

THE FRONT PAGE

KOREA-COLD WAR
FAMILIES OF THE MISSING
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February 2015 Issue #47
POW-MIA WE Remember!

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IN MY OPINION

By Irene Mandra

Under the direction of the Secretary of Defense, the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, and per the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) passed by Congress, the Department of Defense formally created one agency responsible for the recovery and accounting of missing service members from past conflicts. The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) was established on January 30, 2015, to more effectively increase the number of missing service personnel accounted for from past conflicts and ensure timely and accurate information is communicated to their families. The Interim Director is Rear

Admiral Michael T. Franken, USN.

The DPAA brings together the former Defense Prisoner of War Missing Personnel Office (DPMO), the Joint Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command (JPAC), and the Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory (LSEL). Consolidating the Department's personnel accounting assets will lead to better oversight of family resources and services, research, and operations. The agency will enable the workforce to achieve the fullest possible accounting for our missing personnel, better anticipate family needs, and adapt to changes in the DoD and the United States Government. The agency will also honor our veterans' sacrifices and confirm an obligation made to those serving our country.

The new agency will move toward being fully operational over the next year, framed by meeting major milestones. The first milestone occurred on January 30, 2015, when the new agency reached Initial Operational Capability. In addition to Rear Admiral Franken, the leadership team includes Major General Kelly McKeague as the Interim Deputy Director, and Lieutenant General Michael Linnington as an agency advisor. Until further decision, headquarters will remain in Washington, DC with an operational office in Hawaii, and satellite labs in Nebraska and Ohio.

BITS N PIECES – Lynn O'Shea, National Alliance of Families, Feb 28, 2015

United Front – Earlier this week, the national Alliance of Families joined with three other POW/MIA family groups issuing the following press release.

We, the leadership of the World War II families for the Return of the Missing, Search and Recover Greatest Generation, Korea Cold War Families of the Missing, and the National Alliance of Families for the Return of America's Missing Servicemen, unite to voice our extreme displeasure and frustration at the current turn of events in the process to reorganize the POW/MIA accounting effort.

The third attempt by the Department of Defense to reorganize the POW/MIA accounting effort since March 2014 has resulted in the exclusion of POW/MIA family groups from the process. The promises of transparency and "...a balanced and more family-centric approach" have fallen to the wayside. Instead, the current leadership of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) has adopted a dictatorial attitude excluding our groups from the process in which we were once integrally involved. The new attitude is "our way or the highway." DPAA leadership has made it clear they will tolerate no questioning or criticism of its efforts.

Unfortunately, it appears the leadership of the new agency is unwilling to learn from the past mistakes. This is not the first attempt by DoD to reorganize the POW/MIA accounting effort. It is not even the second, third or fourth over the past 30 years. We now see a familiar pattern of past arrogance repeated within the new DPAA. Unless significant changes in policy, practice and attitude take place in the coming weeks, our membership will be forced to deal with a new organization that will be nothing more than a costly cosmetic change and the new POW/MIA accounting agency will be a failure before it is fully operational.

The POW/MIA family groups listed here ask the public to support us in seeking an investigation by Congress on the ongoing failure to reorganize the POW/MIA accounting mission.

Our missing servicemen and their families deserve better.

KENNETH BREAUX - WWII FAMILY – Notes from 2/10/2015 FAMILY GROUPS CONFERENCE CALL

- Just in listening to the roll call of participants, it is very clear that family groups, especially those who are actually represented by a MIA family, are a vanishing species. I am not sure what the Afghanistan Veterans Association has to do with MIA recovery, though I won't deny them a place at the table. It is apparent that Franken and Bardorf in particular, do not want contact with MIA families. In fact both of them went out of their way to criticize previous family members, though not by name, saying they have a new "Values Policy" and claiming that "Mutual Respect" is one of their cornerstones. The comment was something like "individual issues are best in a one-on-one setting, and not in the broader group."
- The first half hour was spent telling us what a great job they were doing, and listening to them congratulate each other. We went over the usual "issues"; the great difficulty of combining two agencies, and their respective Legal, HR, Accounting functions, and telling us what the new organization chart meant. We learned about the new building, and Bardorf said "we are off to a great start with the reorganization."
- Several people, including Bob Ousley, Irene Mandra, and John Zimmerlee, commented on their concern of several issues, but as soon as John got too critical, he was cut off by Rene. All of them voiced concern over WWII and Korea, the time spent vs. the expected recoveries, and the need to continue to look harder at the research and analysis function. We were all assured that they are "busy every day" doing history and archival research. Bob Ousley or John mentioned being concerned about how all this (reorganization) was going to help them achieve the NDAA-mandated 200 recoveries per year.

- The dialogue was mostly one way, with their script being closely followed.
- They avoided the discussion of the results of the working groups, the discussion of any policy issues, and any discussion of recommendations by “The Clearing.” There are no European recovery missions at the moment, but there are several in South Korea, S/N Vietnam, and some WWII Pacific sites. They expect to have a WWII ETO mission beginning in March, and Gen. Linnington said that he witnessed the “finest briefing” he had ever received on that mission. My comments regarding suggestions were not addressed, and Rene said that they were “something best dealt with later” or words to that effect.
- I believe that the message is clear. They will slowly weed out the family groups in favor of the large VSOs and other entities. There is a clear political benefit to that for them, and that is what they will take to the hill to lobby Congress, and to defend their position.

Known But To God

In the military cemeteries of Europe, the Philippines, and the United States stand the bone-white Latin crosses and Stars of David, stark and stainless symbols of sacrifice and valor. The small monuments mark the final resting places of the known dead of World War II. In these same cemeteries in the liberated countries of Europe and the Philippines stand other crosses with the inscription “Here lies in honored glory a comrade in arms known but to God.” In each of these cemeteries stands a larger memorial to the missing. World War II generated nearly 400,000 dead, and another 78,000 missing in action. For many of these there is no possibility of recovery. The US Navy has chosen to allow sunken ships to become the graves of sailors, and even if recovery were authorized, recovery of those lost in deep water is not possible. But the military has said in official correspondence that among the 78,000 missing of World War II, approximately 18,000 can be recovered. Within that large group, there are a small percentage of family members who actively seek closure for their loss. Children of World War II casualties especially seek this closure as they age and increasingly often their grandchildren have the same desire to know more about the loss and the circumstances surrounding it. The frustration of searching can become overwhelming for these families. In some cases, there is scant information regarding the loss and its location, especially for aircrews lost over water without witnesses. In others, clear evidence of poor documentation and custody of remains is present. Even when families find a site that contains remains of their relatives and solid if circumstantial evidence, the process continues to burden an overwhelmed agency tasked with the duty of recovering, identifying, and repatriating the soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines of World War II. For the last several years since publishing a book about the successful recovery of a World War II casualty, I have been honored to know some of the families of the missing. Their patriotism, persistence, and determination to honor their missing relative are humbling. These are the stories of some of these families, and their dedication to the memory of their loved one.

**Frederick W. Goempel
Private, US Army
F Company, 2nd Battalion
11th Infantry Regiment
5th Infantry Division
9 February 1945**

In early February of 1945, US Army divisions occupied a broad 25-mile front on the western side of the Sauer River in Luxembourg. The Sauer formed the border between Luxembourg and Germany, and General George S. Patton had ordered a military maneuver known as a forced river crossing. Forced crossings occur when the units in pursuit of the enemy cannot continue the pursuit in normal order, but must stop, prepare a "forced" crossing with special equipment, and usually in the face of strong defenses. This crossing was to be especially difficult. The Sauer, normally a placid stream that was narrow and not deep, could be easily crossed in normal weather. In February of 1945 however, the weather would hinder the pursuers as they attempted the crossing. The winter snowfall experienced by the besieged 82nd Airborne in Bastogne had melted. Now, the Sauer raged with a 12 mile per hour current, deep and wide. Temperatures were freezing or slightly above. The Germans occupied high ground on the bank facing the Americans, and the area bristled with tanks and fixed concrete bunkers. The equipment to be used by the Americans was not of the best quality. Heavy plywood boats with no engines were all that were available. And these were to be paddled across the strong current, filled with soldiers loaded down with rifles and ammunition, wearing packs, winter clothing and heavy boots.

Frederick Goempel joined F Company of the 11th Infantry approximately 5 days before 2nd Battalion attempted the river crossing. An infantry replacement, he had entered the front with hundreds of other replacements for the wounded and dead of the battles the US Army was fighting as they approached the border of Germany. On the night of 6-7 February 1945, the men of 2nd Battalion prepared to cross the raging Sauer approximately 2 miles north of the town of Echternach, Luxembourg. Combat engineers had placed a number of wooden boats at a tree line close to the river. The plan was for the engineers to support the crossing by going over with the infantry, so that they could return the boats for further use. In the first attempt, enemy fire was heavy, and the swift current took several boats and the men inside either down the river out of control, or the boats were struck by enemy fire and lost. Only one squad of men was able to make the crossing and establish a tenuous bridgehead on the German side. This intrepid group of eight men was stranded under enemy fire for nearly a day before two of their Captains made it across and evacuated the squad. Crossing attempts and plans continued, and artillery fire pounded the German positions across the Sauer, assisted by chemical mortars to lay down a smoke screen in the hopes of destroying the German's ability to observe the crossing. By the evening of 8-9 February, the Second Battalion had succeeded in crossing many of the unit, and had begun to advance to an elevated area on the German shore known as Hill 183, which was a key objective.

Once the bridgehead was secure and expanded, units regrouped and began supply and support operations. Head counts were made and wounded were brought to an aid station west of the town of Echternach, perhaps a mile from the river crossing. The dead were collected and attempts were made at identification. Frederick Goempel was not at the bridgehead, nor was he found among the dead and wounded at the aid station. He was reported as missing. There were no reports of him being taken prisoner by the Germans. There were few men who knew Frederick or who made his acquaintance before the crossing. Unlike many of the dead, his family received none of his personal effects, either from his equipment left behind at the battalion storage point or on his person. He was simply missing. There were two people who thought that they knew what might have happened to Frederick. One of them thinks that someone resembling Frederick stepped on a mine as the assault team landed on the far bank, and was obliterated by the explosion. This man did not know Frederick, but described

someone remarkably similar in appearance to him. Another man, who did know Frederick, contends that he was shot while crossing the river and drowned. There is no documentary evidence to support either of those claims.

Quartermaster Corps Graves Registration units began to search the Sauer above and below Echternach and on both sides of the river immediately after combat operations, and continued their work in the area until the late 1940s. Dozens of men had been lost in the crossing attempts across the front occupied by several US divisions, and the bodies of many of these men were found in both the river and on the German side. Some were found as late as the early 1950s.

When these teams began a search, they used unit reports from the various combat elements to try to discern where to begin their efforts. In the case of Frederick Goempel, inexplicably, they began their search not 2 miles north of Echternach where the 11th Regiment's battalions are known to have crossed, but about twelve miles south of the crossing point above the town. The coordinates provided them by the Army Map Service somehow placed Goempel as "last seen" far below the actual crossing point. This meant that whatever dental charts or physical characteristics of Frederick Goempel would be compared to dozens of recovered bodies that belonged to the dead of the division flanking the 5th on the right, and 10 miles below the 5th's crossing site. It is highly unlikely that had Frederick Goempel drowned in the river, his body could be found twelve miles south of the crossing. The Sauer is shallow, and normally a placid stream. It twists and turns a great deal in the twelve miles from the crossing point. Dozens of bodies were found in the shallow banks along the river and many of these were identified as being from the units to the south of Echternach.

Contacted by a Goempel family member, Col. Jim Tonge and I began to look at the available records of the crossing provided by her. She had done a remarkable job at collecting information relating to the crossing, and had talked with two of the men who believed they knew Frederick's fate. She too had wondered at the strange starting point for the search for Frederick Goempel. None of us have since been able to explain why this location was selected. In addition to the witnesses, she had collected combat maps with exact placement of the German and American positions on both sides of the river and unit histories. Karl von Clausewitz, the great Prussian general and philosopher of war, talks of the "fog of war" in combat. The fog of war is not dispelled by the cessation of combat. The battlefield is a fluid and violent place. Records are understandably difficult to maintain to exacting standards, especially at the squad level under combat conditions. In the Goempel case, we are sure of only one thing as a result of investigating the available records. That is that by looking twelve miles south of the 2nd Battalion crossing point, we would not find Private Goempel. He remains missing.

**Fred Brann
Technical Sergeant
US Army Air Forces
335th Bomber Squadron
95th Bomber Group
20 December 1943**

The case of Fred Brann is at once frustrating and compelling. Of all of the cases I have read and reviewed, the case of Sergeant Fred Brann seems to be one that should have never been a mystery. In fact, Fred Brann should not be missing. But he is.

On Monday, 20 December 1943, the 95th Bomb Group and its squadrons undertook a mission across the channel to Bremen. They were part of a larger force of 407 B-17s attacking the port facilities, along with 127 B-24s and a number of fighter escorts. They were over the target beginning at 1142 and by 1214 those surviving bombers were out of the area and headed again toward England. This was the first time the Eighth Air Force had employed the use of aluminum chaff to clutter the enemy radar. 21 of the B-17s were lost, and with the airplanes, a total of 270 men went down, missing or killed in action. Fred Brann and his crewmembers went down in the Bremen area, not far from the target. Three of the crew managed to escape the plane and parachute safely. One of these men died in a German hospital of injuries suffered in the attack. Two were taken prisoner. Seven went down in the airplane. All of the seven were buried very systematically and recorded by the German command. Their graves were specifically numbered, and noted as a crew lost on 20 December 1943. Their graves were numbered 2, 4, 8, 12, 16, 18, and 113. Of the seven, only two were identified by the Germans through dog tags. The remaining five were not positively identified but records clearly indicated that they were from the 20 December crash over Bremen. German "Kampf Flugzeuge" # KU 543 and American Missing Aircrew Report #1557 supply the basic information for this case.

At war's end, American Graves Registration Teams began a systematic canvassing of the areas known to contain burial sites of American and other allied military men. As they searched the Bremen area, they discovered the German military cemetery, with its meticulous records and dozens of US and other allied burials. From graves 2, 4, 8, 12, 16 and 18 they retrieved six of the missing crew from the 20 December crash. Grave 113 was not disturbed and no remains were retrieved from that site. It is believed that the remains in Grave 113 were thought to be British. The six graves were disinterred and the remains brought to an American military cemetery for identification and burial. Sometime in 1946, a team from the British Graves Registration Command arrived to recover the remains in Grave 113. These remains were removed to the British Military Cemetery in Soltau, Germany.

In February 1947 it became apparent to the American Graves Registration Command that they had failed to repatriate the remains in Grave 113, and an investigation was begun to attempt to find those remains. In fact, the AGRC concluded that Grave 113 had contained the remains of an American airman with a date of death of 20 December 1943, and the remains were now in the possession of the British. The 466th Quartermaster Battalion issued a correspondence dated 17 September 1947 that states: *"A disinterment team was dispatched to Soltau Cemetery Plot XXIV, Row Grave #14 from this headquarters. From August 1947 it is established that Grave #14 is grave of subject deceased. All evidence recovered is being evacuated (Evac. #1F3257) to C.I.P for final decision."*

On 10 May 1949 the British Graves Registration Command responded to the 466th Quartermaster Battalion's correspondence: *"This is the only casualty which, according to the Exhumation Report, a copy of which is attached, does not appear to be that of a British airman."* Working steadily through the remainder of the graves repatriated from the Bremen cemetery, the AGRC successfully identified all the remains found there, with one exception; Grave #113. German records are clear that this grave contained an American airman from a

B-17G crash on 20 December 1943 along with his fellow crewmembers. At this point the Army made a determination of BNR - "body not recoverable." The missing records in this case are the transfer of remains receipt from the British at Soltau, and the Exhumation Report. Neither has surfaced in the investigation of this case.

Fred Brann's relative, who brought us this case, believes that Fred Brann was buried in an American military cemetery as an unknown. The "X-Files" as they are called, are files of the forensic examinations of unknowns buried in American military cemeteries. Requests for information to American Battle Monument Commission cemetery superintendents have gone unanswered. At the time of this writing, we have waited more than one year since our request to examine the X-files of the American Military Cemetery in Margraten, Netherlands. We believe that a rigorous review of the files will indicate that TSGT Brann is buried there as an unknown. Specifically, we believe that a review of interments of unknowns between 1 November 1946 and 30 August 1947 will reveal the resting place of TSGT Fred Brann. Fred Brann should have been easy to identify in forensic examination. He was 36 years old, 5' 4" in height and had unique dental prosthetic work.

**Leroy E. Leist, Staff Sergeant
William S. Green, 1st Lieutenant
Jack P. Jensen, 2nd Lieutenant
Robert P. Valentin, Staff Sergeant
Roman R. Beran, Technical Sergeant
Sanford F. Tisdale, Staff Sergeant
US Army Air Forces
418th Bomber Squadron
100th Bomb Group**

On the morning of 4 February 1944, the crew of B-17G #42-37975 was preparing for a bombing mission on targets in and near Frankfurt, Germany. They would not have needed a meteorologist to tell them the weather was going to be a challenge. With temperatures just above freezing, wind at twenty-five knots or more and cloud cover from the deck up to several thousand feet, the crew knew what they were going to face not only from the enemy but from nature. They briefed, breakfasted, and took off with the rest of the crews of the 100th for Frankfurt. The bomb run was made with minimal opposition from flak, and nearly all of the crews turned for home without being struck by enemy fire. Just minutes before the crew of 975 was to go "feet wet" over the channel, another crew noted that they had begun to drop out of the formation over Walcheren Island on the Dutch coast. One engine seemed to be smoking, but there was no radio contact, and the airplane seemed under control. They did not land with the returning group. On 6 February, the bodies of two of the crew washed ashore on the beach at Ouddorp. Another came ashore in mid-April and a fourth at an unknown place and time. Of the remaining crew, nothing was found. The family of Sergeant Leist began a personal investigation in the late 1990s. In that process many items of information were discovered.

As 975 began to fall out of the formation, German defenses were aware of their plight. German radar noted the presence of a single airplane in a slight descent and falling away from the group. At the same time, a Luftwaffe fighter squadron was patrolling the exit area, looking for bombers that might have been hit and separating from the group. A German pilot, Erich Scheyda, claimed the shoot-down of a B-17 aircraft at the approximate time and place that 975

had dropped out of the group and entered the cloud banks below the formation. Minutes later, the flak battery on Vlissingen Island opened fire on a single bomber, and noted that the plane descended rapidly and then took a sharp turn to the right. This occurred at the same time the

plane would have been starting to cross the channel. The fighter pilot did not follow the plane down, and the flak battery records did not provide more information. This claim was the only one for the formation and time of attack that occurred in the area. There were no other possibilities. The fire chief of the town of Ouddorp provided interesting clues. He had noted the crash of every airplane in the area on a map, and had plotted the location of each piece of ordnance that had fallen in the region. Among this information was the tantalizing clue that a B-17 bomber had fallen about 700 meters offshore Ouddorp. Fishermen in the area had noted that in shallow water, they had snagged nets on the exposed tail of an airplane some years before, but that the airplane no longer seemed to be there. The Dutch Ministry of Public Works offered information on dredging and a major storm that occurred in the area in the 1950s. A British hydrologist plotted the locations of the three bodies recovered in specific locations and hypothesized that the bomber should be in an area generally close to where the fire chief plotted the crash of 1944, and included the belief that it could be no further than 12 miles off the Ouddorp beach. Dutch civilians organized diving searches, document research and archival investigations. The Dutch Navy provided a diving barge and divers to comb the bottom in the area and US officials accompanied them on this effort.

What happened to the bodies of the remaining crew of 975? There are many possibilities. One possibility is that the rest of the crew were all killed before the plane descended and their bodies are still trapped inside the wreckage. Perhaps some parachuted and were lost in the channel. Storms in the North Sea can be particularly violent. It is possible that the wreckage has been covered by silt and sand and now lies beneath a beach. Water recoveries are the most difficult to resolve. Locations of loss are rarely known with precision. Depth often proves an impossible obstacle even if location is known.

Ewart T. Sconiers
1st Lieutenant
US Army Air Forces
414th Bomber Squadron
97th Bomber Group
DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

The case of Lt. Ewart Sconiers is remarkable for several reasons. Sconiers had been in pilot training but became a bombardier in a B-17 squadron after being cut from the pilot program. During a mission over Germany on 21 August 1942, Sconiers was forced to pilot his damaged B-17 back home to England with a wounded pilot and co-pilot. For this action he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, the second highest award for conspicuous bravery in the US Army Air Forces. Two months later, on 21 October, Sconiers' plane was shot down and he became a POW. During that winter, he became ill and was taken to a German hospital in Lubin, Poland, where he died. A group of POWs from his camp who knew Sconiers were taken by train under guard to Lubin to conduct a military funeral. Photographs of this funeral exist, and at least one witness, a retired General and former Superintendent of the US Air Force Academy, was still living at the time of this writing. The cemetery where Sconiers was buried is said to exist today, and the location of many of the war graves was well known at the end of

WWII. A team of US military was sent to the cemetery at war's end, and repatriated remains, but Sconiers was not among them.

100th BG/349 BS 13 Air Wing

Crew of B-17 # 13714AC# 44-6470

1st Lt. Arthur G. Larsen pilot MIA

1st Lt. Thomas E. O'Neil co-pilot MIA

2nd Lt. Dale F. Watterson navigator MIA

T/Sgt. Charles W. Dineen togglier KIA

T/Sgt. Raymond R. Bazata top turret gunner/flight engineer MIA

T/Sgt. Joseph M. Popson radio operator/gunner MIA

S/Sgt. Willard P. Bostrom ball turret gunner MIA

S/Sgt. Marvin F. Barner MIA

S/Sgt. John E. Kaiser (tail gunner captured as POW, repatriated)

On March 31, 1945, following a successful bombing mission over oil refineries at Zeitz, Germany, the B-17 aircraft suffered flak damage which blew away the #3 engine. The plane left formation attempting to fly east, towards Russian lines. One man, the tail gunner, S/SGT John Kaiser, escaped by parachute and was captured on his landing, and repatriated about 2 weeks later. During his brief captivity at a German airbase, Kaiser was shown personal effects of most of the crew and told that they had been killed in the crash. Kaiser believes that most of the crew had already parachuted by the time he left his station in the tail. The body of another was seen to strike the tail upon exiting the airplane, and the remains were recovered. German, Dutch, and American researchers have established the crash site near Oberlungwitz, Germany, and visited the site on 27 November, 2000. Further research in the local area has revealed the existence of a witness, then a young girl. This witness claims to have seen the burial of one or more American fliers reportedly killed by the SS after parachuting from the airplane. She alleges that it was known in the local area that the seven fliers who parachuted were taken by the SS and killed. A ground penetration radar search of the site in 2004 revealed the location of possible human remains. With the cooperation of local authorities, the witness agreed to take them to the site and point out the burial location. Remains were found at the site but their origin is unknown although a German anthropologist believes that their condition and probably age fits within the time of the alleged burial and the age of a typical military member. DPMO agreed to search the crash site for remains, but inexplicably cancelled the effort prior to their arrival in Germany. Translated copies of several documents are in the possession of the family of Lt. Watterson. These documents refer to the crash, and witnesses to the crash who claim to have seen several chutes successfully deploying from the airplane, as well as the occupation of the village by American troops prior to the end of combat in Germany. A photograph of the stricken aircraft, with the right engine

blown away, was taken minutes before the crash as the plane attempted to reach the Russian lines and safety.

At present, the challenge involved in the search, recovery, identification and repatriation of World War II MIA's pose a daunting task. The missing are scattered across the globe, some in remote areas such as the Pacific Islands and others in industrialized nations in Europe. Each area presents specific challenges. Organizations such as JPAC and its predecessor have performed remarkably well and met incredible challenges in the pursuit of their mission. They were never formally tasked with the recovery of the missing of World War II, yet have contributed as best they can to this mission under often difficult circumstances. To them we owe a great debt for their commitment to bring the fallen home.

At the close of World War II, the ethos was one of achievement and sacrifice. Many families accepted the notion that their loved ones would never be found. The war was over, and the overwhelming sentiment was to return to the lives they had lived prior to the conflict. The vast expanse of the Pacific war and the subsequent closing of the countries of Eastern Europe hindered searches. Subsequent improvements in forensics, communications improvements such as the Internet, and the opening of Eastern Europe sparked a renewed interest in World War II and its history. In recent years, beginning with the conclusion of the Vietnam conflict, a dark specter began to cloud the issues of the resolution of the missing. This issue centered on the fate of those MIAs who possessed technical skills or classified information. Many believe that these men were captured and removed to the Soviet Union, beginning with the conclusion of World War II and continuing through the end of the Vietnam War. These theories have received a great deal of attention from the families of the missing and from our government. While this effort is noteworthy, and honors the memory of those men, it has overshadowed the effort for closure for the families of the missing of World War II, the 18,000 who our government believes can be recovered.

The recovery of the missing of World War II will not be accomplished without a directed focus on the problem. To achieve that goal, the members of our group propose a method utilizing special envoys. Two such envoys, one for the Pacific area and one for Europe, North Africa and the Mediterranean would be charged with serving as focal leaders for the resolution of World War II MIA issues. Each area is unique. World War II combat in Europe took place largely in industrialized and highly populated areas. The Pacific combat was often waged over remote islands and difficult terrain. Each requires a specific approach.

There are an estimated 18,000 missing from World War II whom our government has said it believes can be recovered. Yet now, more than sixty years since the last shots were fired, we are still trying to fashion a plan for the recovery of the missing. It is an achievable task, and an eminently honorable mission. We accept the calculations of our government that these men can be recovered. What we must do now is to fashion a plan toward that recovery. We owe that to these brave missing, to their families, and to the generations of those who will serve this nation in the future. We believe it can be done. We also believe that it will require new ways of looking at old problems. It will require new cooperative efforts, flexibility in thinking and action, and above all a commitment from the highest levels of government. We are heartened by the efforts of governments abroad in assisting with this mission. We are likewise moved by the actions of private individuals in this effort. It can be done. It is time that it be done.

SERVICE CASUALTY OFFICES

Service Casualty Offices serve family members. Each Military Department maintains a service casualty office. The Department of State does the same for civilians. The officials in these offices serve as the primary liaisons for families concerning personnel recovery and accounting. Full-time civilians who have worked this issue for many years and are experienced and knowledgeable help answer family member questions. Military officials also assist to help explain the methods used to account for families' missing loved ones.

Air Force

USAF Missing Persons Branch
550 C Street West, Suite 15
Randolph AFB, TX 78150-4716
(800) 531-5501

Army

Department of the Army
U.S. Army Human Resources Command
Attn: CMAOC/PCRB
1600 Spearhead Division Ave, Dept 450
Fort Knox, KY 40122-5405
(800) 892-2490

Marine Corps

Headquarters U. S. Marine Corps
Manpower and Reserve Affairs (MRC)
Personal and Family Readiness Division
3280 Russell Road
Quantico, VA 22134-5103
(800) 847-1597

Navy

Navy Personnel Command
Casualty Assistance Division
POW/MIA Branch (PERS 624)
5720 Integrity Drive
Millington, TN 38055-6210
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