

The original documents are located in Box 38, “9/7/76 - Remarks Concerning the Disclosure of Information by the Vietnamese About Americans Still Missing in Action” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

AT MY DIRECTION, THE AMERICAN EMBASSY
IN PARIS TODAY CONTACTED NORTH VIETNAMESE REPRESENTATIVES
~~THERE~~ AND INFORMED THEM THAT WE ~~CONTINUE TO~~ EXPECT
THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL BE PROVIDED WITH ^Q ~~AS~~ FULL
~~AN~~ ACCOUNTING ~~AS POSSIBLE~~, 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 LOVED ONES.

BUT NONE OF US CAN BE SATISFIED BY THIS LIMITED ACTION
BY THE VIETNAMESE. WHAT THEY HAVE DONE IS TO RELEASE INFORMATION
ON ONLY A DOZEN MEN; THEY STILL HAVE INFORMATION ON HUNDREDS
MORE, FOR WIVES, PARENTS, AND FRIENDS OF THE MEN STILL MISSING,
THE ANXIETY AND UNCERTAINTY CONTINUES.

2.

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 OF TEXT

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

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 loved ones.

But none of us can be satisfied by this limited action by the Vietnamese. What they have done is to release information on only a dozen men; they still have information on hundreds more. For wives, parents and friends of the men still missing, the anxiety and 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.