

The original documents are located in Box 17, folder “MIA Task Force” of the Richard B. Cheney Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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FROM: Jack Marsh
TO: Dick Cheney for
the President
INFO: Bill Hyland

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SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

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WHCA FORM 8, 22 FEB 74

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 28, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: DICK CHENEY
BILL HYLAND

FROM: JACK MARSH

The attached relates to the MIA Task Force.

If Passkey approves, we will develop a press plan here.

We recommend Houston as a good place for the announcement. Please advise if you concur and any suggestions you may have for the press plan.

We will pre-advise Dole, and I will see Vice President Rockefeller tomorrow morning.



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 28, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
THROUGH: DICK CHENEY
FROM: JACK MARSH *Jack*
SUBJECT: MIA Task Force

Attached is a draft of the memo prepared by the NSC in reference to the establishment of a MIA Task Force to be chaired by the Vice President. This memo has been approved by Marsh, Scowcroft and Milt Mitler.

I plan to meet with Vice President Rockefeller tomorrow morning to advise him of this proposed action should you approve the same.

If you approve of this approach, it is recommended that you announce establishment of a Task Force in Texas at the Houston stop.

It is our understanding that Dole, in response to questions on this subject, has indicated that you have discussed this matter with him and that he will be the Task Force Chairman. The designation of the incumbent Vice President as Chairman will enable transition to Dole after the election.

Approve Task Force Memo _____ Disapprove _____

Approve announcement in Texas _____

Announce at other place _____

cc: Jim Cavanaugh
Brent Scowcroft
Milt Mitler
Bill Hyland



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 28, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE VICE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Establishment of a Presidential Task Force on the Issue of Men Still Unaccounted for in Southeast Asia

The problem of obtaining a full accounting for the more than 2500 men not accounted for in Southeast Asia remains a matter of great concern to all Americans and to me personally. I believe that these men, who sacrificed so much, deserve our constant efforts, as do their families and loved ones who have suffered so long uncertain of their fate. We will not abandon them and we will not rest until the fullest possible accounting of them has been obtained.

To facilitate that process and to coordinate efforts within the Executive Branch addressing this problem, I ask that you immediately form a Special Presidential Task Force on Americans Unaccounted for in Southeast Asia.

The responsibilities of this Task Force will include:

- reviewing previous actions of the Executive Branch, and considering recommendations of the Congress, the public and the agencies within the Executive Branch regarding approaches to resolving this problem;
- liaison with the appropriate members and committees of the Congress; coordinating Executive Branch actions with them as appropriate and providing assistance to them as they request;



- periodically making recommendations to me as to possible measures for improving the effectiveness of efforts to account for those men listed as missing as well as those listed as killed but whose bodies have not been recovered, and changes in their status.

The Secretary of State will retain responsibility for negotiating with foreign governments and dealing with international organizations on this issue.



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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
~~KISSINGER~~ 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 GOVERMENT, WITHOUT ARBITRARINESS. AND RESENTMENT,
OUR MIA FAMILIES MUST BE GIVEN A STATUS UPON WHICH THEY CAN RELY AND
MAKE FUTURE PLANS. SINCERELY

JIMMY CARTER

WLU
WESTERN UNION

Telegram

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

STATLER 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



SF-1201 (R5-69)

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

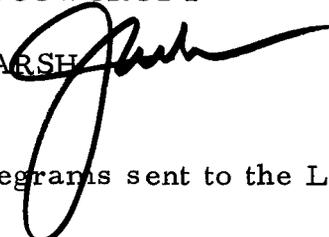
July 28, 1976

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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 them.

Many thanks.



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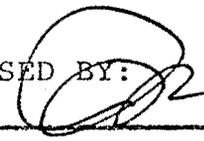
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FROM: Jack Marsh
TO: Dick Cheney
INFO: Mike Duval

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 6, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: DICK CHENEY

FROM: JACK MARSH *J. Marsh*

The attached memorandum is self-explanatory. While you are on the West Coast, I thought you might want to be aware of this so that possibly the call can be placed.

cc: MDuval



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON
October 4, 1976

MEMORANDUM TO: JACK MARSH

FROM: RUSS ROURKE *rr*

Jack, I am not sure I agree with Milt on this one. The President has paid a lot of attention to the MIA situation -- and these constant audiences with the President are becoming more difficult to justify.

Having said that if an open 10 minutes can be found on the schedule a day or so after the debate, I would recommend it, if only to counter-balance the Carter publicity, and to give us a little nudge in conservative country.

Please advise.

Ann Griffiths - PH: (714) 826-3110 (home)
(213) 431-2788 (office)



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 2, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: RUSS ROURKE
FROM: MILT MITLER *file*

Russ, Ann Mills Griffiths, Member/Board of Directors, National League of Families and the wife of an MIA, called to ask if there was any possibility of meeting briefly with the President while he is in California.

Ann is a reasonable person and has not been one of the hard liners concerning the MIA matter. At the same time, she does seek an Executive Order and does support the League's desire for a Presidential Task Force and a White House negotiator.

Carter, as you know, did meet with a number of League members, including Earl Hopper, in Phoenix. Following that meeting, he said he would form a Task Force if he is elected. He has since stated that he would also send a Presidential Fact Finding group to Hanoi and the other Southeastern Asia areas to explore the MIA accounting and resumption of relations with those countries.

I do believe if a short, informal meeting with Ann could be arranged, it would produce positive results even though the President could not promise an Executive Order, Task Force or negotiator. Just the opportunity to spend five minutes talking about the emotional factors in this would go a long way.

I leave the possibilities to you and Jack. I'll be out on Monday, atoning for all you sinners, but will check with you on Tuesday.

