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Optional  
for  
Jan!



Proposed Nessen Statement

*on CIA  
(if you desire  
for!)*

(Background: Governor Carter was quoted yesterday as saying that if elected he would send a Presidential delegation to Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia in an effort to obtain an accounting for Americans missing in action. He also said he would not establish diplomatic relations with Vietnam until he had been satisfied on this matter.)

Statement

I don't think anyone can question President Ford's determination to do everything possible to obtain a full accounting for Americans missing in action and the return of remains of those killed in Indochina. The President has stated flatly that we are not prepared to normalize relations with Vietnam in the absence of a satisfactory resolution of this question. In view of the personal agony for the families concerned, the President hopes that this issue will not become a partisan matter.

~~The President has been concerned with finding the most effective way of proceeding, and he has not ruled out any particular recommendations.~~

~~The idea of a Presidential envoy has been considered several times, and~~

The Select Committee of the House headed by Representative Montgomery has in fact already visited Vietnam and Laos. The Administration has cooperated fully with the Committee. It has also initiated communications in Paris with the Vietnamese for discussion of the issue through diplomatic channels. At least until the Committee has made its report, which we



expect fairly soon, the President believes our present approach is the best one. ~~[Alternative. For the immediate future at least, the President believes our present approach is the best one.]~~