

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

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THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

THE BRIEFING ROOM

4:32 P.M. EDT

At my direction, the American Embassy in Paris today contacted North Vietnamese representatives and informed them that we expect that the United States will be provided with a full accounting without further delay of all Americans missing in action in Vietnam.

Speaking on behalf of all Americans, I welcome the fact that the Vietnamese have finally begun to keep their promise to provide information on our men missing in action in Southeast Asia.

While the report on these 12 men was grim, it at least resolved their status and removed the crushing burden of anxiety and uncertainty from their relatives and their loved ones.

But none of us can be satisfied with this limited action by the Vietnamese. What they have done is to release information of only a dozen men. They still have information on hundreds more.

For wives, parents and friends of the men still missing, the anxiety and the uncertainty continues. It is callous and cruel to exploit human suffering in the hope of diplomatic advantage.

The Vietnamese have an obligation to provide a full accounting of all Americans missing in action. I call upon them to do so without further delay. Normalization of relations cannot take place until Vietnam accounts for all our men missing in action.

END (AT 4:33 P.M. EDT)