

The original documents are located in Box 21, folder “MIA/POW - National League of Families Convention (2)” of the John Marsh Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 19, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR:

JACK MARSH
DICK CHENEY

FROM:

PHIL BUCHEN *P*
BOBBIE GREENE KILBERG *Bobbie*

Bobbie spoke with Dick Wiley, General Counsel of DOD, this afternoon and it is Wiley's legal opinion that, if the conditions set forth below are met, DOD can legally provide transportation for MIA families to and from Washington, D. C. for meetings on July 22 through July 25, which include the 7th Annual Meeting of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing In Southeast Asia, without violating the provisions of 31 U.S.C. § 551. The conditions are as follows:

- (1) DOD must present its own program on those dates which addresses DOD issues and operations.
- (2) Invitations to participate in this DOD program must be sent to all MIA families, including those families who are not members of the National League or who are not planning to attend the League meeting in D. C.
- (3) The DOD program must consist of at least two separate time block sections of at least two hours each and one of these sessions must be either on DOD premises or in a meeting room which DOD has specifically arranged to use for that purpose.
- (4) Substantive issues must be discussed at these sessions and must involve policy matters that DOD has full or partial policy responsibility for or a substantial interest in. At least half of these topics must not already be on the League program.

(5) DOD must make arrangements for any MIA family who so desires to read and discuss the full military file of the MIA with a qualified military caseworker from the appropriate service branch. The DOD invitation to all MIA families must state that the files are available and that these arrangements can be made.

The Counsel's Office agrees with the opinion of the General Counsel of DOD that the above conditions must be met in order to provide a proper legal basis for DOD to provide transportation to and from Washington, D. C. for MIA families on July 22-25. Responsibility for meeting these conditions must rest with the senior officials at DOD, and it is our recommendation that they be urged to give it their highest priority and personal attention.



OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

19 JUL 1976

In reply refer to:
I-7606/76

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

Mr. Earl P. Hopper, Sr.
Executive Director
National League of Families
1608 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006

Dear Earl:

This letter is to further elaborate on Dr. Shields' March 26, 1976 letter which responded to your request for COIN ASSIST travel.

As Dr. Shields indicated to you in the earlier letter, DoD will provide whatever support we can. Unfortunately, the support this year will be drastically reduced compared to previous years due to a number of reasons which I will detail for you. As was indicated to the League last year, the aircraft inventory was being severely reduced because of budgetary and operational requirements. This reduction was implemented in the past nine months primarily through the elimination of courier routes, the consolidation of airlift assets and the scheduling of aircraft only when a firm requirement exists.

In the past, support to the League was provided through existing capability but space available travel was virtually assured through the scheduling of courier aircrafts to centralized points. The capability to support the League in the same manner no longer exists.

Despite these constraints and in an effort to insure that the League would continue to receive support this year, my staff explored the possibility of getting special authorization for space required travel on a one time exception basis, but find that there are statutory provisions in 31 U.S.C. 551 which specifically address the issue of funds for transportation to conventions. To do so would violate the statute which is set forth below:

"Unless specifically provided by law, no moneys from funds appropriated for any purpose shall be used for the purpose of lodging, feeding, conveying, or furnishing transportation to, any conventions or other form of assemblage or gathering to be held in the District of Columbia or elsewhere...."

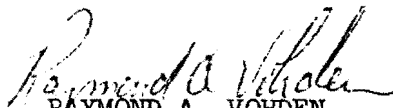


Only recently the meaning of this provision was clarified in Comptroller General decision B-166506, dated February 12, 1976, dealing with the funding of conferences by the Environmental Protection Agency. The reasoning which applied to the decision applies equally to DoD providing transportation to the League. It was through the attempts to obtain space required travel for the League that DoD became aware of this ruling which directly impacts on your request.

For these reasons DoD support must thus be limited to permitting eligible persons to use space available which is surplus after all required travel has been accommodated. This effectively means persons authorized travel as defined in DoD 4515.13-R, paragraph 4-6(b)(2) may register at base operations and apply for travel space but there will be neither scheduled couriers nor assured space. Further, ground transportation in the Washington area will be an expenditure to the individual as other convention expenses.

I regret that these changes must occur, but to support the League convention in the manner as done in the past would contravene the law-- something which we both recognize cannot be done.

Sincerely,



RAYMOND A. VOHDEN
CAPTAIN USN
Principal Advisor,
Office of PW/MIA Affairs

II just opened

files to MIA
families in

May

Working out


THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 19, 1976 (8:00 a.m.)

Jack:

DOD has backed off again. Despite Robin West's unquestioned green light on MIA flights last week (we were even working with Air Force types to set schedules), DOD Legal Counsel rejected entire plan. I am working with Hooper, Mitler, West and Woods in effort to achieve last minute compromise solution. (Ross Perot, possible Pentagon briefing for all MIA families, etc.) You might mention situation to Jim Connor.

Russ



July 19

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Jack:

This is what we have drafted.

Milt

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To concur in the Department of Defense ^{Payment} ~~provision~~ of transportation for the 1976 National League of Families of American Persons Missing in Southeast Asia Annual Meeting.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled.

That The Congress concurs in the Department of Defense interpretation that provisions of 31 USC 551 do not preclude the Department from paying through the use of appropriated funds the transportation to and from the 1976 National League of Families of American Persons Missing in Southeast Asia Annual Meeting of persons authorized at the discretion of the Secretary of Defense or his designee.





OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

19 JUL 1977

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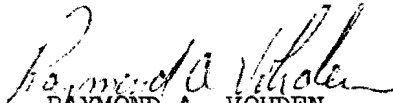


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Sincerely,



RAYMOND A. VOHDEN
CAPTAIN USN
Principal Advisor,
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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 19, 1976

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JACK MARSH
DICK CHENEY

FROM:

PHIL BUCHEN *P*
BOBBIE GREENE KILBERG *Bobbie*

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r w bylryzvt

AM-Ford-MIA 400

By MARGARET SCHERF

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON AP - Unless the issue of Americans still listed as missing in Southeast Asia is resolved, no further progress in establishing relations between the United States and Vietnam is possible, President Ford said Saturday night.

Ford told the National League of Families of Prisoners and Missing Americans in Southeast Asia that his administration is "employing every effective means to account for your loved ones."

He promised that those efforts will continue, but cautioned that "information for every missing man may never be available."

"We are dealing with a government that has shown very little concern for your feelings," the President said.

He said the United States has exchanged messages with the Vietnamese "indicating our willingness to discuss differences."

But, he added, "without a satisfactory solution of the MIA issue, no further progress in our relations is possible."

More than 900 Americans still are listed as prisoners or missing in action in Southeast Asia.

"You and your loved ones must be assured of a continuing commitment from your country to obtain a full accounting of the fate of those still listed as missing in action or prisoners of war," Ford said.

"Let me emphasize . . . this is a firm, unequivocal commitment," he added. "It's still a very active commitment . . . It's a personal commitment."

One woman ran to the door behind the President as he was leaving and said in a loud voice, "Mr. President, I think you can do more. I really do." Another woman tried to approach Ford, but was stopped by Secret Service agents.

But Ford received sustained applause at several points in his speech.

He said that several months ago he discussed with his staff the problem of declassification of information related to MIAs. "I directed that progress be made in that regard," he added. "I'm informed that progress has been made."

Ford did not elaborate on that point.

Rep. G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery, D-Miss., told the convention Friday that a House investigation has produced no confirmable evidence that any missing U.S. servicemen are still alive in Southeast Asia.

Montgomery, chairman of the House Select Committee on Missing Persons in Southeast Asia, said it serves no useful purpose to continue to hold out false hopes that a large number of the missing are still alive.



R W

AM-MIA 7-25

BY RICHARD E. LERNER

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- PRESIDENT FORD HAS PLEDGED AN ALL-OUT EFFORT TO LEARN THE FATE OF SOME 800 U.S. SERVICEMEN STILL OFFICIALLY MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, BUT HE ALSO HAS WARNED RELATIVES OF THE MIAS THAT SOME OF THEIR LOVED ONES MAY NEVER BE ACCOUNTED FOR.

FORD'S MESSAGE, TEMPERING HOPE WITH REALITY, COMES AT A TIME WHEN MANY MIA WIVES ARE FIGHTING TO KEEP THEIR HUSBANDS FROM BEING DECLARED LEGALLY DEAD AND WHEN OTHERS IN THE MIA CAUSE ARE URGING U.S. CONCESSIONS TO HANOI IN HOPES OF GETTING NEW INFORMATION.

THE PRESIDENT DELIVERED HIS PROMISE OF CONTINUED EFFORTS IN AN EMOTIONAL SPEECH SATURDAY NIGHT TO THE 7TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF MIAS, WHICH SAYS DECLARING MIAS DEAD WOULD COST THEIR FAMILIES CONSIDERABLE FINANCIAL BENEFITS.

"LET ME ASSURE YOU -- WE ARE EMPLOYING EVERY EFFECTIVE MEANS TO ACCOUNT FOR YOUR LOVED ONES ... AND I WILL CONTINUE THAT EFFORT," FORD SAID.

BUT HE ADDED: "WE MUST BE HONEST WITH OURSELVES. THIS IS A FRUSTRATING, PAINSTAKING, DIFFICULT PROCESS. IT'S A TRAGIC FACT -- THAT MAKES ME AND ALL AMERICANS VERY, VERY SAD -- THAT EVERY MISSING MAN OR INFORMATION REGARDING THAT INDIVIDUAL MAY NEVER BE AVAILABLE, REGARDLESS OF ANY SUPER-HUMAN EFFORT BY THE BEST IN OUR GOVERNMENT."

AFTER HIS BRIEF SPEECH, AS THE PRESIDENT STOPPED TO HOLD TWO YOUNG GIRLS IN HIS ARMS, A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN WITH TEARS IN HER EYES STEPPED FORWARD AND SAID: "MR. PRESIDENT, I THINK YOU CAN DO MORE, I REALLY DO."

ONE STEP ADVOCATED AT THE MIA MEETING -- A STEP WHICH IT APPEARED UNLIKELY THE FORD ADMINISTRATION WOULD TAKE -- WAS ENDING THE U.S. EMBARGO ON TRADE WITH NORTH VIETNAM.

NELSON AMSDILL OF THE FRAZER, MICH., VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS, AND LAWRENCE ZATKOFF OF ROSEVILLE, MICH., PROPOSED A SIX-MONTH TRIAL LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO. ZATKOFF SAID: "IN THAT PERIOD WE EXPECT IMMEDIATE, POSITIVE ACTION FROM HANOI TO GIVE US A FULL ACCOUNTING ON ALL MIAS AND POWS."

THEY SAID THE GESTURE WAS ONE OF THREE POINTS RAISED BY A HANOI DIPLOMAT, FIRST SECRETARY DO THAN, DURING A JUNE 4 MEETING IN PARIS IN WHICH DO PROMISED A FULL REPORT ON MIAS AND PRISONERS OF WAR "WHEN YOUR COUNTRY DOES SOMETHING FOR US."

BUT FORD SAID COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS IN NORTH AND SOUTH VIETNAM, CAMBODIA AND LAOS ARE WITHHOLDING INFORMATION ABOUT AMERICAN MIAS "TOTALLY WITHOUT JUSTIFICATION."

"WITHOUT A SATISFACTORY SOLUTION OF THE MIA ISSUE, NO FURTHER PROGRESS IN OUR RELATIONS IS POSSIBLE," FORD SAID. "YOUR LOVED ONES HAVE NOT BEEN FORGOTTEN. YOU HAVE NOT BEEN ABANDONED. I PROMISE YOU I WILL NOT REST UNTIL THE FULLEST POSSIBLE ACCOUNTING OF YOUR LOVED ONES HAS BEEN MADE."

DUPLICATES B-WIRE POINTS

UPI 07-25 06:00 PED



Monday, July 26

UP-024

(VIET MISSING)

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- RELATIVES OF SOME 800 U.S. SERVICEMEN STILL OFFICIALLY MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA SAID SUNDAY PRESIDENT FORD WOULD HAVE TO GET RID OF HENRY KISSINGER BEFORE HE COULD CARRY OUT HIS PLEDGE OF AN ALL-OUT EFFORT TO LEARN THE FATE OF THE MIAS.

THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF MIAS ENDED ITS 7TH ANNUAL MEETING BY VOTING OVERWHELMINGLY TO ASK FORD TO FIRE KISSINGER IMMEDIATELY AND REPLACE HIM WITH SOMEONE "WHO WILL ACTIVELY PURSUE AN ACCOUNTING FOR THE MISSING."

IN A BRIEF SPEECH TO THE RELATIVES OF THE MIAS SATURDAY NIGHT, FORD PLEDGED HE WOULD CONTINUE TO USE "EVERY EFFECTIVE MEANS" TO ACCOUNT FOR THE MISSING BUT HE ALSO WARNED THAT SOME OF THEM MAY NEVER BE ACCOUNTED FOR.

ON SUNDAY, THE 600 RELATIVES AT THE LEAGUE SESSION WELCOMED FORD'S PROMISE BUT SAID IN A STATEMENT "BECAUSE KISSINGER'S PAST PERFORMANCE IS INCONSISTENT WITH THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENTS, THE FAMILIES STILL FEEL THE SECRETARY OF STATE MUST BE REPLACED BEFORE REAL PROGRESS CAN BE MADE TOWARDS RESOLVING THE POW-MIA PROBLEM."

UPI 07-26 09:39 AED



27>

R W

AM-MIA ISILD-PICKUP>IMGRAF A2>> 7-2>

BY RICHARD E LERNER

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- RELATIVES OF SOME 800 U.S. SERVICEMEN STILL OFFICIALLY MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA SAID SUNDAY PRESIDENT FORD WOULD HAVE TO GET RID OF SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY A. KISSINGER BEFORE HE COULD CARRY OUT HIS PLEDGE OF AN ALL-OUT EFFORT TO LEARN THE FATE OF THE MIAS.

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THE LEAGUE SAID IT HAD RECEIVED TELEGRAMS FROM BOTH RONALD REAGAN AND JIMMY CARTER PROMISING THEY WOULD TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION IF THEY WON THE PRESIDENCY TO APPOINT A SECRETARY OF STATE WHO WOULD ACTIVELY PURSUE AN ACCOUNTING OF THE FATE OF THE MISSING AND THE RETURN OF THEIR REMAINS.

THE LEAGUE ALSO VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO SEEK A PRESIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE ORDER TO BLOCK THE MILITARY SERVICES FROM DECLARING THE MIAS LEGALLY DEAD SINCE THIS WOULD COST THEIR FAMILIES CONSIDERABLE FINANCIAL BENEFITS.

THE PRESIDENT, IN AN EMOTIONAL SPEECH SATURDAY, HAD SAID "LET ME ASSURE YOU -- WE ARE EMPLOYING EVERY EFFECTIVE MEANS TO ACCOUNT FOR YOUR LOVED ONES ... AND I WILL CONTINUE THAT EFFORT."

PICKUP 5TH PGH: BUT HE ADDED

UPI 07-25 07:29 PED



SMT 4

MISSING IN ACTION ADDRESS - JULY 24, 1976

I AM HONORED TO MEET ONCE AGAIN WITH THIS
COURAGEOUS ASSEMBLY OF AMERICANS WHOSE LOVED ONES REMAIN
UNACCOUNTED FOR IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.

YOU HAVE BORNE A HEAVY BURDEN WITH INCREDIBLE
COURAGE. EVERY CITIZEN IN THIS COUNTRY ADMIRES YOUR
BRAVERY, YOUR DIGNITY AND YOUR PERSISTENCE.

THROUGH LONG MONTHS AND YEARS OF TRIAL, YOU
HAVE BEEN SUSTAINED BY THE LOVE OF YOUR MISSING MEN AND
BY YOUR LOVE OF THE COUNTRY THOSE MEN HAVE DEFENDED.

I AM PROUD OF YOU, AND PROUD OF YOUR MEN.

BUT MY ADMIRATION IS NOT ENOUGH. THE
GRATITUDE OF THIS NATION IS NOT ENOUGH.

YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES MUST BE ASSURED OF A CONTINUING
COMMITMENT FROM YOUR GOVERNMENT TO OBTAIN A FULL
ACCOUNTING OF THOSE MISSING IN ACTION. ✓ *listed on POW*

YOU HAVE THAT COMMITMENT FROM THIS ADMINISTRATION.

IT IS A LONGSTANDING COMMITMENT; IT IS STILL AN
ACTIVE COMMITMENT; AND FOR ME IT IS A VERY PERSONAL
COMMITMENT, AND THAT IS WHY I'M HERE TONIGHT.

WHEN I CAME HOME FROM THE PACIFIC THIRTY YEARS AGO,
I JOINED SEVERAL VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS AND A SHORT TIME
LATER BECAME A MEMBER OF CONGRESS.

DURING MY SERVICE AS A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE,
I WORKED ON M.I.A. PROBLEMS, ON AN INDIVIDUAL, CASE-BY-
CASE BASIS, DURING BOTH THE KOREAN AND VIETNAM CONFLICTS.

AS A CONGRESSMAN, I MET WITH MEMBERS OF THE
NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES HERE IN WASHINGTON AND BACK
HOME IN GRAND RAPIDS.

I DID NOT FORGET YOU THEN, AND I HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN
YOU NOW.

ONE OF MY VERY LAST MEETINGS AS VICE PRESIDENT WAS
WITH YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

A YEAR AGO, AS PRESIDENT I ATTENDED THIS CONVENTION,
AND SHORTLY THEREAFTER MET AGAIN WITH YOUR BOARD OF
DIRECTORS IN THE CABINET ROOM AT THE WHITE HOUSE.

WE ARE EMPLOYING EVERY EFFECTIVE MEANS TO ACCOUNT
FOR YOUR LOVED ONES. LET ME ASSURE YOU TONIGHT THAT
I WILL CONTINUE THAT EFFORT.

WE MUST BE HONEST WITH OURSELVES. THIS IS A
FRUSTRATING AND PAINSTAKING PROCESS.

IT IS A TRAGIC FACT THAT INFORMATION ON EVERY
MISSING MAN MAY NEVER BE AVAILABLE, REGARDLESS OF WHAT
IS DONE.

FURTHERMORE, WE ARE DEALING WITH A GOVERNMENT THAT
HAS DEMONSTRATED LITTLE CONCERN FOR YOUR FEELINGS.

THE VIETNAMESE CLAIM TO HAVE ESTABLISHED AGENCIES
TO SEARCH FOR THE MISSING. BUT THUS FAR THEY HAVE
WITHHELD THIS INFORMATION -- TOTALLY WITHOUT JUSTIFICATION.
WE HAVE OFFERED TO CARRY OUT THE SEARCHES OURSELVES,
OR TO ENLIST A NEUTRAL GOVERNMENT OR THE RED CROSS IN THIS
HUMANITARIAN SEARCH.

THUS FAR, NONE OF THESE OFFERS HAS BEEN ACCEPTED.

BUT WE WILL PERSIST; WE WILL KEEP TRYING.

WE ARE WILLING TO TALK WITH THE VIETNAMESE.

AT MY DIRECTION, WE HAVE EXCHANGED MESSAGES WITH THEM

INDICATING OUR WILLINGNESS TO DISCUSS OUTSTANDING ISSUES

BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

WE HAVE MADE CLEAR THAT OUR PRIMARY CONCERN IS
TO OBTAIN ~~BOTH~~ AN ACCOUNTING FOR OUR MISSING IN ACTION •
~~AND THE RETURN OF OUR SERVICEMEN WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES~~
~~FOR OUR COUNTRY.~~

WITHOUT A SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION OF THE M.I.A.
ISSUE, NO FURTHER PROGRESS IN OUR RELATIONS IS POSSIBLE.

I KNOW THAT MANY OF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT
INFORMATION
DECLASSIFICATION OF MATERIALS RELATED TO M.I.A.'s.

SEVERAL MONTHS AGO, I DISCUSSED THIS PROBLEM
WITH MEMBERS OF MY STAFF AND DIRECTED THAT PROGRESS BE
MADE IN THAT REGARD. I AM INFORMED THAT PROGRESS HAS
BEEN MADE, AND MORE PROGRESS WILL BE MADE.

EVERY ONE IN THIS ROOM HAS DEMONSTRATED A STRENGTH
AND A RESOLVE WHICH MAKE YOU EQUAL TO THE BURDENS YOU
ARE CARRYING. YOUR COURAGE HAS BEEN AN INSPIRATION
TO ME AND TO MILLIONS OF YOUR FELLOW CITIZENS.

YOUR LOVED ONES HAVE NOT BEEN FORGOTTEN●

YOU HAVE NOT BEEN ABANDONED●

I PROMISE YOU I WILL NOT REST UNTIL THE FULLEST
POSSIBLE ACCOUNTING OF YOUR LOVED ONES HAS BEEN MADE●

THANK YOU VERY MUCH●

END OF TEXT

July 26, 1976

Dear Sonny:

Many thanks for the tremendous help and assistance you gave us on the MIA Convention.

The President also sends his thanks.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Sincerely,

John O. Marsh, Jr.
Counsellor to the President

The Honorable G. V. Montgomery
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

JOM/dl



July 26, 1976

Dear Milt:

You did a great job on the MIA Convention.

The President is most grateful.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Sincerely,

John O. Marsh, Jr.
Counsellor to the President

Mr. Milt Mitler
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20500.

JOM/dl



July 26, 1976

Dear Pat;

Just a short note to let you know how much I appreciate all your help on the recent MIA Convention.

Many thanks.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Sincerely,

John O. Marsh, Jr.
Counsellor to the President

Mr. Pat Butler
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20500

JOM/dl



July 26, 1976

Dear Brent:

Just a short note to let you know how much I appreciate all your help on the recent MIA Convention.

Many thanks.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Sincerely,

John O. Marsh, Jr.
Counsellor to the President

The Honorable Brent Scowcroft
Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20500

JOM/dl



July 26, 1976

Dear Doug:

Just a short note to let you know how much I appreciate all your help on the recent MIA Convention.

Many thanks.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Sincerely,

John O. Marsh, Jr.
Counsellor to the President

Mr. Doug Smith
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20500

JOM/dl



July 26, 1976

Dear Frank:

You did your usual great job in your skillful advance on behalf of the President's visit to the MIA Convention.

The President sends his thanks.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Sincerely,

John O. Marsh, Jr.
Counsellor to the President

Mr. Frank Ursomarse
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20500

FOM/dl



July 27, 1976

Dear Dick:

Just a short note to let you know how
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recent MIA Convention.

Many thanks.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Sincerely,

John C. Marsh, Jr.
Counsellor to the President

The Honorable Richard A. Wiley
General Counsel
Department of Defense
Room 3E980
The Pentagon
Washington, D. C. 20301

JOM/dl



July 27, 1976

Dear Roger:

You did a great job on the **MIA Con-**
vention.

The President is most grateful.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Sincerely,

John O. Marsh, Jr.
Counsellor to the President

Dr. Roger Shields
Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Economic Affairs
OASD/ISA
Room 4E830
The Pentagon
Washington, D. C. 20301

JOM/dl



July 27, 1976

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You did a great job on the MIA Convention.

The President is most grateful.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Sincerely,

John O. Marsh, Jr.
Counsellor to the President

Mr. Frank A. Sieverts
Deputy Coordinator for
Humanitarian Affairs
D/HA
Room 7802
Department of State
Washington, D. C. 20520

JOM/dl



July 28, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: DICK CHENEY
 BRENT SCOWCROFT

FROM: JACK MARSH

Attached you will find photostats of telegrams sent to the League of Families by Carter and by Reagan.

I am somewhat surprised at the stridency of both insofar as directing attacks on the President on this subject.

I am not sure whether the League released these to the press and, therefore, I would appreciate your keeping a close hold on these.

Many thanks.

JOM/dl



LLD046 WAD056(1236) (2-016205E206) PD 07/24/76 1236

ICS IPMRNCZ CSP

1976 JUL 24 PM 2:44

4155471556 TDRN OAKLAND CA 98 07-24 1236P EST

PMS COLONEL EARL P HOPPER SR

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN PRISONERS AND MISSING:
IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, DLR
STAILER HILTON HOTEL
WASHINGTON DC

TO THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES: IF YOU HAD HAD THE KIND OF
ACTION YOU HAVE BEEN SEEKING YOU WOULD NOT HAVE TO BE GATHERING FOR
A 7TH ANNUAL MEETING, AS YOU ARE TODAY. THE FIRST WEEK THAT I AM
PRESIDENT, A NEW SECRETARY OF STATE WILL BEGIN IMMEDIATELY TAKING
EVERY REASONABLE AND PROPER STEP TO RETURN ANY LIVE AMERICANS STILL

8F-1201 (R5-69)

BEING HELD IN SOUTHEAST ASIA; TO SECURE AN ACCOUNTING OF AMERICANS
STILL LISTED AS MISSING IN ACTION; AND TO REPATRIATE THE REMAINS OF
AMERICAN DEAD. YOU HAVE HAD TO WAIT TOO LONG; FOR ACTION.

RONALD REAGAN

NNNN

8F-1201 (R5-69)



LLC034 WAED44(1034)(2-011494E206)PD 07/24/76 105476 JUL 24 PM 12:40
ICS IPMTZZ CSP

4048977110 TDMT ATLANTA GA 260 07-24 1054A EST
PMS CAL EARL HOPPER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DLR
CARE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN PRISONERS AND MISSING
IN SOUTHEAST ASIA STATLER HILTON HOTEL 16 AND ~~K~~ STS NORTHWEST
~~WASHINGTON DC 20005~~

IN APRIL WHEN PRESIDENT FORD ANNOUNCED THAT HE WOULD REFUSE TO
NORMALIZE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH VIETNAM, EVEN IN RETURN FOR A
COMPLETE ACCOUNTING OF AMERICAN MISSING IN ACTION, HE TURNED HIS
BACK ON THE HOPES OF MIA FAMILIES FOR THE SAKE OF INTERNAL
REPUBLICAN PARTY POLITICS.

THIS MOVE ON THE PRESIDENT PART WAS MADE SOLEY TO DEPRIVE RONALD
~~REASON~~ OF THE CHARGE THAT MR FORD WAS "SOFT ON VIETNAM", EVENTHOUGH
MR KISSINGER, FORDS OWN SECRETARY OF STATE HAD ANNOUNCED LESS THAN 6

WEEKS BEFORE THAT THE U S WAS PREPARED IN PRINCIPAL TO NORMALIZE
RELATIONS IN NORTH VIETNAM AND THAT THE ADMINISTRATION'S PRINCIPAL
CONCERN WAS ACCOUNTING FOR THE MISSING IN ACTION.

MR FORD HAS HANDED AMERICAN BORN POLICY FROM THE ONE MAN RULES OF DR
KISSINGER TO ONE MANY RULE OF GOVERNOR REGAN, AND IN THE SAME
STROKE, HAS DEPRIVED OUR MIA FAMILIES OF THEIR BEST CHANCE TO KNOW
THE FATE OF THEIR LAST SONS, FATHERS, AND HUSBANDS.

AFTER CLEAR INDICATIONS OF A READINESS TO RESOLVE THE MIA QUESTIONS
AS PART OF NORMALIZING RELATIONS, THE POSITION OF A NORTH VIETNAMESE
HAS SHORTLY BEEN HARDENED BY THE ADMINISTRATION'S CAPRICIOUS
ACTIONS. OUR MIA WILL BE FULLY ACCOUNTED FOR, AND PEACE FINALLY
ESTABLISHED, ONLY THROUGH AN OPEN, GRADUAL NEGOTIATION OF

OUTSTANDING ISSUES. THE FAMILIES OF AMERICANS WHO FOUGHT IN VIETNAM
DESERVE AT LEAST THAT MUCH. MIA FAMILIES ALSO SERVE TO BE TREATED
SERIOUSLY BY THEIR GOVERNMENT, WITHOUT ARBITRARINESS. AND RESENTMENT,
OUR MIA FAMILIES MUST BE GIVEN A STATUS UPON WHICH THEY CAN RELY AND
MAKE FUTURE PLANS. SINCERELY

JIMMY CARTER



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 29, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: JACK MARSH

FROM: MILT MITLER *mit*

Jack, in the event you haven't seen this or heard about it, here is the Hanoi reaction to the President's speech to the National League of Families.

Attachment (Hanoi reaction to President's Speech to National League of Families)

FBIS 11

HANOI COMMENTARY ON FORD'S MIA TALK

06271747 HANOI INTERNATIONAL SERVICE IN ENGLISH 0100 GMT 27 JUL 76 OW

(UNATTRIBUTED COMMENTARY: "GERALD FORD'S UNSUCCESSFUL PSYCHOLOGICAL ATTACK")

(TEXT) ON SUNDAY U.S. PRESIDENT GERALD FORD SUMMONED THE REPRESENTATIVES OF 800 FAMILIES OF AMERICANS REGISTERED AS MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA TO THE WHITE HOUSE TO HEAR HIS WORDS OF SYMPATHY.

WHILE TALKING NINETEEN TO THE DOZEN, THE U.S. PRESIDENT DID NOT MENTION A WORD ABOUT THE REASON FOR THE DEATHS OR MISSING IN ACTION OF HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF AMERICAN YOUTHS IN A REGION HALF A WORLD AWAY FROM THE STATES. HE ALSO WENT TO LENGTHS MAKING SLANDERS AGAINST THE PEOPLE OF VIETNAM, LAOS AND CAMBODIA WITH REGARD TO THE MISSING IN ACTION PROBLEM. BY SO DOING, GERALD FORD PROBABLY WANTED TO INCITE THE CHAUVINISTIC FEELING AMONG AMERICANS TO BUY VOTES IN THE NOVEMBER PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS.

HOWEVER, FORD'S PSYCHOLOGICAL BLOW HAS MISSED THE TARGET BECAUSE HE UTTERED AMBIGUITIES AND FAILED TO PROVIDE ANY CONCRETE EVIDENCE. AT THIS WHITE HOUSE MEETING, GERALD FORD ALSO MISSED HIS MARK WHEN HE SAID THAT THERE IS NO NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND VIETNAM SO LONG AS THE MISSING IN ACTION PROBLEM HAS NOT BEEN SETTLED.

FORD'S BLACKMAIL IS TOO OBVIOUS TO TAKE ANYBODY IN. EVERYBODY IN THE WORLD KNOWS THAT HE IS EATING THE U.S. PROMISE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE HEALING OF THE WOUNDS OF WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION IN VIETNAM. THE QUESTION IS HOW THE UNITED STATES COULD BREAK ITS SOLEMN PROMISE TO CONTRIBUTE TO HEALING THE WOUNDS OF WAR AND TO THE REBUILDING OF VIETNAM, WHICH IS THE RESPONSIBILITY AND OBLIGATION AND A POINT OF HONOR FOR AMERICA.

IT IS CERTAIN THAT THE COMPATRIOTS OF MR GERALD FORD, THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE AND THE WORLD PUBLIC WILL NOT LET HIM DO WHAT HE LIKES.

28 JUL 0609Z JPC/MC



July 30, 1976

MIA

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT

FROM: JACK MARSH

I thought you would be interested in seeing what Hanoi said concerning your remarks to the League of Families.

I have sent a copy of this to Brent for his consideration and interpretation, should you desire.

cc: Brent Scowcroft

JOM/dl



July 30, 1976

MIA

MEMORANDUM FOR: BRENT SCOWCROFT

FROM: JACK MARSH

Please note the attached. The President may ask you about this statement.

Many thanks.

JOM/dl



HANOI COMMENTARY ON FORD'S MIA TALK

"GERALD FORD'S UNSUCCESSFUL PSYCHOLOGICAL ATTACK"

(TEXT) On Sunday U. S. President Gerald Ford summoned the representatives of 800 families of Americans registered as Missing in Southeast Asia to the White House to hear his words of sympathy.

While talking nineteen to the dozen, the U. S. President did not mention a word about the reason for the deaths or Missing in Action of hundreds of thousands of American youths in a region half a world away from the states. He also went to lengths making slanders against the people of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia with regard to the Missing in Action problem. By so doing, Gerald Ford probably wanted to incite the chauvinistic feelings among Americans to buy votes in the November Presidential elections.

However, Ford's psychological blow has missed the target because he uttered ambiguities and failed to provide any concrete evidence. At this White House meeting, Gerald Ford also missed his mark when he said that there is no normalization of relations between the United States and Vietnam so long as the Missing in Action problem has not been settled.

Ford's blackmail is too obvious to take anybody in. Everybody in the world knows that he is eating the U. S. promise to contribute to the healing of the wounds of war and reconstruction in Vietnam. The question is how the United States could break its solemn promise to contribute to healing the wounds of war and to the rebuilding of Vietnam, which is the responsibility and obligation and a point of honor for America.

It is certain that the compatriots of Mr. Gerald Ford, the Vietnamese people and the world public will not let him do what he likes.

JUL 29 1976

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

July 29, 1976

MEMO FOR:

JACK MARSH

I thought you would find of interest the attached comments which Hanoi made on the President's remarks last Saturday night. I prepared a summary of this article for the President's July 29 morning brief.



Ken Quinn

FBIS 11

HANOI COMMENTARY ON FORD'S MIA TALK

OM271747 HANOI INTERNATIONAL SERVICE IN ENGLISH 0100 GMT 27 JUL 76 OW

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IT IS CERTAIN THAT THE COMPATRIOTS OF MR GERALD FORD, THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE AND THE WORLD PUBLIC WILL NOT LET HIM DO WHAT HE LIKES.

28 JUL 0609Z JPC/MC



AUG 2 1976

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

August 2, 1976

TO: JACK MARSH
FROM: KEN QUINN *Ken*

The attached Vietnamese News Agency attack on President Ford is one of the most biting ones I have ever seen. I frankly do not understand what motivated them to use such harsh language. It should be noted that the item is in the Vietnamese language and thus intended primarily for consumption within Vietnam. Moreover, it was published July 22, two days before the President's remarks to the National League of MIA Families. The usual Hanoi line is to attack the President's policies. To call his personal probity into question is a most unusual affront.

I prepared a summary of the article for the President's morning brief of August 3.

TA *File*
GEORGE FORD LIBRARY

We were deeply touched at hearing Prime Minister Pol Pot saying: "The friendship and solidarity between the Kampuchea and Vietnam revolutions, between Kampuchea and Vietnam constitute a problem of both strategy and sacred feelings. Should that friendship and solidarity go well the revolution in our two countries would develop finely. There's no other way".

The Vietnamese press and television delegation on visit to the Democratic Kampuchea shall keep forever the nice and profound recollections and shall do its utmost to contribute even a small part to keeping the two countries, as the first secretary of the Vietnam Workers Party said: "Already bound to each other in the struggle for national liberation, to be forever attached to each other in the national reconstruction and protection, for the sake of the independence and prosperity of our respective country and for the revolutionary interests of the people in southeast Asia and the world over." [sentence as received]

VIETNAM

VNA DESCRIBES FORD AS CORRUPT, REACTIONARY POLITICIAN

Hanoi VNA in Vietnamese to VNA Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) 1320 GMT 22 Jul 76 OW--
FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

[VNA document: "Ford's True Nature"]

[Text] In reality, what is Ford? Following are some features on him:

--Ford started his political career by jumping into the U.S. House of Representatives with the assistance of the Western family, one of the wealthiest and most influential families in Michigan and having relations with the well-to-do uppercrust families in the United States.

--Ford has the past of a reactionary. In a letter addressed to his friends in 1971, he considered the liberals in the Democratic Party as dangerous elements with regard to the U.S. way of life and philosophy.

--Ford assisted Nixon in selecting ultrarightist judges such as Carswell and Hainesworth to the Supreme Court.

--He is well-known racist in the United States.

--He is an advocate of increasing the Pentagon's inherently huge national defense budget.

--He is a defender of corruption in the United States. As confirmed by sources from Washington, Ford took large payoffs at his office in Washington from an employee of the General Electric Co. who asked him as the House minority leader to help Thomas O. Paine, director of the monopolist company, win the post of NASA deputy director. A few days after Paine was appointed to hold this post, the General Electric Co. signed a contract with NASA worth \$50 million to carry out a satellite project. This contract was approved by the Federal Government.

--Ford has close relations with the major financial companies in the United States. On 22 January 1968, he was appointed director of the old Kent Bank and Trust Company in Grand Rapids, a big bank of [words indistinct] which sent him to run in the congressional elections. This bank possesses assets worth \$500 million. In the United States, the banks have big interests in all problems related to the laws concerning banks and finance. Thus it is not surprising that many Federal projects have been carried out through the Kent Bank.

According to a U.S. law, a state official such as a congressman and the U.S. president are not allowed to assume functions in any private organs.

But Ford has had no trouble when he violated this law.

Robert Winter Berger, one of those specializing in seeking persons who wish to sign contracts with the company which he represents, wrote in his book "Washington Payoff" about the bargain between him and Ford on the purchase of the title of U.S. ambassador to France for Francis Kellog, president and main share holder of the International Mining Corporation in New York.

Winter Berger said to Ford: "He is ready to offer \$30,000 more to the Republican National Committee." Ford replied promptly: "All right, please tell him that he can come and see me at any time as he pleases."

Before leaving, Winter Berger warned Ford: "Be careful, this is a hot piece of charcoal!" Ford replied: "Don't worry, money is the name of this game."

All the aforesaid facts have exposed the true nature of Ford who is now playing a bigger chess game in the United States.

JAPAN

KANEKO READS JCP CC REPORT ON DRAFT RESOLUTION

Tokyo JPS in English 1512 GMT 29 Jul 76 OW--FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

[All figures at beginning of paragraphs are as received]

[Text] Tokyo, July 30 JPS--On the first day of the 13th extraordinary congress of the JCP (July 28), the Central Committee proposed the draft resolution; Mitsuhiro Kaneko read the report on behalf of the Central Committee. Some points are added to the draft resolution by consideration of the development in the subsequent situation and adoption of the contents of discussions in the entire party. Kaneko read out the report, which includes the added parts.

Pointing out the "importance of the aggravation of the LDP crisis resulting from the progress of the criminal investigation into the Lockheed scandal case since the announcement of the draft resolution, Kaneko said as follows:

1. The correctness of the draft resolution saying that the dangerous maneuver of the Miki cabinet for hush-up of the Lockheed scandal is starting too, was endorsed again.
1. We should not belittle the danger that maneuvers for hushing-up the Lockheed scandal will gain success.
1. The Liberal-Democratic Party and the Miki cabinet are attempting to divert the criticism of the people under the new cloak of "rebirth of the LDP."
1. We should not [be too] lazy to pay attention to various political moves resulting from the aggravated crisis of the LDP.
1. (Such LDP political moves) do not mean that the straight retrogression in the LDP's rule and its rapid approach to "the alliance of conservatives and progressives", the modernization of the LDP body, etc. are inevitable.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

August 3, 1976

MIA

MEMORANDUM FOR:

RUSS ROURKE

FROM:

MILT MITLER *teal*

Russ, attached is a letter from Earl Hopper - National League of Families - containing a Resolution passed by the League calling for the replacement of the Secretary of State. I have responded to Earl telling him that the letter was received and has been made known to the President.

Attachment (letter fr Earl Hopper and Resolution - National League of Families)



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

1608 K STREET, N.W., WASHINGTON, D. C. 20006 (202) 628-6811

July 27, 1976

Honorable Gerald R. Ford
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Members of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia in attendance at the League's Seventh Annual Meeting have given me a mandate to present you with the attached resolution.

This resolution was introduced from the floor at a regular business meeting, discussed then passed with only two dissenting votes. It calls upon you to replace Secretary of State Henry Kissinger with a person who will actively pursue a Southeast Asian policy that is in the best interest of the people of the United States and which will secure an accounting of those Americans who are still prisoner or missing as a result of the war in Southeast Asia.

Mr. President, the POW/MIA families are most serious in their resolve for you to replace Dr. Kissinger and sincerely appeal to you to do so as soon as possible.

Respectfully,

Earl P. Hopper, Sr.
Colonel, AUS-Ret.
Executive Director

EPH:jjf



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

1608 K STREET, N.W., WASHINGTON, D. C. 20006 (202) 628-6811

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Some three and a half years ago Dr. Henry Kissinger, chief architect of the Paris Peace Agreement, chose to abandon over 1,300 Americans who are Prisoners of War and Missing in Action, leaving their fate to the good will of the Indochinese communists, and

WHEREAS, Secretary Kissinger has repeatedly lied to the families of these men and the American public with false assurances that these men would be returned and accounted for, and

WHEREAS, The Secretary of State has declined to publicly testify to the House Select Committee on Missing Persons in Southeast Asia on the POW/MIA problem and repeatedly lied to Members of Congress as to secret agreements and commitments of aid to the communists nations holding our men, and

WHEREAS, Secretary Kissinger admitted to the National League of Families that he felt there may be Americans still held captive in South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, yet has exhibited malfeasance in office by refusing to attempt to gain their release, and

WHEREAS, The Socialist Republic of Vietnam has repeatedly admitted that they indeed do have information on our men as well as those Killed in Action whose remains have been repatriated to the United States, and

WHEREAS, The families of these men have constantly called upon the Secretary of State to speak out on the POW/MIA issue and seek a solution he has chosen instead to ignore the importance of this issue and refuses to press for an accounting.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the National League of Families calls upon the President of the United States to replace the Secretary of State with a person who will actively pursue a Southeast Asian policy that is in the best interest of the People of the United States of America and which will secure an accounting for those who are Prisoner or Missing as a result of serving our Country in the Southeast Asia war.

AUG 9 1976

MEMORANDUM

4392 (add-on)

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 7, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR JACK MARSH

FROM: BRENT SCOWCROFT 

SUBJECT: Hanoi's Attack on the President

There is no question that Hanoi's personal attack on the President goes substantially beyond what we usually see. Ordinarily, Hanoi attacks some aspect of the President's policy rather than his personal character. The harsh tone is also inconsistent with other more authoritative commentaries which Hanoi has disseminated recently. For example, its reaction to the President's July 24 remarks at the MIA Convention was more measured than this diatribe. Ordinarily the sharper attack could be expected to follow the President's taking a tough line on the MIA problem.

The best explanation I can think of is that this commentary was meant for internal consumption in Vietnam. It seems obvious that the information the article uses came from some "research" which an American commentator compiled. We believe Hanoi regularly receives all such material, and probably jumped on this item as a "good foreign source" on which to base an attack on the President. Moreover, it is in the Vietnamese language and it was a wire item. The words which Hanoi really wants us to hear are sent in English over its international radio service.

Since there is no clear evidence that Hanoi meant to pick a fight with us directly by publishing this item, I recommend that we not make an issue of it now. Rather we should save it for use as a rationale for being tough with Hanoi when critics suggest we are not being sufficiently forthcoming to the Vietnamese.



m 1 A
(League of Families)

August 5, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: BRENT SCORCROFT
FROM: JACK MARSH

Brent, I would appreciate your thoughts on the attached.
Many thanks.
cb



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 5, 1976

TO: JACK MARSH

FROM: RUSSELL A. ROURKE

Rour

_____ For Direct Reply

 R For Draft Response

 R ~~XX~~ For Your Information

_____ Please advise *to*

*Send
Back for
execution*

AUG 8 1976

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

August 3, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: / RUSS ROURKE

FROM: MILT MITLER *MM*

Russ, you may have already seen this transcript of a diatribe against the President by Hanoi. This was released on July 22, 1976, before the League of Families speech. It represents an unusually harsh attack against the President and unlike the normal run where the President's policies are attacked. It was also in Vietnamese and so intended primarily for consumption within Vietnam.

Attachment (transcript - "Ford's True Nature")

were deeply touched at hearing Prime Minister Pol Pot saying: "The friendship and solidarity between the Kampuchea and Vietnam revolutions, between Kampuchea and Vietnam constitute a problem of both strategy and sacred feelings. Should that friendship and solidarity go well the revolution in our two countries would develop finely. There's no other way".

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