

COALITION OF FAMILIES OF KOREAN & COLD WAR POW/MIAS



SUMMER “We will find our own missing loved one by searching for them all together.” 2021

New Beginnings:

Where The Mission Stands

Let's imagine that the Covid storm has indeed passed. We can step outside, dust ourselves off and see where we stand in life and the accounting mission.

There is newness, of course – the President, his advisors, the Sec of State, Sec of Defense. They are the players now. With them comes a new mindset that will contend with old issues. The cobwebs need to be dusted off those issues to see what still lays beneath.

These political transitions present new hope, the possibility of new pathways to bringing men home. Here is a look at the mission that awaits the new actions.

North Korea / Democratic People's Republic of Korea

North Korea has been dealing with the coronavirus, like the rest of the world. The DPRK closed its borders when the virus hit; even with China. Ambassadors from most nations left Pyongyang and went home. There has also been severe flooding, which occurs often this time of year there. U.S. / United Nations sanctions are still in place. North Korea has been shut off and isn't talking much with anyone ... including DPAA.



The Biden administration has completed its policy review towards the DPRK (see page 7). It reportedly reached out to North Korea through unofficial channels, even offering vaccines. North Korea, known to be adamant in its independent nature, has declined all offers.

Historically, the DPRK has been open to pursuing the MIA recovery mission though. It unilaterally returned remains in the 1990s, 2007 and recently the 55 boxes in 2018. Joint recovery operations ran from 1996-2005. If the Biden administration is open and the mission is allowed to be independent of more contentious issues, progress may be made.

One key indicator will be how the U.S. handles sanctions – either in their direct impact on North Korea or indirectly in how they affect nongovernmental U.S. organizations and their interactions with North Korea.

The Biden administration appointed Sung Kim as the new special envoy to North Korea. Mr. Kim was born in Seoul but grew up in Los Angeles. He previously served as the ambassador to South Korea and as the Special Envoy for the Six-Party Talks. Mr. Kim has a long background in international relations, so it will be interesting to see how he is received by North Korea .

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President's Corner

All the many years that I've been with the accounting mission, my naïve vision of the missing men coming home was as a one-time event: 'Here they are! All of them! All identified!' Fireworks may have been involved.



K55 Return Ceremony

The realist in me knew better than that. For thirty years, the mission has been identifying and sending men home in groups designated the K-208, JFAs, K-55. In that naïve part of my mind, however, this was prelude to the big finale when the whole lot would somehow be returned all at once ... the fireworks moment.

The reality is that learning the fate of these men in clusters, as it has been, is the way it will happen going forward. 186 men were identified through the 208 boxes of remains sent home by North Korea in the early 1990s. Another 156 identifications were made through the joint recovery operations inside North Korea between 1996 and 2005. Six were identified of the seven Bill Richardson brought home in 2007. Seventy-four have been identified from the 55 boxes returned by North Korea in 2018. A total of 423 missing American servicemen have been identified in the returns/recoveries from North Korea over the years. A lot of families have found closure through these clusters of returns and identifications.

Then there are the Unknowns being brought up from the Punchbowl in Hawaii. Over 400 of the 866 caskets have been raised. More than 150 have been identified and gone home.

This is the nature of the mission. The firework moments were policy decisions – when recovery teams were allowed into NK, when all the people and agencies agreed to disinter the Unknowns. Individual advocacy campaigns that ranted and raved, argued and debated, discussed and agreed upon, were the forces behind these moments. That's when the fireworks happened. Groups of missing men were later identified because of these moments, these campaigns.

Technological advances in identifications are another factor – with their own campaigns to development and implementation. They are allowing identifications to be made

that weren't considered possible previously. These advancements will continue as well, eventually identifying men that still wait for their moment. These will also come in clusters.

The mission will continue this way. The important moments will come from many different campaigns, each of which will result in decision making that will lead to the fate of missing men being learned. The campaigns, and those who waged them, will have been lost in accomplishments.

So, there will be no grand moment where all the men will be home in one fell swoop. Even though I know this, there still is that part of me that imagines that the fate of all 5300 men still missing in North Korea, the nearly 1000 still missing in South Korea, and who knows how many that were taken to the former Soviet Union, will all be resolved at once. Take about a week. Silly, of course. Still, the vision doesn't go away. Maybe it's what keeps me going.

The challenge is to not let naïve expectations of this ideal get in the way of pursuing the smaller campaigns that actually make it possible to bring men home. The plan is to keep finding ways to bring smaller groups home, while identifying ones already here ... new technologies that allow more DNA extraction ... more families giving DNA, ... North Korea and the U.S. agreeing to resume recovery missions ... an NGO brings a few home here and there ... the USRJC learns the fate of men taken to Russia ... China open its archives.

The mission is made up of these piecemeal campaigns. It is people working on separate projects that build upon each other's efforts until another fireworks moment occurs. Maybe our guy will be among them.

For some, it will be the next generation that carries on. They are taking on projects now. One day, all the men who can be found will be found. There won't be fireworks then either. It will be a quiet realization ... okay, that's done. Mission accomplished.

Rick Downes, President

(Lt. Hal Downes, father - MIA 1952)

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South Korea / Republic of Korea

There are approximately 1000 men still MIA in South Korea, despite an exhaustive search done following the war. Many were lost in the heavily mined DMZ. South Korea's counterpart to DPAA, MAKRI, is continuing the search for men from all countries lost during the war. The search within the DMZ finally opened last year. North and South Korea agreed to begin demining operations and remains recovery around battles that took place in and around Arrowhead Ridge. U.S. forces were not too involved in battles that area.



South Korea has completed its initial demining and search. They will be moving on to other sites in the area. The exciting aspect is that searches within the DMZ are underway. This has long been a goal.

In March, a DPAA investigative team departed to work with MAKRI. There will also be investigations in the Central Corridor and Busan perimeter areas. DPAA's Drs. Byrd and Jin also traveled to South Korea and performed a Joint Forensic Review with MAKRI. The team reviewed nine sets of remains and recommended three be repatriated for future analysis at the DPAA Lab.

(Courtesy of DPAA)

Russia / Russian Federation

The former Soviet Union was involved in Korean War air battles, anti-aircraft units, and behind the scenes on the ground. There are documented reports that U.S. military personnel were taken to the Soviet Union but never returned.

US–Russia Joint Commission (USRJC) Update.

Since the 1990s, Russian has worked with the U.S. to learn what may have happened to these men. March 26 was the 29th anniversary of the U.S. Russia Joint Commission, which was established by Presidents George H.W. Bush and Boris Yeltsin.

The USRJC's consistency is sometimes impacted by other relations between the U.S. and Russia. Commissioners are not appointed. Archivists are called back or not

approved. The reasons are always political, unrelated to the commission's mission. In general, though archivists on both sides do their best to work on requests from each side; trying to stay independent of contentious politics.

In November 2020, Russian President Putin filled long-standing vacancies on the Russian Side of the Commission. This action set the stage for the two sides to renew its work once pandemic-related conditions permit. This work includes archival research in the Russian Ministry of Defense Archives and planning for the previously postponed recovery mission at a cemetery near Vladivostok, Russia, which may correlate to a 1951 US Navy aircraft Cold War loss.



China / People's Republic of China

The Chinese don't get a lot of attention in the Korea War POW/MIA mission. Yet they hold a lot of answers to many missing men's fate. Chinese soldiers fought U.S.



troops on the front lines and responded to U.S. air loss sites. They partnered with the Soviets during interrogations of U.S. P.O.W.s. For most of the war, China ran the P.O.W. camps housing thousands of U.S. troops – many of whom never came home. Chinese records should hold that information. They aren't sharing that info. The most they have agreed to is info on U.S. air losses inside China. All reports on U.S.

personnel from inside Korea remain classified or are subject to approval from the DPRK – despite a 2008 agreement between the U.S. and China that allows access.

In late January of this year, DPAA reported conducting a virtual, two-day case information exchange with China's People's Liberation Army Archives Department. Fifteen cases of U.S. MIAs were discussed, covering World War II, the Korean War, Cold War, and Vietnam War. There was also talk about future joint field work in the People's Republic of China.

(Courtesy of DPAA)

The Unremitting Question About American P.O.W.s:
Were some taken from North Korea to the former Soviet Union?

By Donna D. Knox
 Daughter of Lt. Hal Downes, USAF (MIA since 1/13/52)

Early last year, the Coalition announced an upcoming review of evidence relating to the issue of whether Americans were taken from the theater of combat in North Korea and transferred to the Soviet Union. We expected to publish those articles throughout 2020. But then the COVID struck, life went haywire, and here we are in June of 2021. We are, however, ready now to do what we wanted to do a year ago.

When I thought about writing this series of articles, I intended to lay out the questions and then the answers, or lack thereof, in a neat, orderly fashion. But, when I sat down to write this first piece, I was overwhelmed by the boxes and folders and notebooks—all of which contain reports, transcripts of hearings, media coverage, archival research, and a great deal more. Suffice it to say that the so-called Live Prisoner Transfer issue is complex and uncertain.

I decided that setting out some history would be the best way to begin. In future articles, I will delve more deeply into details of certain sightings and reports.

The question of whether P.O.W.s were being held back was raised before the Korean War even ended. Officials noted discrepancies between enemy reports of how many men had been captured versus U.S. reports of how many men were missing. For example, a December 21, 1951, message from General Headquarters Far East Command references the 'incompleteness' of the P.O.W. list furnished by the Communists and goes on to 'assume' the inaccuracy was being challenged. It further states that Intelligence indicated there were live prisoners who were not named on the list.. *(Editor's Note: Complete documents are found on the Coalition's website: www.coalitionoffamilies.org)*

A September 2, 1952, CIA Information Report cites a 'source' that reported it was known that transit camps for P.O.W.s captured in Korea had been established in Komsomolsk-on-Amur, in the Russian Far East, and that American P.O.W.s were passing through those transit camps.

In December of 1953, the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Hugh Milton, issued a memo to the Army Chief of Staff requesting detailed information about 610 Army personnel who were listed by the U.S. as P.O.W.s but were still unaccounted for. Interestingly, the information Milton sought pertained to education and technical skills, among other things, suggesting a concern that men with certain knowledge and expertise were being selected out and not acknowledged.

These are just three of numerous reports, memos, and other interactions within the U.S. government from early on that showed a growing concern that all was not as it should be in terms of the Communists' accounting for Americans who had been captured. Some six months after the Armistice was signed in July of 1953, the Department of State issued a report titled *Efforts to Secure the Return of American Personnel Who Might Still Be In Communist Custody*. The report stated that the United Nations Command had collected information from 'every known source' to make sure all prisoners were accounted for, and that careful screening of the information had produced evidence that there might be some personnel in Communist custody who were not returned during the prisoner exchange nor otherwise accounted for.

By this time, so many reports and resulting questions had leaked through the media that the American public and Congress began pressing for more to be done. Finally, then-Secretary of the Army, Robert Stevens, wrote a memorandum to the Secretary of Defense in which he recommended that the military, in concert with the State Department, form detailed plans to initiate diplomatic negotiations. Whatever plans they came up with yielded no results.

All of this is to say that the unexplained disappearance of some American servicemen who fought in Korea has been known for some 70 years. Were some of them taken to the Soviet Union? We still have no answers and the most oft-repeated explanation from our government is simply that there is 'no credible evidence' that men were taken and not returned. *(Continue to the Next Page)*



(P.O.W.s Continued)

I am an attorney. In a court of law, when evidence is put forth, it stands unless and until it is shown to lack credibility. The issue presented does not just go away because someone says they cannot prove the evidence to be right or wrong. The matter asserted and supported by evidence is deemed credible unless additional evidence shows affirmatively that it is not.

In light of the numerous reports that Americans were taken to the Soviet Union and not returned, an aggressive and thorough investigation should have been ongoing. But from what we have been able to ascertain, this is not the case.

At a hearing in September of 1996, then-Congressman Bob Dornan, who chaired the House Subcommittee on Military Personnel, referenced his 31 years of direct involvement with the issue of missing servicemen, as well as the past twenty months in which he had conducted a series of hearings in order to provide effective oversight of the fullest possible accounting of

Americans still missing in action. In his comments Dornan referenced the 'lack of competence by an entrenched bureaucracy.' He further stated that "this shameful institutional performance is best described as an unrelenting predisposition to discredit and dismiss all information and reports that have merit and might lead to resolving cases of Americans known to have been alive in communist captivity."

At that same hearing, Colonel Phillip Corso (Retired) testified that he had been Head of the Special Projects Branch/Intelligence Division/Far East Command under General MacArthur. Upon his return to the U.S., Corso was assigned to the White House National Security Council, a position from which he handled 'virtually all' projects related to U.S. P.O.W.s. Corso testified as to several reports that Americans had been sent to the Soviet Union for intelligence exploitation.

I also testified at that hearing. As Colonel Corso and I sat together in a room waiting to be called, he confided in me that, when he shared this information with then-President Eisenhower, the President asked him what he would do if he were President: tell the American People the truth and risk war with the Soviet Union or hide the truth to protect peace and prevent additional losses. Corso told me his answer was to hide the truth. And that's what they did.

Congressman Dornan made an insightful remark at that hearing. He stated that, in the nuclear shadow of the Cold

War, Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy were faced with a classic dilemma: risk millions of innocent citizens or leave American P.O.W.s in gulags behind the iron curtain. Dornan went on to say that, after the fall of the Soviet Union, there was no credible explanation for not utilizing this country's vast resources to finally keep the faith and demand the fullest possible accounting. That was twenty-five years ago and we still have no answers.

At that time, the U.S. Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs (USRJC) was four years in existence. Part of the USRJC's mission was (and remains) to determine whether American servicemen were being held against

their will on the territory of the former Soviet Union, and, if so, to secure their immediate release and repatriation. The Department of Defense's POW/Missing Personnel Office (called DPMO at the time) was tasked with providing analytical and investigative support to the Joint Commission. All of this was a positive step forward in terms of the government

taking on the live prisoner transfer issue. That being said, the tenacles of bureaucratic delay and avoidance had not been fully rooted out.

In 1999, the U.S. side of the USRJC raised 'the Memoirs' with its Russian counterparts. The Memoirs is a diary, of sorts, compiled decades earlier by a Russian named Veniamin Dodin who lived in internal exile within the former Soviet Union most of his life. Dodin claimed to have, on multiple occasions, heard about, been told about, and seen evidence of Americans in the USSR against their will during the 1940s and 50s.

Nothing concrete came about in terms of an investigation by the USRJC until 2005. At its plenary session in Moscow that year, the two sides of the Commission agreed to fully investigate information contained in Dodin's Memoirs. They agreed to hold a second archival conference to advance relevant issues. The Russian side responded favorably to the proposal and various Russian archivists proposed discussion topics.

Nothing concrete came about in terms of an investigation by the USRJC until 2005. At its plenary session in Moscow that year, the two sides of the Commission agreed to fully investigate information contained in Dodin's Memoirs. They agreed to hold a second archival conference to advance relevant issues. The Russian side responded favorably to the proposal and various Russian archivists proposed discussion topics. *(Continue to the Next Page)*



(P.O.W.s Continued)

Unfortunately, DPMO's leadership disapproved of the initiative. A member of the USRJC at the time informed me that DPMO asserted that it's budget allocations would remain focused on more 'immediate' requirements, such as expanding its data base. The Commission member also told me that the Memoirs included, among other things, a diagram that purportedly showed where some twenty U.S. POWs from the Korean War were led from a Soviet mining camp, and that at least one of the names listed on the diagram matched that of a missing American serviceman. I am not privy to the details behind DPMO's decision. But, on the surface, it would appear that the agency declined to support a cooperative effort with the Russians that could well have shed informative light on the transfer issue.

My purpose is not to denigrate the current staff of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency. DPAA (DPMO's successor) has many dedicated individuals within its ranks who, I believe, are genuinely committed to the fullest possible accounting. The problems are not of their making. The problems are long-standing and deeply rooted in many aspects of this complicated issue. My purpose in this, and

other articles to come, is to demonstrate that the question of whether American P.O.W.s were taken to the Soviet Union is a valid one. It is true that we do not have definitive evidence. It is also true that a large body of evidence does, in fact, exist and should be taken seriously. Credible evidence and absolute proof are not the same thing. We should explore every viable alternative, whether through diplomatic channels or through the exercise of reasonable economic or other pressures, to get the answers that are so long overdue.

In the series of articles that will follow this one, I will delve into specific sightings, reports and other evidence that speak to the notion that men were held back. Some of these reports have been questioned. Some have been set aside for a lack of confirmation. It will not be a discussion from which one can draw absolute conclusions. It will, I hope, give rise to a meaningful pursuit of answers to the difficult and painful questions that families of the missing have been asking for decades.

These reports will be posted on the Coalition's website as they are completed. You can follow the series there over the coming weeks and months.

* Korean/Cold War Family August Briefing *

DPAA will host the annual meeting in person this year, August 5-6 at the Renaissance Arlington Capital View Hotel, in Arlington, Virginia. The invitation letters will be mailed the first week in June. Families can register online at :

<http://www.dpaa.mil/Families/FamilyEvents.aspx>,

and make hotel reservations at:

<https://www.marriott.com/events/start.mi?id=1622125731418&key=GRP>

or call 888-236-2427, reference "Korean Cold War 2021" room block.

Email your Service Casualty Offices with any questions:

Air Force - afpc.dpfc.pow-mia@us.af.mil

Army - usarmy.knox.hrc.mbx.tagd-tapcper@mail.mil

Marine Corps - repatriation@usmc.mil

Navy - mill_navypow-mia@Navy.mil

* To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the "Tomb of the Unknown Soldier", DPAA will bring the group to Arlington National Cemetery and participate in a wreath laying ceremony on Friday afternoon, August 6.

Cold War Losses

Thirty-nine U.S. military and civilian aircraft were either shot down or otherwise lost on the periphery of communist countries, primarily the former Soviet Union, while flying intelligence missions during the Cold War (1946-1991). One hundred twenty-six U.S. service members remain unaccounted for from the war.

In November 2020, Russian President Putin filled long-standing vacancies on the Russian Side of the Commission. This action set the stage for the two sides to renew its work once pandemic-related conditions permit. The USRJC is planning for the previously postponed recovery mission at a cemetery near Vladivostok, Russia, which may correlate to a 1951 US Navy aircraft Cold War loss.



United States

The Biden White House has been talking with everyone under the sun developing their policy towards North Korea. The outcome of the review was recently released:

"Our policy calls for a calibrated, practical approach that is open to and will explore diplomacy with the DPRK, and to make practical progress that increases the security of the United States, our allies and deployed forces," White House press secretary Jen Psaki said.

There are a lot of lines to read between there.

There are phrases one wish were included: *One of our priorities will be to bring our missing men home, or We hope to return recovery teams to North Korea as soon as possible.* Language like this has yet to appear.

The media had these headlines:

Biden to Steer Between Obama, Trump Policies on North Korea - Wall Street Journal

Biden administration to pursue 'practical' North Korea nuclear diplomacy - FoxNews

Biden dismisses Trump, Obama approaches in charting new North Korea policy - ABC News

Again, one would like to have seen: *Will our missing men be a priority?* The media didn't raise the issue.

There was this: A senior administration official said, *"Our approach will build on the Singapore agreement and other previous agreements"*.

The MIA recovery mission was part of that agreement. NK later delivered 55 boxes of remains – from which 74 families have found closure so far.

While short on specifics, there seems to be an openness to the Biden plan - flexibility, a lack of extremes, go



with the flow. If an opportunity to talk/meet/dance with North Korea, this White House appears okay with taking advantage of it.

If/when the moment for action comes, these are among the important issues to be pursued:

- *Exempt the accounting mission from all travel bans,
- *Allow third party ngos to engage with the DPRK,
- * Return the recovery mission to North Korea.
- *Designate the mission humanitarian, to be negotiated separately from other contentious issues. The U.S. already does this works on the accounting mission with nuclear powers

Russia and China.

DPAA had input in the administration's policy review. They shared the POW/MIA experience with Vietnam as an example of former enemies coming together via the humanitarian mission. The issue helped build trust and confidence.

The NK/US relationship seems to feed off conflict, as if the two governments don't know how to behave otherwise. If it were a family affair, the people of both countries would be the children ... watching the parents argue and argue ... hoping they would stop so that everyone could get on with other things in life.

"Our policy towards North Korea is not aimed at hostility. It's aimed at solutions," Jake Sullivan, Biden's national security adviser, said in an interview with ABC. Let's hope this includes MIAs.

Twelve presidential administrations have faced the Korean/Cold War accounting mission, with little success. Maybe #13 will turn out to be lucky.

* * * * *

Congress

Congress has been a consistent ally of the accounting mission. With 2021 came the new 117th Congress. Legislation from the 116th Congress has to be reintroduced. These bills are among them:



* *The Bring Our Heroes Home Act*, declassification Legislation. If enacted,

the *BOHHA* will be the first comprehensive legislation to mandate widespread declassification of documents related to missing U.S. service personnel dating back to WWII.

The bill has moved steadily through the Senate and House since being introduced at the end of the 115th Congress, 2016. It is currently under review for introduction.

* *The Enhancing North Korea Humanitarian Assistance Act* has been reintroduced by Sen Markey (MA) and Rep. Levin (MI). This bill calls for lifting sanctions on NGOs doing humanitarian work inside North Korea. The Korean War POW/MIA accounting mission is included.

A proposed Resolution asks that the Korean War POW/MIA recovery mission be designated humanitarian, to be pursued independently of more contentious issues between the two governments. The next step is to connect with a Congressional office that will introduce the resolution.

State Dept

The nation's new Secretary of State, Anthony (Tony) Blinken, has experience with North Korea. Mr. Blinken worked on the North Korea portfolio during the



Obama administration, part of the group that attempted to jumpstart diplomatic conversations with the North Koreans. He has served as deputy secretary of state, principal deputy national security advisor, and Democratic staff director for the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Congress approved Mr. Sung Kim as the special envoy to North Korea. Mr. Kim was born in Seoul, Korea, and grew up in Los Angeles. In the past, he served as the ambassador to South Korea, the Special Envoy for the Six-Party Talks, and has a long background in international relations.

* A Memo was sent to Sec. Blinken by a collective of non-governmental organizations recommended that the State Department remove the travel ban to the DPRK for humanitarian missions. The accounting mission was included.

Dept. of Defense



Lloyd James Austin III is the new Secretary of Defense. Gen. Austin's 41-year career in the Army included command at the corps, division, battalion, and brigade levels. He was awarded the Silver Star for his leadership during the invasion of Iraq in

2003. He retired from the Army in 2016.

Following his retirement from military service, Sec. Austin served on the Boards of Directors for Raytheon Technologies, Nucor, and Tenet Healthcare

DPAA

* DPAA holds quarterly conference phone call with NGOs supporting the accounting mission. The NGOs then share the information with their members.

* There have been 92 Identifications between October 2020 and April 2021) -

- WWII = 81 newly-accounted-for
- Korean War = 10
- Vietnam War = 1

(Additional Portion related to previous IDs = 146)



The Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Budget.

Congress passed, and the President signed into law, the Consolidated Appropriations Act 2021. In addition to DPAA's budget request of \$130 million, they received two Congressional Program Increases to bring this year's budget to a little under \$155M.

*** Partnerships and Innovations (PI)**

DPAA is working with the University of Utah to develop maps of strontium and oxygen isotopes concentrations in U.S. soil and groundwater. These maps will assist the DPAA Laboratory in matching bone and tooth samples from remains to areas where individuals were born and grew up.

* DPAA has reviewed ground and air cases for investigation and recovery in South Korea and the Demilitarized Zone for 2021-2023. They have also generated research products provided to MAKRI for their planned operations at US loss sites.

*** Punch Bowl Unknowns / NMCP**

The Korean War Identification Project (KWIP) has disinterred over half of the original Korean War Unknowns interred in the NMCP after the Korean War. As of April 2021, there are 294 remains of Unknowns in the lab; with nearly 2/3 of these being exhumed within the past 2 years. 154 men have been identified from this effort.

DPAA will continue disinterments at an average of 16 per month to complete Phase 3, which should be accomplished in late summer or early fall of this year. Phase 3 encompasses 63 Unknowns from UNMC Miryang and later recoveries from battles in the Naktong Bulge area of the Pusan Perimeter, from late July to September 1950. This phase began Dec 7, 2020. (See DPAA's website.)



*** AFMES-AFDIL Update**

The collaborative efforts of Congressman Chris Pappas and others were instrumental in getting a \$4M program increase included in the recently passed Consolidated Appropriations Act 2021. The 4M will be used in the purchase of reagents (for NGS DNA extraction) and to replace end of life equipment supporting the past accounting mission.



* Armed Forces Medical Examiner believes that testing capability should double by January 2023.

* **AFDIL is working** with a scientist in the ancient DNA field (Neanderthal era) to assist with modifications to how AFMES-AFDIL can recover more DNA from highly challenged samples

Our Collective Voice

Coalition News

The Coalition's role in the accounting mission focuses on three areas - advocacy, outreach and research. Together and separately they are the pathways to answers we all look forward to finding.



Each new year offers hope that the search for our missing loved ones will bring answers to more families. We look forward to working with you to turn hope into reality.

* *Mailing Address Update*

Post offices move, branches close. The *Coalition's* mailing address is once again:

PO Box 4194

Portsmouth, NH 03802

We're happy being back at the old box number.

* *Amazon Smile*

Thank you to those who make the *Coalition* their non-profit charity of choice on *Amazon Smile*. Your purchases help support our role in learning what happened to the missing men.

* *AFDIL Funding*

The government's DNA laboratory pursues identifications of all military personnel serving today and yesterday. Its past conflicts operation processes DNA samples submitted by DPAA's labs.

While AFDIL's operations are an indispensable aspect of the accounting mission, they are funded via the Armed Forces Medical Examiner's office, a DOD subagency separate from DPAA; with a separate budget. This funding hasn't always kept pace with DPAA's increasing submissions from the disinterment of Unknowns treated with formalin solution. At times, the identification process has slowed down waiting in line.

Government agencies like AFDIL are not permitted to request added funding directly from Congress. As a non-governmental organization, the *Coalition* can. We did. Rep. Pappas' (NH) office responded successfully. The Consolidated Appropriations Act 2021 included \$4 million for AFDIL's budget.

This effort was the culmination and fulfillment of a collaboration between Rep. Pappas' office, AFDIL, and the *Coalition* – one that will need to be successful again this year. The *Coalition* thanks Congressman Pappas and those who work in his office for their ongoing support for the accounting mission.

* *Humanitarian Mission Resolution*

The *Coalition* worked with the *American Friends Service Committee* to propose a Resolution asking that the Korean War POW/MIA recovery mission be designated a humanitarian mission, to be pursued independently of more contentious issues between the two governments. We are looking for a Congressional office that will introduce the resolution.

* *Bring Our Heroes Home Act*

Many of you have been following the BOHHA's journey. Information on any of the missing men might be found in P.O.W. debriefings, intel reports, and other documents that have been kept secret unnecessarily for decades.



The *Coalition* has worked with several offices to move the bill through Congress. Each year, it gets further along the way. Currently, the bill is waiting on Sen. Shaheen's and Sen. Crapo's offices to decide how they want to reintroduce the bill.

* *Enhancing North Korea Humanitarian Assistance Act*

This bill calls for lifting sanctions on NGOs doing humanitarian work inside North Korea. In 2016, the *Coalition* worked with Sen. Shaheen's (NH) office on legislation that exempted the POW/MIA accounting mission Congressional legislation. This bill includes wording from that bill. The next order of business will be reaching out to families to ask their Senators /Representative to sign on as cosponsors.

* *DPAA Conference Calls*

The *Coalition* joins other nongovernmental organizations in quarterly conference phone calls with DPAA that update the POW/MIA accounting mission. The *Coalition* sends notes from these calls out to the families.

* *Memo to Sec. of State Blinken*

The *Coalition* joined the *Richardson Center for Global Engagement, VFW, American Friends Service Committee, and Divided Families USA*, in this Memo sent recommending that the State Department remove the existing travel ban to the DPRK for humanitarian missions.

Membership

The *Coalition of Families of Korean & Cold War POW/MIAs* is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, dedicated to accounting for the thousands of American servicemen who are still missing from the Korean and Cold Wars. Their stories should be told and closure found for their families.

Washington, DC, Travel Fund Donations

The *Coalition* relies on memberships and broader donations to pursue issues that help know what happened to the missing men.

Much of this work is done in Washington, DC. Multiple visits each year incur expenses beyond the *Coalition's* regular operation.

Please add to your membership donation and support these important expenses.

The more we are able to travel to the nation's capital ... the more we can advocate on the men's behalf.



Thank you.

Coalition of Families of Korean and Cold War POW/MIAs
National Membership Application

New

Renewal

Name: _____

Date: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

(Associate Membership / Nonfamily member – please check here:)

Relationship to missing service member: _____

Service member's full name: _____ Service # _____

Branch of Service/Unit or Group: _____

Date & Area of Loss: _____

Annual Membership Donation - \$25

Washington, DC Travel Donation - \$ _____.

Make checks payable to: Coalition of Families

Mail to:

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

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