

**The original documents are located in Box C32, folder “Presidential Handwriting 12/8/1975” of the Presidential Handwriting File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

### **Copyright Notice**

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Gerald Ford donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

HENRY B. GONZALEZ, TEX.  
JOHN JOSEPH MOAKLEY, MASS.  
PATRICIA SCHROEDER, COLO.  
RICHARD L. OTTINGER, N.Y.  
TOM HARKIN, IOWA  
JIM LLOYD, CALIF.

PAUL N. MCCLOSKEY, JR., CALIF.  
BENJAMIN A. GILMAN, N.Y.  
TENNYSON GUYER, OHIO

## U.S. House of Representatives

SELECT COMMITTEE ON MISSING PERSONS  
IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

ROOM 3334, HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING ANNEX 2

Washington, D.C. 20515

NINETY-FOURTH CONGRESS  
G. V. MONTGOMERY, MISS., CHAIRMAN

J. ANGUS MACDONALD  
STAFF DIRECTOR  
(202) 225-5745

*Max 7.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Monday - December 8, 1975

### MIA COMMITTEE MEETS WITH VIETNAMESE IN PARIS

Rep. G. V. Montgomery (D-Miss.) released the following statement regarding a meeting of the House Select Committee on Missing Persons in Southeast Asia with diplomatic officials from North and South Vietnam in Paris last weekend. Montgomery is chairman of the committee.

"Marking the first time that an official American delegation met with the Vietnamese since the cessation of hostilities, twelve members of Congress, including eight of the ten members of the House Select Committee on Missing Persons in Southeast Asia, met in an historic all day session on Saturday, December 6, with North Vietnamese Ambassador Vo Van Sung, PRG Charge d'Affaires Huynh Thanh and several North Vietnamese officials.

"The Vietnamese, in emphasizing their desire to re-establish not only normal, but friendly relations with the United States, cited the positive actions they had made toward the United States as evidence of their continuing willingness to build a bridge of good relations if each side helps to build it plank by plank.

"The Vietnamese made three commitments:

(1) They promised to release to the families the remains of three American pilots. (Lieutenant Commander Jesse Taylor, Jr., of Los Alamitos, California, shot down January 16, 1967; Lieutenant Colonel Crosley James Fitton of Hartford, Connecticut, shot down February 29, 1968; and Captain Ronald Dwight Perry of Gallatin, Tennessee, shot down December 21, 1972.

(more)

*cc to Max F*

(2) The Vietnamese announced for the first time that they have an agency actively researching this problem of our missing in action. They also agreed to continue to search for other American MIAs in Vietnam and to report to their government the Committee request that they assist in obtaining information about MIAs from the Laotian and the Cambodian governments.

(3) The Vietnamese also agreed to take all steps necessary to permit American civilians remaining in South Vietnam the opportunity to voluntarily leave the country.

"Chairman Montgomery reflected the views of the entire congressional delegation in stating that the discussions were friendly, forthright and constructive.

"The Vietnamese emphasized the importance that the U. S. take positive bridge-building actions now, such as lifting the present trade embargo and helping to heal the wounds of war. The Committee stressed America's interest in continuing the resolution of the MIA question and its concern about the return of the bodies of the two Marines killed in Saigon on April 30, 1975, and the repatriation of such remains as can be identified in the continuing search promised by the Vietnamese.

"Also discussed were the questions of the emigration from Vietnam of Vietnamese wives and children of American personnel, the 82 'hard evidence files' on individual MIAs turned over to Prime Minister Le Duc Tho by Secretary Kissinger in 1973, various forms of potential aid and trade with Vietnam and the recent veto of the Vietnamese admission to the United Nations.

"During the Paris meeting, Chairman Montgomery stressed that while the Select Committee is independent of the Executive Branch and could not make policy decisions, the Select Committee had the strongest interest and support of President Ford in seeking ways to  
(more)

resolve the MIA question.

"Ambassador Van Sung and Chairman Montgomery agreed that the Paris talks were a success.

"On Sunday, December 7, the Committee traveled to Geneva to meet with the International Red Cross Committee Director Jean Pierre Hocke and Delegate General Melchior Borsinger.

"The International Red Cross officials confirmed that they were assisting in the departure of foreign civilians from South Vietnam and were assisting in determining the needs for humanitarian assistance to both North and South Vietnam. They further indicated that identification and repatriation of MIAs was well within their mandate and that they were prepared to assist in such activities if agreeable to the Vietnamese.

"Chairman Montgomery, noting that while the Paris-Geneva trip was fast moving and intensive, its accomplishments are significant."

Taking part in the MIA Paris-Geneva mission were the following Select Committee members: G. V. Montgomery (D-Miss.), John J. Moakley (D-Mass.), Patricia Schroeder (D-Colo.), Richard Ottinger (D-N.Y.), Thomas Harkin (D-Iowa), Paul McCloskey (R-Calif.), Benjamin Gilman (R-N.Y.) and Tennyson Guyer (R-Ohio). Also participating in the MIA meetings were Dante Fascell (D-Fla.), International Relations Committee; Jonathan Bingham (D-N.Y.), International Relations Committee; Robert Duncan (D-Ore.), Appropriations Committee; and Ken Holland (D-S.C.), Veterans Affairs Committee.

did not  
ff  
Gonzales  
Lloyd