MEMORANDUM
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:
President Ford
Representatives of the National League of Families of Missing-in-Action
Cong. G. V. (Sonny) Montgomery (D. - Miss.)
Senator Robert Packwood (R. - Ore.)
Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Roger Shields, Dept. of Defense
Frank Sieverts, Special Assistant for POW/MIA Matters, Dept. of State

DATE & TIME:
Tuesday - July 22, 1975
5:30 p.m.

PLACE:
The Oval Office

President:
It is a pleasure to have you here to see how we can work something. Most of you know my feelings on this, both now and in the past. We want to do anything possible to resolve this terrible problem. We must be realistic, but I want you to know we will do everything within our power. I am pleased to have Senator Packwood and Congressman Montgomery here.

Bus Mills: We are honored at the opportunity to meet with you to discuss some of the concerns we have. We were pleased that you could meet with some of our families last week. I want to point out that we are discussing the problems from our point of view.

[He reads a statement.]

President: Thank you very much, Bus. Would some of you like to make comments? I am sure you recognise that what Congress does is an initiative on their part. I think there are several alternatives, Sonny. There is one proposal for standing committee jurisdiction; there is a proposal for a select committee. I can't interject myself into the Congressional process, but if they want our help we will cooperate in every way. I would rather not give you answers now to the questions in your statement. I would rather give it thoughtful consideration later.
Hartness: We get many queries as to why you don't speak out on this issue more -- like recognizing this meeting.

President: I did refer to the problem in my Memorial Day address. And the press will cover this meeting.

Franks: We are concerned not only with this war but all wars. We worried that in future wars men won't want to serve because under the situation as it is, we won't or can't do everything possible to get them back.

President: If there are laws which should be changed, I would appreciate knowing it. I would be upset if I thought our Government wasn't able to do everything possible for its prisoners and missing.

Lewis: We appreciate this meeting but hope you will meet with us periodically during the year.

President: I will do my best, but there are only so many hours in the day.

Martin: I represent the 400 men on whom there have been presumptive findings of death. This problem will go on forever as far as some of these people are concerned.

President: I can appreciate that.

Cong. Montgomery: My bill has more sponsors than any bill before. Our problem is with committees and reluctance to have another Select Committee.

The basic step is to get to the sites and get there fast -- the jungle is closing in and people forget. I don't know how we do it, but that is the most important first move.

President: One of the staff people can say what our efforts have been.

Shields: [He detailed the activities of the MIA searches and their termination with the evacuation of South Vietnam.]

Sieverts: [Described the diplomatic efforts at getting an accounting.]

Hartness: We have a new ballgame now. All these countries want to trade with us. We hold some trump cards -- we have an embargo with Cuba for less reason than this.
Harper: We feel there is a basis for talks. We are not for ransom but we think we should take some initiatives.

Scowcroft: [Described that we are in contact and continued on the cynical nature of their treatment of this issue.]

President: I can assure you we will not recognize those countries nor will we give them any assistance.

Mills: We are pleased to hear that you won't recognize or aid them. We would push the UN. There is the thought that if Israel were kicked out of the UN we would reduce our support. We should contemplate the same on this issue.

President: Would someone like to summarize? I would just say we will fight to keep Israel in the UN. The UN has not always done as much as we would like but we will keep trying.
Kim Jones  What are financial matters.

P/ Nathleane of Furness

22 July 75

P. Realize it's important that we work and save money. We must be realistic and make the best of our opportunities. We need to save as much as possible and invest wisely. We cannot afford to waste money on luxuries. We must be frugal and live within our means. Please save for retirement.

Best wishes,

[Signature]

[Handwritten note: Please save for retirement.]

[Handwritten note: Thank you very much.]

[Handwritten note: Would you like to have a meal?]
apprentice him with. I would be upset if I the
some sort event and so anything possible for its
invasion; missing.

Lewis. We appre, this thirty men. hope you will not
I hope personally don't I try.
P. I will do my best, look only to Bury some

Martin. I appreciate the 400 pounds. find it of clear.
This sort problem will go am finish as far as
one of those youth are concerned,
P. I can agree, that.

Corp. Montgomery. They tell us more something than this
before. Our part is why lack. must be substituted
to have another decent trail.
Base. they is a part to suits get this part
of you is using in 4 people forget. Don't
know how are do it, but that is most negative
First more.
P. One 4 people can say what our efforts have

Shields. (Refer to a series of MTs seen here and their termination
with ease)

Smith's (Refer to a story, efforts at getting accuracy)

Hartley. We have learned one hour. All these events
want to do with? We hold here Thompsons
we have in bag of Cato. We have more
than this.

Hargreaves. We feel that are basic in order. We are not
for some reason but we think we should take
some initiatives.

I understand that we are in contact a continued
in logical sequence of their treatment of this case.
P. I can now agree you will not recognize those
controls nor will have paid them any previous
wells. We pleased to hear they grant to cop and
them. We would first be taken to there is that
that if I were treated and you were treated as well, you can support us should anything else come in this room.

I would have to do some summarizing. I would just say we're all fighting to keep it on. The issue has not always been something we can work on, but we will try.