAM AS LONG AS IT REMAINS AN OCCUPYING FORCE IN CAMBODIA. I WAS GRATIFIED TO LEARN THAT SEVERAL OF THE ASEAN AMBASSADORS ARE HERE TONIGHT IN SUPPORT OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES. I APPLAUD THEM FOR THEIR UNDERSTANDING, THEIR HELP AND THEIR FRIENDSHIP WITH YOU AND THE UNITED STATES.

THE POTENTIAL BREAKTHROUGH WITH VIETNAM THAT WE NOW SEE AHEAD OF US WAS TOO LONG IN COMING, BUT IT IS HERE, IN PART BECAUSE THE LEAGUE LEADERSHIP UNDERSTOOD OUR STRATEGY AND ACTIVELY PARTICIPATED IN IT OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS. FOR YOUR SUPPORT, WE ARE GRATEFUL. LET US CONTINUE THIS PRODUCTIVE APPROACH WITH FAITH IN EACH OTHER, KNOWING THERE WILL BE FRUSTRATIONS OR POSSIBLE FUTURE DELAYS. SHOULD THEY COME, IT IS CRITICALLY IMPORTANT THAT UNITY BE MAINTAINED. WE HAVE ADOPTED EVERY MAJOR SUGGESTION PUT FORTH BY THE LEAGUE AND HAVE WELCOMED THE SUSTAINED, TOUGH BUT QUIET AND EFFECTIVE OVERSIGHT GIVEN TO US BY ANN GRIFFITHS AND YOUR BOARD. ENERGY CHanneled INTO POSITIVE PROGRAMS, THAT THE LEAGUE PURSUES, GIVES CLEAR SIGNALS TO THE VIETNAMESE. DIVISIVENESS, MISINFORMATION OR SIMPLISTIC PROPOSALS THAT MIGHT BE ADVOCATED FOR DOMESTIC PURPOSES CAN ONLY SEND CONFUSING MESSAGES TO THE HANOI LEADERSHIP AND PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE OTHER SIDE TO DELAY TAKING ACTION.

WE WERE PLEASED BY THE UNPRECEDENTED NATURE OF THE COOPERATION EXTENDED TO US BY THE GOVERNMENT OF LAOS DURING THE RECENT JOINT CRASH SITE EXCAVATION IN PAKSE, LAOS. IN ADDITION, AS THE VICE PRESIDENT ANNOUNCED YESTERDAY, THE LAOS HAVE INDICATED THEIR INTENTION TO CONTINUE OUR PROGRESS IN A CONCRETE FASHION: WE WELCOME THEIR RECENT AGREEMENT TO ANOTHER EXCAVATION. THE DETAILS WILL BE WORKED OUT BETWEEN US SOON. THE PROCESS IS ONE OF MUTUAL BENEFIT WITH OUR EMPHASIS ON PROGRESS IN POW/MIA ACTIVITIES. THIS CONCRETE MANIFESTATION OF THEIR PLEDGE TO CONTINUE COOPERATION SHOULD ENABLE US TO TAKE FURTHER STEPS OF INTEREST TO THEM.

DURING THE RECENT HOSTAGE CRISIS DUE TO THE TWA HIJACKING, I'M SURE YOU NOTICED THE INTENSE GOVERNMENT ACTIVITY AT A HIGH LEVEL. AS DIFFICULT AND TRAGIC AS THAT INCIDENT WAS, WE WOULD WELCOME A SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCE BY POSSESSING TANGIBLE EVIDENCE OF U.S. SERVICEMEN BEING HELD CAPTIVE. UNTIL SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES OCCUR, OUR EFFORTS ARE AND WILL BE STEADY AND INTENSE IN DIPLOMATIC AND INTELLIGENCE CHANNELS, IN ORDER TO DEVELOP THEM. WE HAVE YET BEEN UNABLE TO PROVE THEY ARE HOLDING OUR MEN CAPTIVE, BUT SHOULD WE DO SO, THE SAME ACTIVE, HIGH-LEVEL OFFICIAL MACHINERY THAT YOU SAW IN THE HOSTAGE CONTEXT WILL BE ACTIVATED TO EFFECT THEIR RETURN.

THERE IS AN ADDITIONAL ISSUE ON THE TABLE -- PERHAPS THE MOST DIFFICULT OF ALL -- I REFER TO THE LIVE PRISONER QUESTION WHICH IS RAISED IN OUR NEGOTIATIONS AT THE POLICY AND TECHNICAL LEVELS. WE HAVE NOTED PLEDGES BY THE VIETNAMESE AND LAO GOVERNMENTS TO SEARCH FOR ANY INFORMATION ON OUR MISSING MEN. WE HAVE INFORMED THEM THAT WE UNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF THE ISOLATION OF SOME GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS IN THEIR COUNTRIES DURING THE WAR. FURTHER, WE EXPRESSED OUR HOPE THAT SHOULD THEIR EFFORTS PRODUCE ANY LEADS OR INFORMATION, WE WOULD WELCOME IT AND WORK CLOSELY WITH THEM TO RETURN ANYONE BACK TO THE UNITED STATES, REGARDLESS OF THEIR STATUS. OUR GOAL IS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE, NOT DWELL ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES OR MOTIVES THAT CREATED IT IN THE PAST.

NOW, LET ME SAY A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE DOMESTIC SIDE OF THIS ISSUE, FIRST, I

WOULD LIKE TO COMMEND LEAGUE EFFORTS TO COUNTER THE MISINFORMATION THAT BECAME ALMOST EPIDEMIC FOR AWHILE. YOUR RECOGNITION OF THE DAMAGE IT CAN DO IS COMMENDABLE. AS THE ISSUE CONTINUES TO GAIN VISIBILITY, SUCH PHENOMENA MAY INCREASE. WE ALL NEED TO CONTINUE OUR PRIORITY PROGRAMS STEADILY AND NOT BE DEFLECTED FROM OUR COMMON GOAL.

I'M SURE WE WILL SEE PROPOSALS FOR SIMPLISTIC SOLUTIONS THAT MAKE IT APPEAR THE PROBLEM IS IN WASHINGTON, NOT HANOI. PROPOSALS FOR SPECIAL COMMISSIONS FALL INTO THIS CATEGORY. WHETHER GENERATED OUT OF FRUSTRATION OR CONSTITUENT PRESSURE, THE RESULT OF SUCH EFFORTS ARE THE SAME. HANOI WOULD READ IT AS A REASON TO DELAY RESPONDING TO THE CURRENT EFFORTS IN HOPES OF A BETTER DEAL. THE TALENT, EXPERIENCE AND CONTINUITY CONCENTRATED ON THE PROBLEM NOW COULD NOT BE MATCHED BY A COMMISSION DRAWN INTO THE PROBLEM ON A TEMPORARY BASIS TO DRAW CONCLUSIONS. COMMISSIONS HAVE A SUBSTANTIVE PURPOSE IN SOME ISSUES WHERE BIPARTISAN SUPPORT IS LACKING OR WHERE A STRATEGY IS NEEDED. BUT WE HAVE THIS SUPPORT AND MUCH MORE BECAUSE THE ISSUE IS INSTITUTIONALIZED AND DEALT WITH DAILY AT HIGH LEVELS IN ALL RELEVANT DEPARTMENTS OF GOVERNMENT. WE NEVER RULE SUCH THINGS OUT FOREVER, BUT NOW THAT WE ARE SEEING THE CURRENT APPROACH WORKING, IT IS PRECISELY THE WRONG TIME TO DEFLECT EVERYONE AWAY FROM IT. THE COMMISSIONS IN THE PAST ON THE POW/MIA ISSUE WERE CONVENIENT WAYS FOR SOME TO DODGE THE PROBLEM -- WE ACCEPT OUR LEGAL AND MORAL OBLIGATION TO RESOLVE THIS ISSUE AND WILL CONTINUE THE CURRENT STRATEGY WITH THE HIGH PRIORITY NOW IN PLACE.

AS YOU KNOW, PRESIDENT REAGAN IS INTENSELY INTERESTED IN THE ISSUE AND IS UPDATED REGULARLY THROUGH BRIEFINGS AND PAPERS. IN ADDITION, HE SEEKS OUT ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS RAISED IN THE MEDIA OR ELSEWHERE. HE IS INVOLVED AND COMMITTED TO FINDING THE ANSWERS YOU SEEK. HE ASKED THAT I CONVEY HIS PERSONAL REGARDS TO YOU ALONG WITH HIS HEARTFELT THANKS FOR: YOUR CONTINUED CONFIDENCE IN OUR COMMITMENT. HE KNOWS THAT YOU ARE SUBJECT TO PRESSURES FROM THOSE WHO ARE ADVERSARIAL TO THE GOVERNMENT AND HE URGES YOU TO ABANDON ANY STRATEGY FOR NEW PRIVATE APPROACHES. HE ALSO KNOWS YOU HAVE SEEN IT ALL BEFORE AND IN THE END, BECAUSE OF YOUR LONG INVOLVEMENT IN THE ISSUE, HE IS CONFIDENT YOU WILL SEE THE DIFFERENCES NOW.

LET US CONTINUE OUR IMPORTANT WORK TOGETHER, CONSOLING EACH OTHER IN DISAPPOINTMENT, REJOICING TOGETHER IN SUCCESS AND EMPHASIZING TO ALL THE PRESIDENT'S WORDS IN HIS RECENT REPORT TO THE CONGRESS WHERE HE WROTE, "IN THIS EFFORT, THERE CAN BE NO PARTISAN OR PAROCHIAL VIEWS OR ANY SPECIAL INTERESTS, BUT ONLY THE INTEREST OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE TO SEE TO IT THAT ALL OF US DO OUR DUTY TOWARD THOSE WHO SERVED THIS NATION SO WELL IN TIME OF WAR AND THEIR FAMILIES WHO LOOK TO US TO HELP SECURE THE ANSWERS THEY SO RIGHTFULLY SEEK AND DESERVE."

THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU.

*Speeches  
PW/MIA*

It is a pleasure to be here today before the Annual National Convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. The efforts of the VFW's two million members, from your national officers to your posts and individuals, have played a crucial role in the government's strategy to rally public support for the 2,464 American servicemen and civilians who remain unaccounted for in Indochina. Let me assure you, your letters, petitions and community efforts across the nation have not gone unnoticed in Hanoi.

*in support  
of the  
National  
League  
of  
Families  
over the  
years*

If we had received from Hanoi the kind of cooperation that the dictates of humanity and the provisions of the 1973 Paris Agreements gave us a right to expect, this issue would long since have been resolved and the questions of the families of those still missing would have long since been answered. As we are all painfully aware, such has not been the case. We are endeavoring to demonstrate to the Vietnamese that it is in their best interest to accelerate the accounting effort to resolve the issue. There should be no doubt in your minds — the major obstacles are in Hanoi, not Washington.

There is no necessity for me to reemphasize for you today the President's absolute commitment to resolution of the PW/MIA issue. He has made it a matter of highest national priority; he is intensely interested and is updated regularly through briefings and papers. The President has expressed himself on many occasions far more eloquently than I can on his behalf. What I would like to emphasize, however, is that his commitment permeates every level of the Executive Branch, including the Defense Intelligence Agency. We take very seriously the priority the President has placed on resolution of the PW/MIA issue. We have an obligation to do so to the American people, to those who



served this country in Indochina and to those Americans who in the future may be called upon to serve in another foreign war.

After many years and various approaches to this issue by several national leaders, there is finally a unified, cohesive U.S. Government policy and strategy to resolve this issue. I hasten to add that this is not a political issue, rather it is one of conscience which enjoys broad, bipartisan support.

The bureaucracy is sensitized and is working steadfastly to secure the return of any <sup>POWs</sup> ~~POWs~~ who may be held and to achieve the fullest possible accounting of those who died in service to this country. An Interagency Group, which is comprised of representatives from the Department of State and Defense, DIA, Congress, the National Security Council and the National League of Families, <sup>was</sup> ~~has been~~ <sup>and</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>adhering to a strategy that on this point, reasonable</sup> ~~working to ensure that every conceivable~~ avenue is pursued. ~~and there is constant evolution~~

Updating you on the status of government attempts to resolve this difficult issue in which we are all involved requires a brief overview of DIA's findings and current pursuits. To date, we have not yet been able to prove that Americans are still being held captive in that area of the world. Having said that, I must hasten to add that our priorities and efforts continue at the highest level and that our basic motivating factor and operating assumption is that at least some Americans may still be held captive by the Indochinese communists.

DIA actively pursues all intelligence information pertaining to the PW/MIA issue. An integral part of the in-processing procedure of all refugees who request asylum in the U.S. includes questions eliciting PW/MIA-related information. Refugees screened for resettlement in countries other than the U.S. are questioned by personnel from the Joint Voluntary Agencies on any knowledge they might possess relating to the PW/MIA issue. We are confident that the Indochinese who enter the refugee system are aware of the U.S. Government's strong interest in any information relating to the PW/MIA subject. DIA representatives make <sup>regular</sup> annual trips to Southeast Asia where discussions are held with senior American Embassy personnel, Defense Attaches, U.S. refugee officials, United Nations refugee representatives, refugee camp officials and others. These visits sensitized all individuals to DIA's role of providing intelligence support to policymakers and reemphasize our priority collection requirements to obtain PW/MIA information from refugees and other sources. Additionally, they ensure that methods and procedures are in place which will elicit maximum participation on the part of refugees who might possess PW/MIA information.

During the past year, the reporting received on this issue has increased substantially. Based on the number of reports received to date, this year's total will exceed that of the previous high year (1984) by approximately 50%. I must preface that remark, however, with the fact that almost one-half of the total number of reports received this year are those that we categorize as "dog tag" reports. These reports relate to the claimed recovery of dog tag or other identifying information to include alleged remains of Americans obtained from crash or grave sites. Of the total number of nearly 850 dog tag reports

received to date, over 70% relate to Americans who are alive in the U.S. and another 20% report the names of Americans whose remains were recovered from the battlefields of Southeast Asia, identified and subsequently buried in the U.S. Thus over 90% of the reports are patently false and misleading. We believe this is part of a managed misinformation effort intended to influence and inflame the PW/MIA issue. To that extent, this misinformation effort has been successful in diverting DIA assets from the investigation of live sighting reports. We have devoted thousands of man hours to processing and evaluating these "dog tag" reports -- time better spent elsewhere. These reports have also captured the imagination of some in the private sector who tend to recycle the information, often directly to family members, thus adding to the burden on our resources and causing needless anxiety among some next of kin.

In spite of this drain on our analytical resources, we must pursue with greatest vigor our investigation of Americans reported to be alive and in captivity in Southeast Asia.

The major source of our information on the PW/MIA issue continues to be refugee reporting from Southeast Asia. Since the fall of Indochina to the communists in 1975, DIA has received almost 3,850 reports from Indochinese refugees concerning the PW/MIA issue. This includes alleged sightings of Americans, crash locations, grave sites and the handling and disposition of American remains.

The majority of information reported is other than live sighting information. Although given a lower priority than the live sighting reports, all crash and grave site reports are analyzed and recorded for correlation to any subsequent information. Of the total reports received since 1975, 773 or 20 percent are firsthand live sightings. We have resolved 84% of these reports. Four hundred eighty or 62% of these reports have been resolved through a determination that they correlate with individuals since accounted for. An additional 171 reports or 22% are judged to be fabrications. Thus, the remaining 122 or 16% are unresolved and are under continuing investigation.

I would like to digress for a moment on the live sighting issue in order to emphasize something which I think is important. As I've stated, 16% remain unresolved, this equates to 122 unresolved firsthand live sighting reports. However, almost 50 percent of these report sightings of individuals who were not in a classic detention environment, that is, they report individuals not under guard, some with Vietnamese wives and families, or walking freely in Saigon. Most of these reports may not, in fact, be related to former American prisoners of war. They could be Soviet advisors, Western European diplomats or press or other Caucasians. We continue to carry these reports as unresolved live sighting statistics. We are left with 63 reports of Americans in claimed captivity which are still unresolved and upon which we obviously concentrate our greatest efforts.

There is a wide span of time covered by the dates of sighting in the unresolved cases reporting Americans in captivity. Approximately one third of these sightings occurred prior to the fall of South Vietnam in 1975. Only two

firsthand cases reporting sightings of Americans in captivity since 1980 are unresolved--one in 1981 and one in 1984. This is not to imply that our efforts may not obtain more, but is an accurate reading of current statistics.

However, difficult as these cases are to prove, we are attempting to verify the information. I should emphasize that all unresolved cases remain "open" in order to correlate any information we subsequently receive. In assigning investigative priorities we, of course, concentrate our efforts on those reports which are relatively recent in time and reasonably specific as to location. From my position of responsibility for intelligence collection within the Department of Defense, I can assure you that all PW/MIA requirements levied on our collection systems have, and under my direction will continue to receive, our highest consideration and attention. Our working relationship with other U.S. Government agencies and military intelligence organizations has been and continues to be excellent.

One of the avenues pursued to obtain an accounting is to seek the assistance of other friendly governments which have significant relations with Vietnam. We are grateful to a number of countries for their efforts to emphasize to the Vietnamese leadership, the wisdom and humanity of cooperating in the resolution of the <sup>0</sup>PW/MIA issue. ~~For several years~~ The governments of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, have sought to convey to Hanoi the need to be more forthcoming on this question. In recent months, United Nations Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar and Australian Foreign Minister Bill Hayden, when in Hanoi, have both taken this issue up at our request. <sup>One</sup> Another statesman who has <sup>significantly</sup> ~~similarly~~ intervened with the

Vietnamese on this issue is Indonesian Foreign Minister Mochtar. He made a strong presentation on our behalf in Hanoi this past March. Indeed, we should all be grateful to the ASEAN countries for their active support of our efforts.

The attitude of the Vietnamese Government, is of course, the single most important factor in resolving the fate of our missing men. Hanoi has agreed with us that this is a separate humanitarian issue, not linked to other matters which divide our two countries. Hanoi has also agreed to accelerate cooperation in its resolution, however, despite some encouraging signs, progress thus far is still painfully slow. The recent repatriation of the remains of 26 Americans and information on six more is welcome, as is the Vietnamese <sup>commitment</sup> ~~announcement that they plan~~ to resolve the issue within the next two years. We <sup>are</sup> ~~are~~ hopeful that they are serious in their proposal and <sup>are</sup> ~~look~~ <sup>we proceeding in that spirit assume</sup> forward to holding high level talks in the very near future.

Since 1981, in order to get where we are today, it has taken five high level policy meetings in both Hanoi and New York, ten technical meetings in Hanoi, <sup>additional</sup> numerous sessions between the League of Families and the Vietnamese, several trips by congressional delegations, scores of interventions by other countries and the success of the public awareness programs.

Of course, not all of our efforts are directed toward Vietnam. Over 500 Americans are missing in Laos, a country with which we maintain diplomatic relations. After more than a decade of various approaches to the Lao, this past February the United States was permitted to carry out the first

excavation of an aircraft crash site in Indochina since 1973. The Lao Government participated fully in the excavation and the Americans who participated were extremely impressed with the spirit and effectiveness of their cooperation. The Lao officials and work party did all that they could to see to it that the excavation was a success. We are highly gratified by this cooperation and look forward to its continuation. Just last month the Lao Government agreed to schedule a visit to the U.S. Central Identification Laboratory to gain some technical understanding of the processes we employ in identifying remains; and more importantly, they have agreed to ~~X~~ excavation of a second crash site during the coming dry season. We appreciate the cooperation of the Lao Government and this concrete demonstration of their intent to continue it. The process is one of mutual benefit with our emphasis on progress in PW/MIA activities.

*It causes us concern as well as the families of our men still missing.*

The success of our public awareness efforts has been a bit of a mixed blessing. It has generated <sup>recently</sup> a whole host of PW/MIA groups and individuals, many of whom have their own ideas about how to solve this problem. Many appear to subscribe to the RAMBO theory of <sup>POWs</sup> PWs in bamboo cages awaiting rescue -- if only there were someone brave enough to do it, because the government is either not serious or is incapable of taking action. I am here to tell you that if all it took was sweat and dedication and bravery, we could take the full measure of that in this room and have resolved the issue years ago. But, of course, it is not that simple.

Unfortunately, there are also several individuals or groups who are touting the RAMBO theory or otherwise exploiting the issue for political, financial or



ego reasons, or some combination of these reasons. We have all seen proposals for simplistic solutions that make it appear the problem is in Washington, not Hanoi. Proposals for special investigatory commissions fall into this category. Whether generated out of frustration or constituent pressure, the result is the same. Hanoi would read it as a reason to delay responding to government efforts in hope of a better deal. Commissions have a substantive purpose in some issues where strategy and bipartisan support is lacking. But we have such support. This issue is institutionalized and dealt with daily at the highest levels in all relevant departments of our government. We accept our legal and moral obligation to account for our missing and will continue our current strategy with the high priority now in place.

In recent months many of you may have read various press accounts of convicted collaborator Robert Garwood who has come forward claiming he possesses information on American <sup>PW's</sup> still held in Vietnam. My analysts have reviewed the limited PW/MIA material supplied by Robert Garwood. And, I use the word "limited" in its literal sense.

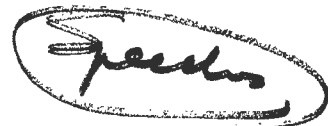
As you may know, Garwood has <sup>thus far</sup> refused to meet with DIA analysts. The information provided by Garwood was determined to consist of vague generalities and consequently was of dubious value. Indeed, credible information already in our possession demonstrates that some of Garwood's live-sighting reports do not bear up under scrutiny.

In light of Garwood's reluctance to provide specific details concerning his other reported sightings, we can make no definitive judgment on their

reliability or credibility. His continued refusal to provide such detail belies his stated objective to return any men who may still be held captive. This continuous public portrayal by Garwood and a small circle of supporters that espouse his statements as proof that Americans are held captive in Vietnam leaves a dangerous misconception in the minds of the general public. It undermines a serious national effort by this government to resolve the issue and portrays to Hanol a seeming divisiveness over objectives in this country. The "proof" being offered consists of a crude sketch of a reported "detention facility" and a list of a dozen first names and a few common last names. It is not proof and cannot be proof, until evaluated through professional interview and analysis and credited as such. Investigation of Garwood's information has unproductively absorbed a great amount of our analytical resources. Despite this, I reemphasize our desire to interview Garwood in a professional setting where we can conclusively determine the value of any information he may possess.

Progress on the PW/MIA issue has been a <sup>difficult to achieve, but</sup> ~~long term effort,~~ and we intend to persevere in doing what must be done. Our greatest hope for success lies in the government to government effort now being pursued under the priority established by our President. This approach, fully supported on a bipartisan basis in the Congress, backed by a united and informed citizenry, is a powerful message to the Indochinese governments and I believe its success is evident in the recent limited progress achieved, but even more so in the promise of what is to come.

It has been my pleasure to speak before the VFW on this critical issue. The Director of DIA has requested that I reemphasize to you DIA's commitment to the <sup>DM</sup> DM/MIA issue. Let me assure you that our determination is unwavering. We will do all that is necessary to obtain as complete an accounting as possible for those individuals who served <sup>our</sup> ~~their~~ country and in the President's words "may still be serving" so valiantly. We are totally dedicated to that commitment.



ADDRESS TO VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA ANNUAL CONVENTION

RICHARD T. CHILDRESS  
DIRECTOR, POLITICAL-MILITARY AFFAIRS  
WHITE HOUSE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL  
NOVEMBER 22, 1985

THE PURPOSE OF MY COMING IS TO ADDRESS THE POW/MIA ISSUE AND I TRULY WELCOME THE OPPORTUNITY. BUT THERE ARE ALSO SOME BROADER QUESTIONS INVOLVED FOR US AS VIETNAM VETERANS. RELATIVELY FEW VIETNAM VETERANS WERE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN THIS ISSUE UNTIL THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION BEGAN PURSUING IT AS A MATTER OF HIGHEST NATIONAL PRIORITY AND ADOPTED A PUBLIC AWARENESS PROGRAM WHICH INCREASED ATTENTION. THE INCREASED INTEREST IS INDEED WELCOME. BUT WE MUST RECOGNIZE THIS ISSUE HAS BECOME A SYMBOL OF SORTS AND APPEARS TO FULFILL SOME BASIC NEED AMONG OUR FELLOW VIETNAM VETERANS. THE VAST MAJORITY RESPONSIBLY LOOK AT THE PROCESS AND ASK THE LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OR CONSULT WITH US ON HOW THEY CAN CONSTRUCTIVELY HELP, BUT SOME DISCHARGE THEIR INTEREST THROUGH HOLLYWOOD FANTASY, SUCH AS RAMBO; OTHERS PUBLICLY ADVOCATE PRIVATE RESCUE OPERATIONS, STILL OTHERS MAKE A CAREER OUT OF SPREADING MISINFORMATION FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS. THEY ARE FEW IN NUMBER, BUT THEY ARE AROUND.

IT IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR VIETNAM VETERANS TO UNDERSTAND WHY THEY ARE NOW AWARE OF THIS ISSUE AND THE COMPLEX NATURE OF GETTING IT RESOLVED. THEN, THERE IS A BLUEPRINT ON HOW TO PROCEED IN THE FUTURE AND HELP US RESOLVE THIS TRAGEDY.

UPON OUR RETURN FROM VIETNAM, WE WERE BRANDED BY SOME PUBLIC MEDIA AS CRAZED KILLERS, DRUG DEPENDENT VEGETABLES OR AS MENTALLY DISTURBED AND SOCIALLY MARGINAL. WE KNEW IT WASN'T TRUE, AND THE AMERICAN PUBLIC HAS BEGUN TO REALIZE IN THE LAST 2-3 YEARS THAT THEY CAN SAFELY WALK THE STREETS WITH US. MUCH OF THIS CHANGE IN ATTITUDE IS DUE TO VETERANS' EFFORTS TO WELCOME THEMSELVES HOME AND, I PERSONALLY BELIEVE, PRESIDENT REAGAN'S PUBLIC RECOGNITION OF US FOR WHAT WE REALLY ARE -- AMERICANS WHO ANSWERED THE CALL TO DUTY IN AN UNPOPULAR WAR. THE MESSAGE IS SOME MAY BLAME THE WAR, BUT DON'T BLAME THE WARRIORS.

BUT WITH THIS SUPPORT ALSO COMES RESPONSIBILITY. THE PRESIDENT'S PRIORITY TO RETURN OUR MISSING MEN TO THIS COUNTRY, ALIVE AND DEAD, IS CONSISTENT WITH HIS SUPPORT FOR VIETNAM VETERANS AT HOME. NOW, MORE THAN EVER, HE NEEDS YOUR HELP AND SUPPORT TO GET THE JOB DONE. THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION'S EFFORTS ARE NOT RHETORIC, BUT SERIOUS ACTION BASED UPON AN INTEGRATED STRATEGY FULLY DEVELOPED IN 1982 AND NOW BEING IMPLEMENTED. IT IS GREATLY DEPENDENT UPON A UNITED AND INFORMED CITIZENRY BACKING THE EFFORT.

AS THIS STRATEGY DEVELOPED, THE ISSUE BECAME MORE VISIBLE AND ALTHOUGH MILLIONS OF AMERICANS ARE NOW IN FULL SUPPORT, THERE IS A VOCAL MINORITY INVOLVED WITH A VARIETY OF MOTIVATIONS UNRELATED TO RETURNING OUR MISSING COMRADES. I HAVE MET AND SPOKEN WITH A FEW POLITICIANS, WHO HAVE NEVER SEEN A SHOT FIRED

IN ANGER, WHO ATTEMPT TO EXPLOIT THIS ISSUE FOR PERSONAL EGO OR POLITICAL GAIN -- IT IS REPREHENSIBLE. I HAVE SEEN VIETNAM VETERANS GIVING US ALL A BAD NAME BY SPREADING MISINFORMATION AT THE EXPENSE OF OUR MISSING COMRADES AND CLAIMING THE BUDDY SYNDROME IS SOMEHOW SUPERIOR EVEN TO FAMILY TIES. THE FAMILIES RIGHTFULLY ASK -- WHERE WERE THESE GUYS BEFORE? HOLLYWOOD HAS MADE MILLIONS FANTASIZING OVER THE ISSUE -- A SIGN OF SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC AWARENESS AS LONG AS YOU, VIETNAM VETERANS, MAKE CLEAR TO OTHERS THAT FANTASY IS NOT REALITY. OTHERS HAVE BEEN CONVINCED TO BELIEVE THERE IS A CONSPIRACY AND COVER-UP. THIS DESPITE ALL OF THE EVIDENCE TO THE CONTRARY, INTERNAL AUDITS, IG INVESTIGATIONS, AND TWO CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATIONS THAT CLEARLY CONCLUDED SUCH CHARGES ARE PATENTLY FALSE. ON ITS FACE, IT IS A RIDICULOUS CHARGE ANYWAY. THE NEXT TIME SOMEONE SAYS THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION IS TRYING TO BURY THE ISSUE, ASK THEM: WHY THEN DID PRESIDENT REAGAN DECLARE IT A MATTER OF HIGHEST PRIORITY? WHY IS THE ADMINISTRATION ASKING FOR PUBLIC AWARENESS? WHY ARE THEY CONDUCTING NEGOTIATIONS? WHY HAVE THEY RAISED INTELLIGENCE PRIORITIES? THE ISSUE WAS BURIED WHEN THE ADMINISTRATION TOOK OVER. WE EXHUMED IT AND IT WILL NOT BE REBURIED BY THIS ADMINISTRATION.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE MAJORITY OF THOSE OF US IN GOVERNMENT NOW GUIDING THE DEVELOPED STRATEGY ARE VIETNAM VETERANS ALSO. ALTHOUGH IT WOULD NEVER HAPPEN UNDER RONALD REAGAN, IF I EVER BELIEVED THERE WAS A CONSPIRACY OR COVER-UP IN PROGRESS, I WOULD LEAVE THE WHITE HOUSE AND ASK YOU TO JOIN ME IN THE STREETS. IN

A SPEECH TO THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES IN 1983, PRESIDENT REAGAN SAID:

"THE GOVERNMENT IS LARGE. IT'S POSSIBLE SOMETIMES YOU'LL HEAR VOICES THAT WILL SOUND CONTRADICTORY OR INSENSITIVE, BUT WE'RE DOING WHAT WE CAN TO ELIMINATE THAT. SO, PLEASE, DON'T LET IT SHAKE OUR LARGER FAITH."

HE WAS REFERRING TO VOICES IN GOVERNMENT. WE ARE HEARING VOICES NOW, BUT MOST ARE COMING FROM A MINORITY IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR -- SO PLEASE DON'T LET THESE VOICES SHAKE OUR LARGER FAITH. BUT THAT MESSAGE IS STRICTLY DOMESTIC AND PERSONAL. NOW I WOULD LIKE TO TURN TO OUR OFFICIAL STRATEGY -- THE SERIOUS SIDE OF THE ISSUE. HOW WE SET OUT TO RESOLVE IT.

WE KNEW FROM THE BEGINNING THAT THE GOVERNMENT ITSELF, THE VIETNAMESE AND LAO GOVERNMENTS AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE GENERALLY HAD LITTLE KNOWLEDGE THAT A PROBLEM STILL EXISTED. IT WAS IMPERATIVE, THEREFORE, TO INCREASE AWARENESS AMONG AMERICANS AND SIGNAL THE VIETNAMESE AND LAO GOVERNMENTS THAT DESPITE PERCEPTIONS THEY MAY HAVE HAD FROM THE PAST, THE ISSUE WAS STILL VERY MUCH ALIVE. THUS, AT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES, WE FORMALLY ENDORSED A NATIONAL PUBLIC AWARENESS PROGRAM, INCREASED OUR MEDIA CONTACTS TO PROVIDE THEM WITH FACTUAL INFORMATION AND BEGAN A SERIES OF HIGH-LEVEL POLICY ADDRESSES. THE PRESIDENT HAS MADE THREE MAJOR SPEECHES, ALONG WITH SPEECHES OR STATEMENTS BY THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, THE



SECRETARY OF STATE, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, THE VA ADMINISTRATOR AND COUNTLESS OTHER GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. THIS EFFORT HAS HAD A MAJOR IMPACT ON THE PERCEPTIONS IN VIETNAM AND LAOS AND UNITED STATES PUBLIC OPINION.

WE ALSO REALIZED THAT OUR OBLIGATION IN THIS ENTIRE EFFORT WAS TO THE MEN STILL MISSING AS REPRESENTED AT HOME BY THEIR FAMILIES. WE NATURALLY TURNED TO THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES, THE ONLY ORGANIZATION COMPRISED SOLELY OF FAMILY MEMBERS. THE LEAGUE TOLD US STRAIGHT. THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT'S PAST RECORD ON THE ISSUE IS ABYSMAL, AND IF THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION WANTS TO RESTORE OUR FAITH IN THE GOVERNMENT, YOU NEED TO DO A LOT OF WORK. WE TOOK UP THE CHALLENGE. IN ADDITION TO ADOPTING A STRATEGY TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE, WE MADE ANN MILLS GRIFFITHS A FULLY FUNCTIONING MEMBER OF THE POW/MIA INTERAGENCY GROUP, OPENED THE INDIVIDUAL CASE FILES TO THE FAMILIES, BEGAN PUBLISHING A NEXT OF KIN NEWSLETTER AND PROVIDED SENSITIVE BRIEFINGS TO THE LEAGUE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

THE FAMILIES CLEARLY HAVE THE MOST TO GAIN OR LOSE BY OUR EFFORTS, SO THEIR COLLECTIVE OPINION IS A LITMUS TEST OF SORTS ABOUT HOW WE ARE DOING.

NEGOTIATIONS ON THIS ISSUE WERE ALSO NONEXISTENT WHEN WE BEGAN, SO, THROUGH ANN GRIFFITHS, WE BEGAN SOUNDINGS FOR SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE VIETNAMESE AND LAO. THE FIRST HIGH-LEVEL TRIP TO HANOI WAS IN 1982. THIS HAS BEEN FOLLOWED BY SUSTAINED

POLICY-LEVEL CONTACT SINCE THAT TIME WITH BOTH GOVERNMENTS. THROUGH THESE NEGOTIATIONS, WE WERE ABLE TO REACH AGREEMENT THAT THIS ISSUE WAS HUMANITARIAN AND SEPARATE FROM OTHER POLITICAL ISSUES THAT DIVIDE US. FROM THE BEGINNING, THEY HAVE NEVER RAISED WAR REPARATIONS WITH THIS ADMINISTRATION AND WHEN I WAS IN HANOI IN AUGUST, NOT ONE WORD WAS MENTIONED ABOUT AID, TRADE OR DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION. SUCH TALK<sup>by Americans</sup> IN THE CURRENT ENVIRONMENT SIMPLY MISLEADS HANOI THAT DELAY WOULD BE TO THEIR ADVANTAGE AND ERODES FOUR YEARS OF HARD, HARD WORK.

IN ORDER TO HELP CREATE THE CONDITIONS FOR SIGNIFICANT MOVEMENT, WE ALSO CONTACTED OTHER GOVERNMENTS TO REQUEST THEY INFORM THE VIETNAMESE OF OUR SERIOUS INTENTION TO RESOLVE THIS ISSUE AND URGE THEIR COOPERATION.

ON THE DOMESTIC FRONT, WE HAVE WORKED HARD TO FORGE A BIPARTISAN AND UNITED APPROACH TO THE ISSUE, FOR IT IS NOT A REPUBLICAN ISSUE, A DEMOCRATIC ISSUE, BUT AN AMERICAN ISSUE. WE ALSO CONTACTED VETERANS GROUPS AND OTHER PRIVATE POW/MIA GROUPS TO SOLICIT SUPPORT FOR OUR STRATEGY. SOME PRIVATE GROUPS, BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF VISIBLE GOVERNMENT PRIORITY IN PAST YEARS, WERE ENGAGED IN PRIVATE RESCUE PROPOSALS AND OTHER IRRESPONSIBLE ACTIVITIES. WE TRIED TO CONVINCE THEM OF THE FUTILITY OF SUCH ACTIVITIES. WITH SOME WE HAD SUCCESS, AND THEY CAME TO BACK OUR NATIONAL EFFORT. YET OTHERS HAVE EMERGED DUE TO THE VISIBILITY OF THE ISSUE WHO TRASH CRASH SITES WHICH HAMPERS IDENTIFICATION AND DESTROYS VALUABLE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION. PRIVATE

RESCUERS CONTACT US AND ASK FOR A TARGET AND MONEY AND THEY WILL THEN DO THE JOB. WE HAVE ASSURED THEM THAT WE HAVE NO SHORTAGE OF DIPLOMATS, INTELLIGENCE AGENTS OR SOLDIERS.

CONCURRENT WITH OUR DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS, WE HAVE RAISED OUR INTELLIGENCE PRIORITIES ACROSS THE BOARD IN AN EFFORT TO CONFIRM WHETHER PRISONERS ARE STILL BEING HELD CAPTIVE IN INDOCHINA. THE RESULT HAS BEEN BETTER INFORMATION AND MORE INFORMATION AND ALTHOUGH WE HAVE YET BEEN UNABLE TO PROVE PRISONERS ARE BEING HELD, WE OPERATE UNDER THAT ASSUMPTION, THAT IS OUR MINDSET AND WE WILL HOLD THIS POSITION UNTIL THE QUESTION CAN BE ANSWERED.

GIVEN THIS INTERLOCKING STRATEGY AND THE DIFFICULTY OF THE PROBLEM, I HOPE YOU CAN NOW SEE HOW SIMPLISTIC SOLUTIONS WILL NOT WORK. CALLS FOR PREMATURE DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION, AID OR TRADE ARE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE AND PLAY INTO THE HANDS OF THOSE IN VIETNAM WHO MIGHT WISH TO EXPLOIT THIS ISSUE. THESE THINGS MAY COME IN DUE TIME, BUT RESOLUTION OF THIS ISSUE, AS THE LAST VESTIGE OF THE WAR BETWEEN OUR PEOPLES, WILL ENSURE THAT SUCH DEVELOPMENTS WILL NOT BE TEMPORARY OR HOLLOW.

SIMILARLY, SIMPLISTIC CALLS FOR SPECIAL COMMISSIONS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE COULD PROVIDE THE VIETNAMESE WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT ONCE AGAIN THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE TOO IMPATIENT TO STICK WITH IT -- SUCH A DEVELOPMENT NOW WOULD BE PARTICULARLY COUNTERPRODUCTIVE. IT WOULD RIGHTFULLY GIVE VIETNAM THE MOTIVATION TO PAUSE AND WAIT TO SEE IF CONCESSIONS ARE COMING WITHOUT THE FULLEST

POSSIBLE ACCOUNTING. WE HAVE LOOKED AT THE CONCEPT OF A COMMISSION ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS -- EACH TIME IT WAS REJECTED, WE DON'T RULE IT OUT FOR THE FUTURE, BUT OUR GUIDING CRITERIA WILL BE IN TERMS OF WHETHER IT WILL REALLY HELP GET THE JOB DONE.

WE BEGAN IN 1981. FOR OVER TWO YEARS PRIOR TO THAT, NONE OF OUR MISSING MEN HAD BEEN RETURNED. TODAY, WE HAVE JOINT CRASH SITE EXCAVATIONS IN LAOS AND VIETNAM. THE VIETNAMESE ARE RECOVERING AND RETURNING MEN IN ALL CATEGORIES; POW DISCREPANCY CASES; DIED-IN-CAPTIVITY CASES; AND THOSE LISTED AS KILLED IN ACTION, BODY NOT RECOVERED. WE HAVE, FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE END OF THE WAR, BEEN PROVIDED A WRITTEN PLAN BY THE VIETNAMESE TO RESOLVE THIS ISSUE AND THEY SOLICITED OUR COMMENTS. DIALOGUE ON LIVE-SIGHTING REPORTS IS NOW TWO-WAY. WE BELIEVE THEY HAVE MADE A HIGH-LEVEL DECISION TO COOPERATE WITH US AND WE WELCOME IT. WE WILL NOT FALTER IN OUR PRIORITY. THE STRATEGY I DESCRIBED IS NOW PAYING OFF WITH THE HELP OF THE LEAGUE, VETERANS AND AN ARMY OF CONCERNED CITIZENS.

THERE IS A LOT MORE WORK TO DO. I GENUINELY HOPE THAT WHAT I HAVE TOLD YOU TODAY WILL HELP YOU APPRECIATE OUR SERIOUSNESS AND OUR NEED FOR YOUR SUPPORT. AS YOU, I AM A VIETNAM VETERAN. THE WAR MEANT DIFFERENT THINGS FOR EACH OF US, BUT WE SHARE A UNIQUENESS THAT IS SOMETIMES UNSPOKEN. TOGETHER, IN SUPPORT OF THE CURRENT STRATEGY, WE CAN MAKE A HISTORIC CONTRIBUTION THAT FUTURE GENERATIONS AT PEACE OR WAR WILL REMEMBER WITH WONDERMENT AND GRATITUDE.

THANK YOU.

Sub

I NOTICED THE DRAFT PROGRAM I RECEIVED FROM MIKE IN THE MAIL LISTED ME AS HONORABLE RICHARD CHILDRESS AND AS I WROTE TO HIM I CONSIDER MYSELF HONORABLE, BUT NOT AN HONORABLE. WITH SUCH AN INTRODUCTION, PERHAPS WE SHOULD CHANGE THE PROGRAM BACK TO THE ORIGINAL.

IN REALITY, I'M AN NSC STAFFER CHARGED WITH SOUTHEAST ASIAN AND AUSTRALIAN/NZ AFFAIRS--THE POW/MIA ISSUE FALLS UNDER THE FORMER. IT IS THIS ELEMENT OF MY JOB THAT SIMULTANEOUSLY PROVES TO BE THE MOST INTERESTING AND THE MOST FRUSTRATING. BECAUSE IT IS OF GREAT PERSONAL INTEREST TO THE PRESIDENT, I CAN GIVE IT THE PRIORITY IT DESERVES WITH THE FULL KNOWLEDGE AND COMFORT OF BEING BACKED AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL--A CHARTER UNUSUAL FOR THE WASHINGTON ENVIRONMENT AND ONE THAT I DISCHARGE WITH GREAT PERSONAL INTEREST.

SEVERAL CRITICAL TASKS FACED THIS ADMINISTRATION ON POW/MIA AFFAIRS ON A NUMBER OF FRONTS. THE FIRST AND FOREMOST WAS TO TRANSLATE THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITMENT THROUGHOUT THE BUREAUCRACY TO ENSURE THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S DIVERSE ASSETS WERE FOCUSED AND COORDINATED TOWARDS RESOLUTION. THIS TASK INVOLVED THE MAJOR DEPARTMENTS OF GOVERNMENT AND CUT ACROSS THE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT, THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS AND OUR INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES. I CAN HAPPILY SAY THAT INSTITUTIONALLY THE GOVERNMENT HAS RELIGION. POW/MIA AFFAIRS FIGURE PROMINENTLY AND RECEIVE PRIORITY EFFORTS IN THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY AS WELL AS THE DEPARTMENTS OF STATE AND

DEFENSE. ARE WE PERFECT? FAR FROM IT, BUT THE MOMENTUM IS PRESENT AND GROWING. WE DON'T HAVE MEETINGS TO DECIDE THAT SINGLY WE CAN DO NOTHING AND COLLECTIVELY DECIDE THAT NOTHING CAN BE DONE.

A SECOND MAJOR TASK WAS TO AID GROUPS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO GENERATE PUBLIC AWARENESS. THUS FOR THE SECOND TIME IN HISTORY, A FLAG OTHER THAN THE AMERICAN FLAG FLEW OVER THE WHITE HOUSE. PRESIDENT REAGAN SIGNED A PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION TO THIS EFFECT FOR POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY, JULY 9, 1982. IN ADDITION, PUBLIC STATEMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT, VICE PRESIDENT, THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AND WILLIAM CLARK, THE PRESIDENT'S NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR, HAVE BEEN MADE EMPHASIZING THE ADMINISTRATION'S SINCERE COMMITMENT TO RESOLUTION. WITHOUT SIMULTANEOUS CONCRETE ACTION, SUCH SYMBOLISM COULD BE RIGHTFULLY DISMISSED AS EMPTY. IT IS NOT, HOWEVER, EMPTY SYMBOLISM, BUT SYMBOLIC REFERENCE TO AN INSTITUTIONAL IMPERATIVE THAT EXTENDS FROM THE OVAL OFFICE TO INTERVIEWS IN REFUGEE CAMPS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.

THE ADMINISTRATION RECOGNIZED FROM THE OUTSET THAT MANY PRIVATE EFFORTS WERE SPAWNED OUT OF A CONTINUING SENSE OF FRUSTRATION AT PERCEIVED GOVERNMENT INACTION. OPERATING OUT OF A GENUINE PATRIOTIC DESIRE TO FULFILL A MANDATE LONG OVERDUE, SOME OPERATED ON A SHOESTRING, OTHERS WERE WELL FUNDED. ALL OPERATED UNDER TWO MAJOR DISADVANTAGES--A LACK OF ACCESS TO THE FULL INTELLIGENCE APPARATUS OF THE USG AND A PERCEPTION THAT THE CONDITIONS THEY LEFT BEHIND IN INDOCHINA WERE STILL OPERATIVE. IN AN ATTEMPT TO BRING ORDER

TO A CHAOTIC SCENE, WE CONDEMNED FORTHRIGHTLY ALL ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY HOLDING OUT OUR WILLINGNESS TO RECEIVE INFORMATION ON OUR MISSING MEN FROM ANY SOURCE. WE ARE NOW AT THE CRUX OF MY TALK TONIGHT.

THE RESULTS HAVE BEEN DISAPPOINTING. MANY THAT MISTRUSTED THE GOVERNMENT IN THE PAST CONTINUE TO DO SO, YET USE OUR STATEMENTS OF BEING WILLING TO RECEIVE INFORMATION FROM ANY SOURCE AS AN OFFICIAL ENDORSEMENT OF THEIR ACTIVITIES. THEY USE THIS DISTORTION TO ACT ON SPURIOUS INTELLIGENCE AND EVEN LESS CREDIBLE OPERATIONAL CAPABILITIES. THEY USE THIS DISTORTION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS TO GAIN COOPERATION FROM FRIENDS OF THE "GOOD OLD DAYS" IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. THEY USE THIS DISTORTION TO GENERATE AND REGENERATE OLD INFORMATION THAT TIES UP INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS FOR DAYS AT A TIME. FINALLY, AND MOST TRAGICALLY, THEY USE THIS DISTORTION TO EXTRACT DONATIONS/CONTRIBUTIONS FROM INDIVIDUAL PATRIOTIC AMERICANS WHO ARE TOLD THEIR ELECTED GOVERNMENT DOES NOT CARE ABOUT ITS MISSING MEN.

THE VULNERABILITY OF THOSE CLOSEST TO THIS ISSUE, THE FAMILIES OF MISSING, ARE EXPLOITED BY THESE SAME DISTORTIONS.

WE HAVE SAID REPEATEDLY THAT SHOULD WE GAIN INFORMATION THAT WE CAN ACT UPON, WE WILL. IN ADDITION, WE ARE ACTIVELY SEEKING SUCH INFORMATION, OPERATING UNDER THE PRESUMPTION THAT LIVE AMERICANS ARE CURRENTLY BEING HELD. THIS IS REFLECTIVE OF THE PRESIDENT'S TELEGRAM TO YOU TONIGHT THAT RESOLUTION OF THIS ISSUE IS ONE OF HIGHEST NATIONAL PRIORITY.

THE ISSUE IS SO FRAUGHT WITH EMOTION, SO COMPLICATED BY OTHER AGENDAS, SO DISTORTED BY HISTORY THAT MANY BELIEVE THEY ARE THE CLOSEST TO GOD--THIS REMINDS ME OF A STORY.

MENACHIM BEGIN VISITED AL HAIG AND NOTICED THREE PHONES ON HIS DESK--ONE BLUE, ONE RED AND ONE WHITE. HE ASKED WHAT THEY WERE FOR. AL SAID THE WHITE ONE WENT TO THE PRESIDENT, THE RED ONE TO THE PENTAGON AND THE BLUE ONE TO GOD. MR. BEGIN ASKED AND RECEIVED PERMISSION TO USE THE BLUE PHONE. AT THE CONCLUSION OF HIS CONVERSATION, AL SAID "THAT WILL BE \$25.00" WHICH BEGIN PROMPTLY PAID. DURING A VISIT TO TEL AVIV BY AL HAIG, HE NOTICED A BLUE PHONE ON PRIME MINISTER BEGIN'S DESK AND ASKED "IF THAT GOES TO GOD, MAY I USE IT." BEGIN GAVE HIS PERMISSION AND AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE CALL, BEGIN SAID "THAT WILL BE \$1.00." HAIG TURNED TO BEGIN AND SAID, BUT IT IS A \$25.00 CHARGE IN WASHINGTON. BEGIN REPLIED, "I KNOW, BUT HERE IT IS A LOCAL CALL."

I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT WASHINGTON IS ALSO TRYING TO PLACE LOCAL CALLS ON THIS ISSUE. NONE OF US HAS A MONOPOLY ON RIGHTEOUSNESS, BUT IF WE CAN RID OURSELVES OF THOSE WHO DON'T HAVE ANY, WE ARE ALL BETTER OFF. ONLY WHEN WE HAVE SOLVED THIS PROBLEM WILL THE INDOCHINESE GOVERNMENTS PERCEIVE THAT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE OF ONE MIND. GIVE US AN ACCOUNTING NOW.

WE ARE CONVINCED THAT IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, WE WILL ONLY HAVE A COMPLETE AND FULL ACCOUNTING IF IT IS GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT. THAT IS WHY IT IS CRITICAL THAT INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP PRIVATE EFFORTS BASED UPON NOBLE OR OTHER MOTIVES DO NOT ERODE OR UNDERMINE CURRENT



GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES JUST AS THEY HAVE THE HOPE OF BEARING THE FRUIT WE AWAITED FOR SO LONG. WE ARE NOT MYOPIC HOWEVER. WE FULLY RECOGNIZE THE YEARS OF INTRANSIGENCE ON THE OTHER SIDE THAT HAS FRUSTRATED SO MANY EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE OUR COMMON GOAL.

WE DO HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THERE IS SOME MOVEMENT. THE LAO GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES AND THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD OUR EMBASSY PERSONNEL HAS PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY TO PURSUE. SHOULD A PRIVATE EFFORT, BORN IN FRUSTRATION, DESTROY THIS OPPORTUNITY WE MUST COLLECTIVELY AS AMERICANS MOURN AGAIN. LET US WORK TOGETHER TO PREVENT SUCH A REPETITION. HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF AS WELL AS HISTORIANS. REMEMBER THAT GOOD STRATEGY CANNOT FLOW FROM BAD POLICY--OUR POLICY IS SOUND, BUT THE PRIVATE SECTOR MUST AID US IN OUR STRATEGY.

THE GREATEST QUESTION MARK WE ALL FACE IS--ARE THERE AMERICANS STILL BEING HELD AGAINST THEIR WILL? CAN WE BELIEVE THIS TO BE POSSIBLE? THE INDOCHINESE GOVERNMENTS DENY IT, YET THEIR HISTORICAL BEHAVIOR PROVES IT POSSIBLE. DO WE HAVE EVIDENCE? THE EVIDENCE WE HAVE PRECLUDES RULING OUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT PRISONERS ARE CURRENTLY BEING HELD, YET WE STILL CANNOT PROVE IT--AND CONTRARY TO OPINION IN SOME QUARTERS, WE ARE TRYING.

OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT POSITIONS, CONSTRUCTED UNDER A VARIETY OF PRESSURES, ATTEMPT TO SATISFY ALL, YET SATISFY NONE, NOT EVEN THE AUTHORS. YET, WHEN READ THOUGHTFULLY, THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT POSITION TRANSMITS HOPE. NOT THE H. L. MENCHENS VARIETY THAT "HOPE IS A PATHOLOGICAL BELIEF IN THE IMPOSSIBLE," BUT THAT OF PROVERBS, "HOPE DEFERRED MAKETH THE HEART SICK."

YOUR HEARTS ARE SICK, YOUR GOVERNMENT'S HEART IS SICK BECAUSE  
OF HOPE THAT IS ALWAYS DEFERRED. PERHAPS RECOGNIZING THIS BASIC  
COMMONALITY THAT WE SHARE, TONIGHT WE CAN PLEDGE TO RE<sup>new</sup>~~VIEW~~ THE  
FAITH NEEDED TO WORK TOGETHER, PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING THOSE  
THAT DESERVE IT, RECOGNIZING AND DISCREDITING THOSE WHO DON'T--IN  
TANDEM TOWARDS A COMMON AGENDA TO BRING OUR SONS HOME TO AMERICA.  
THANK YOU.