

COALITION OF FAMILIES OF KOREAN & COLD WAR POW/MIAs



SUMMER “We will find our own loved one by searching for them all.” 2017

North Korea’s countryside (former battlefields) holds so many answers to so many stories of American servicemen still missing during the Korean War. Those answers have been in limbo due to standing U.S. policy of nonengagement toward North Korea, and North Korea’s complete disregard for that policy.



There are two prevailing views on which direction U.S. policy should follow – engagement or nonengagement. On the surface, they seem simplistic options ... to be, or not to be. Between these policies is the no-man’s-land where answers to the fate of men still missing in North Korea wait to be found.

The two approaches can be complementary. Humanitarian and political policies can offer alternative ways to interact. Engagement calls for humanitarian exchanges that stand outside political disagreements. The recovery of missing men’s remains falls in this line of thinking. In nonengagement (*strategic patience*), the standing U.S. policy. the U.S. government withholds humanitarian involvement (like the recovery of U.S. remains) as a tactic, a tool.

Surprising to many, North Korea does pretty well separating the policies. It will unleash wild rhetoric damning U.S. cities to nuclear hurricanes, while graciously welcoming individual Americans to their country (like the family members of missing men). It is a duality that serves them. The U.S. approach sacrifices any good that can come from humanitarian engagement.

The current U.S. administration is still shaping its policy toward North Korea. There have been dynamic swings in

A Tale of Two Policies

approaches—ranging from lunch invitations to aircraft carrier deployments. Signs of engagement do appear, but as fluffs of dandelions, vulnerable to the wind.

One glimmer of positive direction, a momentary glimpse of what could be, appeared in a recent DPAA notification that a U.S. / Korean War serviceman’s remains had been identified.



“DPAA (DOD) appreciates the (North) Korean People’s Army, as well as Korean witnesses (named), for their assistance and partnership in this recovery effort.”

A window opened and a spring breeze drifted through. Rarely, if ever, has North Korea’s role in recoveries been acknowledged. Was the new administration looking to see what might happen with an offering of gratitude? Sadly, like the fluff of dandelion, the outreached hand flitted apart with the breeze; called a mistake.

“The U.S. approach sacrifices any good that can come from humanitarian engagement.”

If/when the U.S. reaches beyond a one-way street approach to North Korea, there will be hope that the

pledge of *no man left behind* will become more than patriotic holiday political-speak. We will then resume joint remains recovery operations of the roughly 5000 loved ones still lost in the countryside (former battlefields) of North Korea.

Families are waiting, as they have been waiting ... a lifetime of waiting.

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President's Corner

The Long and Short of It

Short Term Relationships



A year has passed since the DPAA's director left us mid-leap toward a new direction. The search for the next leader goes on, but it may be futile in the end. Turnover in the DPAA/DPMO's director position has become regular happenstance. They come and go like the seasons, with minimal impact on the mission they direct.

There are reasons for this. The role is demanding, thankless in many ways, and often answers to temporary players and vacant offices in the chain of command going upward. Four Secretaries of Defense have passed through that office during the past eight years. The leadership positions directly below the SecDef change as frequently. There are few developed relationships that can build the mission within this hierarchy; little direction. The current acting Director of DPAA may achieve longevity records just holding down the fort.

... the Coalition's role will have been to help develop the policies she or he will carry out.

The *Coalition* is a casual observer during these changes in leadership. The time and effort spent researching possible candidates, submitting recommendations then championing a favorite, even writing this article, become meaningless when the door to the office revolves so soon after the appointment is made.

That time and effort are better spent reaching beyond the empty offices and revolving doors, focusing on the real policymakers in the White House and Congress. They are the designers of the agenda handed down the chain of command. If and when the DPAA director position is filled, the *Coalition's* role will have been to help influence the policies she or he will carry out.

Long Term Relationships

Progress that really matters will come from relationships beyond the DOD's accounting mission. The

Coalition's relationships with Congressional offices, nongovernment organizations, and dedicated individuals are consistently productive. Through them, we have sat across the table from North Korea's vice foreign minister and discussed remains return, introduced declassification legislation into the U.S. Senate, met

The fates of our loved ones are on the minds and hearts of these dedicated policymakers' ...

with state department officials and a special consultant to the President.

These partnerships with nongovernmental organizations and congressional staff members are where success within the mission lays. They mature and diversify, as well: The executive director of a NGO introduces us to a Senate committee staffer with long-standing support for POW/MIA issues. The executive director later leaves the NGO, and is followed in the position by the same congressional staffer, who later sets us on a path with other NGOs that leads to direct negotiations with North Korea.

Follow that?

Legislative staffers of retiring Congressional members, or those who don't win reelection, move on to new offices. The relationships carry over. All along the way, critical meetings are arranged, important letters are written, and new connections are made.

Lasting accomplishments within the mission are measured in these baby steps. Identifications made today happen because of steps taken years ago. We all wish for the big swoosh of movement that will answer all our questions. For some reason, the POW/MIA mission has never been meant for easy answers.

Meanwhile, our loved ones are on dedicated policymakers' minds and in their hearts. We are not alone, and we owe these unsung colleagues a great deal of appreciation.

Rick Downes, President

(Lt. Hal Downes, father - MIA 1952)

United States

The White House

At various times, the two previous administrations locked the POW/MIA mission inside North Korea and misplaced the key. Their efforts to recover missing American servicemen's remains inside NK have been spotty at best.



Last year, up to 120 sets of collect U.S. servicemen's remains were offered for return by North Korea. The one condition was purely humanitarian. President Obama rejected the offer:

"Unfortunately, North Korea's provocative and destructive behavior has prevented closer cooperation until the regime's actions demonstrate a willingness to live up to its commitments."

Four months into the new administration, President Trump has yet to outline his POW/MIA priorities. The current State Department policy regarding the same U.S. remains offered for return by North Korea ends with:

"... when we get back to a place where we can engage with the DPRK, these issues are going to be near the top of the agenda."

This is as good a place as any.

Department of Defense

* As of July 12th, 36 missing servicemen from the Korean War have been identified in 2017; none from the Cold War.

* Much of DoD's hierarchy is in *transition*. The highest level jobs are either held down by *acting* officials or the empty office is collecting dust.

The *undersecretary of defense/policy* position is held down by an *acting* undersecretary. This office oversees DPAA and the search for a new director. If a new director is hired now, he/she will not have been the choice of a new undersecretary, whenever she/he is agreed on, nominated and approved.

DPAA

The annual Korean/Cold War Family Member Briefing will be held in Washington, DC, August 10-11. If your letter hasn't arrived, contact your military casualty office. The hotel for the briefing will be the *Renaissance Arlington Capital View* (The same hotel as last year.) Website:

<http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/waspy-renaissance-arlington-capital-view-hotel/>

Director of DPAA Search - The winner of the first round of applications declined the position. The second round of applications are being processed.

Ms. Fern Sumpter-Winbush continues to serve as acting Director. You may comment on the search by contacting DoD at: <https://www.defense.gov/Resources/Contact-DoD/>

*** Operational Notes:**

Acting Director Winbush's Comments:

"Because the (DoD) did not conduct reprogramming actions while under the CR (Continuing Resolution), DPAA suffered a 35 percent reduction in planned operations. In the interim, we shifted further toward disinterring and identifying remains of those buried as unknowns in U.S. Cemeteries."

"The President's budget request for FY18 was released this past week, and thanks to the support of our leadership from OSD Policy, our request for \$131.2M was included. This puts our mission on a sustainable budget trajectory for the future."

"The hiring freeze has been lifted and we are working to fill our remaining civilian vacancies."

"... the Armed Forces Medical Examiner, Dr. Lou Finelli, finalized our clavicle comparison as an approved method of identification. This gives us another powerful tool for making identifications of WWII and Korean unaccounted for."

"I met with General Brooks, U.S. Forces Korea Commander, and we discussed DPAA's readiness to conduct recovery operations in North Korea when conditions permit. The highlight of the trip was the remains that were discovered by a South Korean telephone company the month prior. We are positive it is an American and have already begun work on the identification."

* Data is being transferred to the Public Portal. *"We are simultaneously working on family member access that will allow access to additional data, submit RFIs, and connect with other family members."*

* A recovery team has completed a site excavation in South Korea, and an investigation team continues to conduct operations to determine sites for future excavations.

* The U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs (USRJC) held *Technical Talks* in March and June to discuss issues concerning missing U.S. and former Soviet service personnel from past wars. The June talks covered issues from the Cold War and the Vietnam War. The next USRJC Tech Talks are in August. during the Korean/Cold War Conference. *Technical Talks* are interim meetings where detailed items of interest are discussed and questions laid out. The broader agendas are set at annual *Plenums*.

(See the *Coalition's Facebook* page for more info)

Congress

Acting on behalf of our loved ones, ourselves, and other family members is how we will learn the answers to the missing men's fates. Congress is one of the mission's true supporters, and its members are accessible. They want your input. Here are some opportunities to do so.



Several initiatives are before both the Senate and House. They need attention in order to move forward. Please reach out to your senators and representatives, and let them know that you want them to cosponsor these initiatives!



The following websites will find the phone numbers for your Senate and House D.C. offices:

<http://www.senate.gov/senators/contact/>

<http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/>

(Learn who your Representatives is at: http://clerk.house.gov/member_info/mcapdir.aspx)

Ask your Senator / Representative to cosponsor the following bills:

S. 120

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

The Bring Our Heroes Home Act of 2017

If enacted, this bill will release decade's old POW/MIA debriefs, intel reports, and other important files still withheld by agencies throughout the government.

Senator Heller introduced S. 120. Referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

H.RES. 129

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES /

Calling on the Department of Defense, other elements of the Federal Government, and foreign governments to intensify efforts to investigate, recover, and identify all missing and unaccounted-for personnel of the United States.

Rep. Sam Johnson of Texas submitted H. RES. 129; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and to the Committee on Armed Services.

S. RES. 61

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Calling on the Department of Defense, other elements of the Federal Government, and foreign governments to intensify efforts to investigate, recover, and identify all missing and unaccounted-for personnel of the United States.

Sen. John McCain submitted S. RES. 61; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

.H. RES. 2765

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES /

To provide for the issuance of a forever stamp to honor the sacrifices of the brave men and women of the Armed Forces who are still prisoner, missing, or unaccounted for, and for other purposes.

Rep. Bilirakis of Florida submitted H. RES. 2765; Referred to the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

Cold War Losses

Thirty-nine U.S. military and civilian aircraft were either shot down or crashed on the periphery of communist countries while flying operational missions during the Cold War (1946-1991).

126 Americans remain unaccounted for from the war.

Our Collective Voice - Coalition News

*The Coalition's mission calls for work in advocacy, outreach, and research.
Here's a glance at what we're doing:*



* **U.S. Collected Remains /North Korea** – In September 2016, the *Coalition* traveled to North Korea with the *Richardson Center for Global Engagement*. We met with North Korea's vice foreign minister to discuss the return of up to 120 collected remains of U.S. servicemen. North Korea wants to return them, with a reasonable condition. We relayed the offer to former president Obama and the current administration's State department. The offer has been declined in both instances *due to current political conditions*. We have pursued other avenues since and will continue to hold the U.S. government accountable to its promise *that no man will be left behind*.

* **Bring Our Heroes Home Act , 2017 (Senate Bill 120)** – This declassification legislation, written by the *Coalition* with former Sen. Kelly Ayotte's office, has been reintroduced by Sen. Dean Heller (NV). The bill will mandate declassification of decades old Korean/Cold War POW debriefs, intel reports and more. Answers to the fate of unknown numbers of missing men may be found in these long secreted documents. (*See page 4*)

* **Washington, DC, Meetings-** The year's first two trips to Washington were in February and June. We met with House and Senate offices, the State Department, White House, and supportive nongovernment organizations, on how to move POW/MIA issues forward. (*See page 6*)

* **Nongovernmental Partners** – We are working with a network of influential NGOs who are pursuing complementary missions. These associations have helped broaden awareness of our collective issues and arranged meetings with Congressional offices and the administration. They are responsible for last year's remains return talks with North Korea's foreign ministry in Pyongyang. The *Korea Peace Network*, *Richardson Center for Global Engagement*, *National Committee on North Korea* and similarly dedicated organizations are committed to pursuing engagement between the U.S. and North Korea on humanitarian issues. These avenues include U.S. remains recovery inside North Korea, Korean-American reunions with family members living in the DPRK, and people-to-people exchanges between the two nations. We have form an accomplished network. (For a complete list of these organizations, see the *Coalition's* website:www.coalitionoffamilies.org.)

* **Social Media** – The *Coalition's* Facebook page is now more than 300 members strong (www.facebook.com/groups/2307893609/). 168 folks/organizations follow us on Twitter (@*KoreanWarMIAs*). Please join us on both these platforms for updates and the latest news.

* **Petition** – This *Coalition* petition calls on the governments of the United States, Russia, China, North Korea, and South Korea to resolve long standing Korean and Cold war issues There are 1100 signers to-date! Help us reach 1500! Copy page 9, pass it around to family and friends, take it to gatherings then mail completed pages to the *Coalition*!

* **Board of Directors** – We welcome Joan Morris to the *Coalition's* board of directors. Joan will assume fiscal oversight responsibilities, as well. Joan's Uncle, Gerard Schmitt, is MIA/Chosin Reservoir - 1950.

* **Summer Fundraiser** - The *Coalition* is producing a fundraising event that will also broaden awareness of the POW/MIA mission. The *Missing Man* concert will take place August 26th, in Portsmouth, NH, featuring *Joshua Tree*, New England's premier U2 tribute band. There will be a silent auction, as well. Support us as you can through the *Coalition's* website - www.coalitionoffamilies.org!

Coalition's Washington Meetings
February and June, 2017

The *Coalition* leadership has traveled to Washington, DC twice this year. There were meetings with Congressional offices, the State Department, White House, and nongovernmental organizations within the extended POW/MIA community. Two featured issues were declassification legislation (affecting all conflicts) and remains recovery, including North Korea's offer to return unearched U.S. Korean War remains they have gathered over the years.



Declassification Legislation, Senate Bill 120 – Bring Our Heroes Home Act

The *Bring Our Heroes Home Act* has been reintroduced to this Congress by Sen. Dean Heller of Nevada. The *BOHHA*, newly named S. 120, was a collaboration between former Sen. Kelly Ayotte's office and the *Coalition*. The bill will mandate the release of P.O.W. debriefings, intel reports, and more.

Senate cosponsors are needed to move the bill out of committee. One has signed on (Sen. Crapo, ID). *Please reach out to your Senators*; tell them how important declassification may be to your case and that it's important for your Senator to cosponsors S.120. Action by the missing men's families and other POW/MIA supporters will be a deciding factor. (For information on the bill go to: www.congress.gov/bills/115th-congress/senate-bill/120)

The Return of Collected U.S. Korean War Remains Unearthed Inside North Korea

Last September, the *Coalition* traveled to North Korea with the *Richardson Center for Global Engagement* and met with the Vice Foreign Minister. A primary focus of meeting was the return of up to 120 U.S. Korean War remains unearthed over the years during North Korea's agricultural and construction projects. North Korea is receptive to returning the remains. The presence of a new U.S. administration in the picture brings hope that discussions will lead to a path bringing these men home.

How this might be done was discussed with officials from Senate/House offices, the State Department's North Korea Unit, and the White House National Security Council. A network of supportive NGOs joined us in the effort to persuade our own government to accept North Korea's offer to return these remains of missing loved ones.

We'd like to acknowledge those of you who made contributions to support these trips, and hope that you feel part of what was accomplished. To support future trips, please do so through the not so subtle green *DONATE NOW* button on the *Coalition's* website. These trips are difference makers. The more we can do, the more difference we can make!

(coalitionoffamilies.org/washington-dc-meetings.html)

The *Coalition* met with the following Congressional offices/Committee staffers during February and June trips to Washington this year:

(*Met with these offices each trip)

U.S. SENATE

*Sen. Jean Shaheen (NH)
Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (ND)
Sen. Todd Young (IND)

*Sen. Angus King (ME)
Sen. Joni Ernst (IA)
Sen. Mike Enzi (WY)

Sen. Dean Heller (NV)
Sen. Maggie Hassan (NH)
Sen. Rand Paul (KY)

Sen. Hoeven (ND) Sen. Isakson (GA)

U.S. HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES

*Rep. Mike Turner (OH)
Rep. Ted Yoho (FL)

Rep. Peter King (NY)
Rep. Eliot Engel (NY)

Rep. Ed Royce (CA)
Rep. Brad Sherman (CA)

THE ADMINISTRATION

* National Security Council, Senior Director for Asia
* State Department, Chief of the DPRK Unit

NONGOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS

* Korean Peace Network and a growing network of NGOs pursuing complementary goals.

Easily Identifiable Remains Await Someone Who Cares

by
John Zimmerlee

It was 1956. The war had been over for 3 years and family members had been asked not to discuss their still missing loved ones fate.. Why? Because secretly our Government knew a lot more than they were telling, and they couldn't afford for the truth to come out!

Not only had our Government left over a thousand men behind alive in Communist prison camps, they also had done a poor job of identifying remains and shipping the wrong bodies home! The mistakes needed to go somewhere, so they buried them as unknowns in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punch Bowl) in Hawaii.

A few years ago, I acquired the forensic files on the unidentified remains, but more recently someone sent me the spreadsheet of the grave sites and their related unidentified X-files. All of a sudden, I had the potential to associate logical missing men with actual grave sites!! So here are some of my early findings.



Of the 848 Korean War unidentified remains in the Punch Bowl cemetery, more than half, 433, came through Operation Glory, an exchange of remains after the war. These remains arrived typically with names and service numbers attached to the box by the North Koreans. They were known Americans who died in prison camps. After double checking by the forensic team, these 433 were challenged and excluded from being the name on the casket, and buried as unknowns.

Even if the North Koreans accidentally mixed up the bodies, they somehow came across the name and service number somehow, so anyone with common sense would surmise that these names should be in the POW column, yet 35 of those excluded from the bodies remain MIA and KIA on DPAA's lists.

Lewis Brickell was an MIA, even though Operation Glory remains N-14889 arrived in 1954 with his name on it. Forensics excluded him, so the family was never told. But, in 1999, they disinterred that same remains from grave 928, and miraculously confirmed it as . . . yes you guessed it . . . Lewis Brickell. That story can be repeated over and over

again for William Butz, Richard Isbell, Anthony

Massey, Arnold Olson, Frank Sandoval, Donald Walker, John Ward, Carl West . . . and probably countless others. This same scenario occurs for remains recovered from the battlefields where men were identified, then excluded and families never told, then confirmed 60 years later. I'm sure

Forensics excluded him, so the family was never told.

the families of Nehemiah Butler, Richard Clapp, Norman Dufresne, James Constant, Bernard Fisher, Will Giovanniello, Lee Henry,

Everett Johnson, Donald Matney, Robert Mitchell, James Mullins, Donald Skeens, Luis Torres, John Ward, Carl West, and Edris Viers, . . . would have jumped at the chance to help confirm or exclude the remains 60 years earlier.



So, back to shipping wrong bodies home. Grave 807 contains X-1404 unidentified remains, but it hasn't always been that way. It was originally shipped home as Eugene Molinar . . . and only one person objected . . . Eugene, who came back alive. Only one missing person now actually fits the forensic criteria, Robert D Miller, but our government sees no need to disinter him.

Commonly, I find comments like "Operation Glory originally labeled remains N-14142 as 'Reginal Smith', but his previously identified(?) remains were already returned to his family." This makes one wonder if the previous identification was accurate. If not, the cemetery is full of mistakes. At least 28 remains share this comment.

Louis Mutta was driving a jeep when it was hit and exploded. His fellow servicemen put him in an abandoned building with the intent to recover him after the incoming attack. The building burned, but there was only one body inside, obviously Mutta. Yet our government wouldn't assume the obvious, and then buried him as unknown in grave 356. It's about time to get him back to his family.

When evidence reduces candidacy down to one person, there should be no excuse to procrastinate. Yet in 116 cases, only one person is logical and they continue their 60 year long wait for someone to care!

If you have a relative missing from the Korean War, please email me at john.zimmerlee@gmail.com or call 770-565-4420.

Together we can . . . and will get answers!

Membership!

The *Coalition* relies on family memberships and broader donations to pursue the issues that one day will lead to someone learning something about their missing loved one. Thank you to all long-standing supporters! Please continue renewing your memberships, adding-on donations, supporting individual projects, and now adding donations through online shopping at links on the *Coalition's* website. (<http://www.coalitionoffamilies.org/merchant-partners.html>)



For those of you who have yet to join with us, we invite you to do so! We have also initiated *Associate Memberships* for family friends of missing men and other supporters.

The application form for all memberships is below. The *Coalition* is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. All donations are tax deductible.

Please join us in this mission to learn what happened to so many missing fathers, brothers, husbands, uncles and now grandfathers. Thank you!

* * * * *

"The true patriot willingly loses his life for his country. These poor men have lost not only their lives, but the very record of their death." Clara Barton

Coalition of Families of Korean and Cold War POW/MIA's

National Membership Application

New

Renewal

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Relationship to missing service member:

(Associate Membership / Non family member – please check here: _____)

Service member's full name: _____ Service # _____

Branch of Service/Unit or Group: _____

Date & Area of Loss: _____

Annual Membership Donation - \$25. Please make checks payable to: Coalition of Families.

Send to:

Coalition of Families (Attn: Treasurer) P.O. Box 4194, Portsmouth, NH 03802

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Board of Directors

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Coalition of Families of Korean and Cold War POW/MIA's

We call upon the governments of the United States, Russia, China, North Korea, and South Korea, to:

- * Fully investigate reports that missing American servicemen were kept in captivity following the Korean War,*
- * Pursue the recovery and identification of American servicemen's remains located within their borders,*
- * Honor pledges for full transparency regarding still classified Korean and Cold War documents, and,*
- * Pursue these humanitarian objectives steadfastly, in the present frame of time, not an unending point in the future.*

NAME

(Please Print)

SIGNATURE

ADDRESS

FAMILY
MEMBER

(Yes/No)