

IN MY OPINION by Irene Mandra



Dear Members,

DPMO did a fantastic job at the annual Korea/Cold War annual meeting which took place September 1 & 2, 2011 in Virginia. I realize it's a tremendous amount of work on their part and I truly appreciate their effort. I have one large disappointment which occurred this year and I sincerely hope that this will never happen again. This is the first year that we did not receive packets at our meeting. I guess it has not occurred to members at DPMO that many of our families are not on computer, therefore they have nothing to take home and read what exactly the Department of Defense is doing to locate and bring them closure on the status of their missing loved ones.

It was very good of DOD to put this information on their web site, again forgetting that they are dealing with an older population, who found the print hard to read, half of the 500 attending are not on computer. In the past if we had a question we could ask our friends at DPMO for an explanation, there at the general meeting. Now we have to go to a web site, (of course those who know how) and what we don't understand there is no one to enlighten us.

I realize that DOD wishes to save money but let me make my position very clear, and let me emphasize how angry I am. **STOP TRYING TO SAVE MONEY ON THE BACK'S OF THE FAMILIES.** Your job is to help us deal with a great loss and give us understanding on what our government is doing to give us closure and accountability on the fate of our missing loved ones. Please understand our position.

As the holidays are fast approaching we think and miss our loved ones who are still missing. We still wait for the Russians to tell us who they took and when will they ever give us the answers we so desire. The Chinese seem like a hopeless cause. As far as our loved ones go their presence we miss, their memory we treasure. Loving him always, forgetting him never.

As the saying goes, remembering them is easy, I do it every day, but there's an ache within my heart that will never go away. You could apply that saying to any loved one that you lost.

We look forward to 2012, if and when we get back into North Korea, and some families will have the closure after sixty some odd years.

The Board and I wish you a Happy Thanksgiving, and a Happy Holiday Season.

Irene